**Contacting your local MP**

**Why should you contact your local MP?**

Politicians aren’t always aware of the work of community radio stations. Telling your story makes politicians realise why political support for community broadcasting is important to their electorate.

The CBAA has provided a template letter that you can use to request a meeting, an interview or just to contact your MP to let them know about your station.

**Who should you contact?**

The CBAA has sent your station the contact details of your current Federal MP. You can also look up the contact details of your MP at <http://apps.aec.gov.au/esearch/>

Federal MPs are often the most relevant politicians to contact because the Federal Government has responsibility for communications policy, including laws and funding for community broadcasting. You can also contact your State MP or local councillors to let them know about your work.

**How should you approach your MP?**

To start with, send your MP a letter or email using the template provided. If you want to request a meeting or interview with your MP, follow up with a phone call one week later.

MP’s offices are often very busy, especially if Parliament is sitting. Keep politely following up your meeting request every one to two weeks until you have an answer.

**Meeting or interviewing your local politician**

Research your local MP before you meet. Know their Party, correct pronunciation of their name, their full title (e.g. Hon, Sen, Mr, Ms) and how long they’ve been in Parliament. A good place to start your research is the Australian Parliament House website [www.aph.gov.au](http://www.aph.gov.au)

You should also research important facts about community radio as a whole. The CBAA 2013 Community Radio National Listener Survey found that over 5.2 million people listen to community radio each week. There are more facts and figures available at: <http://cbonline.org.au/what-we-do/facts-and-figures/>

Make a plan before your meeting so you don’t get sidetracked. Know what you want to achieve: do you want to provide a tour of your station? Make time for a speech by your MP to launch a new project? Make time to discuss your station activities? Leave time to listen and learn from your MP.

For more information see the [Oxfam guide for meeting your MP](https://www.oxfam.org.au/act/diy-campaigning/make-your-mp-work-for-you/meeting-your-mp/).

**The CBAA is here to help**

If you want assistance call the CBAA Policy and Advocacy Officer Erin Turner on 02 9318 9611 or eturner@cbaa.org.au. Erin can help draft your letter or answer any questions.