

Wednesday 25th March, 2020



Cc'd: 

RE: COVID-19 – Essential Service to NZ – Print, Publishing, Mail and Distribution

Dear ,

I write in an era of unprecedented times confronting not only the essence of New Zealand communities, but further a critical period for all New Zealand citizens, businesses and broader economy.

The Real Media Collective (the Collective) represents the paper, print, publishing, mail and distribution sectors across Australia and New Zealand. Across New Zealand, we represent \$5.9BN of the \$6.04BN industry.

The industry sectors we represent employ 20,938 New Zealanders across full-time, part-time and independent contractor arrangements with mixed skilled and unskilled labour supply across metropolitan and regional locations. Providing Community Service, Health, Finance, Government, Education and more notices, information and media to New Zealand homes daily.

We recognise and value the steps the New Zealand Government is implementing to stay ahead of the curve and protect citizens. As a recognised Essential Services Supply Chain provider industry we have unilaterally implemented strong safety measures with remote offices established across content development, design and editorial; rotation and staggering of manufacturing shifts to minimise staff numbers in contact; increased ventilation; individual stylus and other digital solutions to avoid cross-contamination of machinery operation; finger scanners switched to card scanning; safety equipment; sanitisers; and social distancing practices.

The Collective, and the broader membership and industries we represent, provide critical services to the community – printed Medical label and packaging, Government notices and communications, Magazine publications providing in-home media and community notices, Community Newspapers and Magazines, Transactional mail and postal services, Food label and packaging, Finance and Insurance advice and more.

THE REAL MEDIA COLLECTIVE

Australia: Suite 6, 151 Barkly Avenue, Richmond VIC 3121

New Zealand: c/o Webstar, 114 Swanson Road, Henderson, Auckland 0610, New Zealand

ABN: 13 540 235 566 **T:** 03 9421 2206 **W:** therealmediacollective.com.au

To that end, we seek inclusion and clarity across the Government's consideration under possible further restrictions to include the paper, print, publishing, mail and distribution sector within any and all essential services framework across the delivery point and logistical supply chain for any and all ongoing or potential restrictions.

Specific reference is further undertaken across three critical sectors, as follows:

1. Magazine publications, delivered under Subscription, Supermarket or Newsagency channels, provide an essential relief to the most vulnerable elderly, disabled, in-home carer, poor or digitally excluded citizens across New Zealand with an opportunity to shift from isolation and engage in a meaningful, trusted and relevant manner with a media channel that delivers content, community information and entertainment conducive to a positive mental health outlook during an alienating and frightening period.
2. Retail Mail-Order Catalogues, such as *EziBuy*, *Innovations* and others, have the opportunity to engage the most isolated and fragile citizens, our elderly, with additional content, retail access for needed clothing, in-home care, pharmaceutical products and more. With specific opportunity for those unable to attend a Supermarket or Pharmacy or other online retail services for their immediate needs. Online retail services often, for the elderly demographic or those without access to the internet within their home, is restrictive due to digital skills and accessibility to the online retailer environment. Thus, creating additional stress and alienation to a vulnerable section of our community. Established print and letterbox media channels provide alternative solutions for these most isolated members of the community.
3. Community Newspapers and Publications offer a free in-home communication channel for Government, Health Services and other community critical notices to inform all New Zealand citizens isolated in their homes, particularly those already identified as most vulnerable, those living on their own, the elderly, the digitally excluded or those living on the lowest socio-economic threshold.

Further consideration for the above include the community service and digital divide across the New Zealand population leaving citizens more isolated than they need to be without access to the existing established channels;

a) Digital divide – Elderly citizens

For those in Aged Care or In-home isolation across the elderly, internet connectivity is low. InternetNZ reports, 'low levels of social connectedness are related to poor health outcomes, and higher mortality risks, together with significant reduction in quality of life'. The very health concerns we seek to implement to protect these citizens through isolation may well see these very peoples most impacted by mental and physical health deterioration without access to established media channels aforementioned.

b) Digital divide – low socio-economic and regional demographics most impacted

The World Internet Project survey reveals the 'poor, elderly, Maori and Pacific people and those in small towns have less access to the internet, and make less use of core internet services' than any other peoples across the population.

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It is the most vulnerable citizens across the country who will be most impacted in an extraordinary era when isolating is necessary. Restricting this highest digitally divided sector of the community to additional isolation needs to be challenged to ensure all citizens are afforded access to basic levels of communication, community notices as well as media and entertainment services.

