Broadcasting and Media Policy

Vision
A strong, diverse and independent media contributes to the maintenance of effective democracy, and to our social, cultural, economic and environmental wellbeing.

Values and Principles
Decisions relating to broadcasting and media must uphold the following values and principles:

- **Honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi:** Māori broadcasting and media should be prioritised and recognised as a platform to uphold the culture of tangata whenua in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- **Ecological Wisdom:** The environmental impact of the production and storage of broadcasting and media content should be minimised.
- **Social Responsibility:** The media should be accessible to people of all abilities, and used to inform, educate and entertain in a manner that supports citizens to participate effectively in democracy and appreciate each others’ needs, interests and aspirations.
- **Appropriate Decision-Making:** The right to broadcast or publish is balanced with expectations to act responsibly. An independent media should be responsibly self-regulating, resting on the foundation of a strong regulatory framework.
- **Non-Violence:** Non-violent resolution of political and social conflict is based on the knowledge, acceptance and understanding of diverse communities, and of their needs, interests and aspirations. Media should act as a means of checks and balances against the misuse or abuse of social, economic and political power.
- **Independence:** A vigorous, independent and diverse media is the cornerstone of a free society: Public broadcasting and community based media initiatives should be supported, and directives by the state, or ownership and control by international media conglomerates, or domination by local commercial monopolies should be avoided.

Summary
The Green Party will support publicly owned broadcasting services and fund locally produced content, prioritising those communities that are not well served by commercial interests, including Māori and children. We will support an independent media and enable community-based media.

Strategic Priorities
The Green Party’s strategic goals include:

“As a Party we want to see Te Ao Māori and Te Reo Māori flourish in Aotearoa.”
“All people will be empowered to shape the systems that affect them.”

Actions in this policy that will help achieve this include:

- Create the organisational structure necessary to establish, monitor and enforce obligations attached to the right to broadcast and stream content online, including honouring the rights and interests of tangata whenua under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. (1.1)
- Support quality public service broadcasting and digital media commons that nurture and promote our own talent and creativity as a nation, reflecting the unique social and cultural diversity of Aotearoa New Zealand. (2.1)
- Protect the political independence and public ownership of Radio New Zealand, Television New Zealand and the Māori Television Service and iwi radio. (2.2)
- Secure long term funding and support for the Māori Television Service and iwi radio stations to be independent, secure and successful. (3.1)

Connected Policies
A free and independent media makes a significant contribution to the effectiveness of our Democracy, Research, Science and Technology, and Education, through the provision of political debate, diverse perspectives and information about the world we live in. It is a key mechanism for celebrating the Arts, Culture and Heritage of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Policy Positions

1. Free and Independent Media

Issues
At present the right to broadcast in Aotearoa New Zealand is allocated to the highest bidder. There are few restrictions on foreign ownership, or on the number of radio and television channels, newspapers, magazines and other media that any one company can control. There are also no public service or other obligations attached to the right to hold a broadcasting license, unlike in many other countries. The role of the Commerce Commission in broadcasting is limited; it is unable to investigate or regulate the negative effects of political, social and/or cultural influence of media organisations.

Actions

1.1. Create the organisational structure necessary to establish, monitor and enforce obligations attached to the right to broadcast and stream content online, including honouring the rights and interests of tangata whenua under Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

1.2. Bring three existing media industry organisations - the Advertising Standards Authority, the Broadcasting Standards Authority and the Press Council - into a common framework based on the principle of responsible self-regulation that includes giving effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

1.3. Create the organisational structure necessary to:
1.3.1. Monitor the activities and decisions of media industry self-regulatory organisations, and regularly report to Parliament on the effectiveness of self-regulatory codes;

1.3.2. Hear appeals against the decisions of industry self-regulatory organisations;

1.3.3. Issue minimum codes or regulations in the event that self-regulation can be demonstrated to have failed; and

1.3.4. Ensure that appeal to industry self-regulatory bodies will be available to individuals, institutions and organisations (including public sector agencies and local authorities).

2. Public Service Broadcasting and Digital Media Commons

Issues

The current legislative and funding framework for public service broadcasting and digital media does not sufficiently support locally made content, or recognise the vital contribution that small independent radio and television services make to the people of Aotearoa New Zealand. Commercial considerations often undermine the potential for public good in broadcasting and streaming services.

Actions

2.1. Support quality public service broadcasting and digital media commons that nurture and promote our own talent and creativity as a nation, reflecting the unique social and cultural diversity of Aotearoa New Zealand.

2.2. Protect the political independence and public ownership of Radio New Zealand, Television New Zealand and the Māori Television Service and iwi radio.

2.3. Establish a Digital Media Commons that, in partnership with public television, public radio, community broadcasters, and website media providers, provides access to public-interest content, and publicly funded resources (such as the Public Archives, museums and libraries).

