

Media Release  
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## Newsagents Target Truce with West Australian

Newsagencies in a stand-off with West Australian Newspaper Holdings Limited are hopeful of a fair and lasting resolution to long standing disagreements over delivery contracts.

The Australian Newsagents' Federation (ANF) today welcomed West Australian CEO Chris Wharton's commitment to ending the impasse and has called on newsagents to take advantage of a new cooperative dialogue with the publisher.

ANF CEO Anthony Matis said he welcomes Mr Wharton's willingness to bring the feuding to an end, and looks forward to successful and meaningful discussions that will lead to new delivery contracts for newsagents.

"For the first time in this ongoing argument with the publisher we feel there is a real peace process taking place. Mr Wharton has given us a genuine indication that the disagreements the West Australian has with its industry partners must end quickly," Mr Matis said.

"We now have in place a clear path to a successful resolution for newsagents, and we are asking all newsagents in the state to be a part of the process."

The West Australian and the ANF have agreed to be part of a discussion process to be completed by the end of May so a new contractual arrangements can be formulated to be in place for the start of the new financial year.

Contractual arguments between the West Australian and newsagents over paper deliveries became exacerbated when the newspaper changed its format. It required newsagents to spend more time and money preparing papers for delivery and in many cases doing two delivery runs for the one issue. The extra time and effort simply wasn't accounted for in the current contract.

The West Australian mounted legal action against the newsagents who sought to redress their unfair treatment but as new faces started to appear on the board of West Australian Newspaper Holdings Limited the case was taken to mediation. West Australian CEO Chris Wharton has now held out an olive branch in a meeting with the ANF.

"We want newsagents to be on board with their peak national body through this discussion process so we can ensure a new contract that satisfies everyone. With a true sense of partnership and fairness the arrangement West Australian newsagents make with their paper may be a model for such agreements with publishers Australia wide.

The newsagency industry in Australia is made up of some 5000 individually-owned family businesses together representing the biggest retail and home-delivery network in the country. These businesses turn over some \$6.5 billion per annum and provide employment for approximately 20,000 people.

Newsagents home-deliver 3 million newspapers, distribute newspapers and magazines to 25,000 retail subagents and serve 2.5 million customers in their shops each day.

The newsagency system in this country has served publishers and consumers very well and has played a very big part in making magazine sales in Australia the highest per capita in the world.

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