Printers and Distributors, already under the Government's Essential Services framework across Medical, Government, Food Packaging and more will remain operational to supply for essential services and as such the three further critical channels of communication should also remain open for content creation, production and delivery to provide equal opportunity for all citizens.

It is with the above that we seek Government consideration, clarity and support to hold the broader Letterbox and Publishing sectors open under an essential services window for the most vulnerable communities across the country.

We make ourselves available for any further discussions and/or information upon request.

Yours Sincerely,



Kellie Northwood
Chief Executive Officer
The Real Media Collective

NEW ZEALAND PAPER, PRINT PUBLISHING & LETTERBOX INDUSTRY

SNAPSHOT

KEY FIGURES

ANNUAL TURNOVER:



\$6.04BN
(NZD)

EMPLOYEES:



20,938

NO. OF BUSINESSES:



6,466



INDUSTRY REPRESENTATION:

The industries represented above include paper, print, publishing, mail and distribution, represented under a common umbrella of The Real Media Collective in partnership with the Australasian Paper Industry Association (APIA) and PrintNZ.

APIA represents the pulp and paper sector across Australia and New Zealand providing leadership and engagement with Government across pulp and paper local production and international imports.

PrintNZ, the industry association for print and related industries. As the peak body for this sector, PrintNZ lead and represent the industry at the highest levels and work with members to help their businesses to be the best they can be.

Magazine Publishers Association is the industry association for magazine publishers across New Zealand, with numbers ranging from the largest multi-title publishing houses to single-title publishers across consumer, custom, trade and business disciplines.

INDUSTRY OUTPUTS INCLUDE:

Books, Magazines, Home Delivery Packaging, Government (Federal, State, Local) Notices and Communications, Medical Packaging and Labelling, Food Packaging and Labelling, Community Notices, Signage, Catalogues, Envelopes, Finance and Insurance Essential Notices, Transactional mail and more.

RELATED INDUSTRIES INCLUDE:

Marketing, Design, ATL Media, Communications, Newspapers and more.

Source:
New Zealand Industry Reports, Ibisworld, 2019. The Real Media Collective, Industry Metrics, 2020.
Two Sides, Myths and Facts ANZ, 2020. PrintNZ, Industry Snapshot, 2018

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ADDITIONAL POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION:

1. **COVID-19 Government Notices -** [REDACTED] COVID-19 Government Update communication piece to be positioned in every New Zealand home. Quantity being distributed 1.7M. Prime Minister Ardern has had direct review and is in support of the material and the industry is funding the majority of the project as an 'in kind service'.
2. **Supply chain provider to agreed Essential Services** – The broader Paper, Print, Mail processing and preparation and Distribution sectors play an intrinsic part of the supply chain to the Essential Services outlined by the New Zealand Government which we duly note is a referenced inclusion: “Entities providing essential services (including their supply chains)”.
3. **Community service offering** – whether across the digital divide of citizens not having internet connectivity or devices in-home or a digital divide of those with internet connectivity however limited skills to utilise or navigate the digital landscape the Letterbox and Publishing media channels provide community service via the channel provision and content supplied. Further these channels provide risk mitigation should to any digital or other channel failure, for example during a power cut, internet failure or other such event.
4. **Mental Health and Wellbeing** - Letterbox and Publishing media channels can support associated health and wellbeing initiatives such as mental health and social services throughout New Zealand. Two of our members have been approached by Mental Health NZ to distribute a national campaign in the coming weeks.
5. **In a period of fear and mistrust the most trusted channels must remain open** - Magazine brands are more than just information for a lot of those who interact with them. They provide a connection and sense of community and comfort for readers.

Media Brands

- Nearly 1 million (939,000) New Zealanders agree reading a magazine (print or digital) makes them feel they are part of a community. Ahead of both television and radio.
- 2,354,000 (55%) of New Zealanders say magazine brands (print & online) are good for finding out what's new.
- 2,298,000 (54%) of New Zealanders say magazine brands (print & online) are good for tips and advice on how to do things.

Source: Nielsen CMI Q1-Q4 2019

Letterbox Media

- 2,667,249 (73%) of New Zealanders aged 14+ say Letterbox media is the most useful shopping tool, including findings that outline a stress-free and informative channel.
- Letterbox media is considered the second most useful media in 57% of categories. The top category, 913,441 (25%) of New Zealanders aged 14+, is most useful for Grocery.

Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (NZ 14+), January 2019 – December 2019

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