2.4. Ensure and incentivise the production of music, films and programmes for broadcasting and streaming by Aotearoa New Zealand artists, producers, writers and directors.

2.5. Ensure the state sector pays a living wage to employed and contracted media content creators and encourage organisations employing media content creators to develop policies to pay them a living wage (see our Workforce Policy).

2.6. Ensure that independent media contractors have access to a dispute resolution process, the ability to bargain collectively, and legislation for minimum pay and conditions.

2.7. Investigate introducing minimum Aotearoa New Zealand content quotas for public broadcasters and streaming services and incentives for commercial broadcasters and streaming services to provide higher levels of local content.

A. New Zealand on Air
2.8. Ring-fence revenue to ensure sustainable funding for public broadcasting, including for New Zealand on Air, and identify and facilitate additional sources of revenue.

2.9. Permit New Zealand on Air to adjust the broadcaster’s contribution/equity to a lower level in specific priority genres (e.g. Children’s content) in order to directly contribute to genre/audience priority.

2.10. Implement criteria for New Zealand On Air funding decisions that increase the quality of content for niche audiences who are underserved by commercial programming.

2.11. Support, train and fund public broadcasters to act as the designated Lifeline Utility broadcasters in the event of a Civil Defence emergency.

B. Community Broadcasting and Media

2.12. Ensure that the regulatory framework for broadcasting provides ongoing security over both broadcasting rights and funding, for community access broadcasters.

2.13. Ensure that community broadcasting is able to grow and develop in a manner that reflects ethnic and cultural diversity, changing interests, needs and aspirations.

2.14. Increase support for Pasifika media and services to the Pacific, such as Radio New Zealand International.

2.15. Investigate establishing a network of community media hubs who may share content and contribute to the Digital Media Commons.

3. Māori Public Broadcasting and Media

Issues

As expressions of the indigenous culture of Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori kaupapa, tikanga and te reo have special significance. In recognition of this and in accordance with Te Tiriti o Waitangi, it is important that Māori have a strong voice as media content producers and broadcasters. Yet, access to new broadcasting technologies and ownership of frequencies is an ongoing issue, with the discounting of sovereignty playing a key role in these developments. There is insufficient financial support or focus on dedicated Māori language media to play a major role in revitalising language and culture, as well as achieve full equivalence with English language media, which is the birthright of every Māori, and the heritage of every New Zealander.

Actions

3.1. Secure long term funding and support for the Māori Television Service and iwi radio stations to be independent, secure and successful.

3.2. Work with the Māori media industry to develop and enhance services for a multimedia, multi-platform environment.

3.3. Ensure all New Zealanders have access to Māori language and culture in the media, including by incentivising all media to offer Te Reo Māori services and use correct pronunciation for Māori words and place names.

3.4. Regularly investigate and review funding rates to ensure Māori content producers can continue to provide varied genres of quality content.

4. Children’s Television
Issues
Television, radio and web content have a major influence on children's lives, their values and their sense of identity. Children require access to information and education as well as entertainment, but entertainment and advertising currently dominate children's programming and online content. Young New Zealanders currently lack access to enough content that is made specifically for them - which reflects their cultural diversity and values, including the place of Māori as tangata whenua.

Actions
4.1. Prioritise the local production and broadcasting of children's media content, especially that which:
   4.1.1. increases the information and educational resources available to children; and
   4.1.2. engages children in a more active way than passive entertainment programmes.
4.2. Collaboratively investigate removing commercial advertising from broadcasts aimed at pre-school and school age audiences.

5. Reducing Harmful Content

Issues
There is widespread concern about children and young people seeing harmful content – whether in movies and shows, video games, or on social media or other websites. There is particular concern about the effects of harmful online content viewed by children and young people, and content that encourages harm and discrimination.

Actions
5.1. Enable caregivers and educators to ensure that harmful content is not easily accessible to young people.
5.2. Update, monitor and enforce the codes of broadcasting practice on the portrayal of violence on television, and develop an appropriate equivalent for online content and social media.
5.3. Monitor and regularly report on the amount of harmful content viewed by New Zealanders in all media formats.
5.4. Require Television New Zealand, as a publicly funded channel, to take a lead in reducing the amount of violence on television.

6. Accessible Media

Issues
Broadcasting must be accessible to all. There are many groups within Aotearoa New Zealand who are unable to view broadcasting content in an accessible format.

Actions
6.2. Enact legislation to require television (both broadcast and on-line) to provide media in an accessible format, including captioning, audio-description and New Zealand Sign Language content, and to set a target of 100% captioning for all free to air TV to be phased in over a reasonable timeframe.

6.3. Adopt an ongoing monitoring and evaluation process, including feedback from the disabled community, around captioning standards and quality of access.