



## MEDIA RELEASE

### Access first for Auslan users in ABC NEWS channel bulletin

Vicdeaf and ABC News have partnered to provide Deaf Australians the opportunity to watch the prime-time news in their first language for the first time during the National Week of Deaf People.

On Thursday, 26 October the ABC NEWS channel's 6:00pm bulletin will be interpreted live in Auslan -- Australian Sign Language, the national language of the Australian Deaf community.

Vicdeaf Director of Language, Partnerships & Innovation, Brent Phillips, said: "Vicdeaf is delighted to partner with the ABC, Australia's national broadcaster, to deliver Thursday evening's national news bulletin in Auslan. This will allow thousands of Deaf Australians and their families to access and understand the news in our first language, and highlights the important role Auslan plays in connecting Deaf Australians to Australian society and vice versa".

Vicdeaf Chief Executive Officer, Christine Mathieson, said: "Vicdeaf strives to ensure that Australian society is more aware of Deaf identity and pride, and is more inclusive of Deaf people. We applaud the ABC in showing initiative to partner with us and provide Australians the opportunity to watch the news in Auslan. This forms part of Vicdeaf's strategic goal of acknowledging and celebrating Auslan in Australian society and to partner with innovative, like-minded organisations to increase impact".

Director, News Gaven Morris said: "ABC News is very pleased to be part of this initiative to raise awareness of the National Week of Deaf People."

An Auslan interpreter will be visible to the audience through a picture-in-picture display during Thursday evening's national news bulletin, broadcast on the ABC NEWS channel at 6:00pm AEDT. The bulletin will also be captioned for people who are deaf or hard of hearing and do not use Auslan. The program will be made available on iview for later viewing.

ENDS.

#### Background information:

Vicdeaf (the Victorian Deaf Society) is a not-for-profit organisation with a vision for our clients and community to live in an accessible, inclusive society with equal opportunity in all areas of life. Vicdeaf has serviced the Deaf and hard of hearing community since 1884. [www.vicdeaf.com.au](http://www.vicdeaf.com.au)

National Week of Deaf People (22 – 28 October 2017) is a Deaf Australia initiative, with a theme of "Full inclusion with Auslan".

#### More information:

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Brent is currently Director – Language, Partnerships & Innovation at Vicdeaf, leading Vicdeaf’s community engagement and partnerships strategy, as well as Victoria’s largest and most experienced Auslan interpreting agency – Auslan Connections. Brent is also responsible for driving Vicdeaf’s suite of learning and training services. Brent’s previous roles include Contract Manager at the then Department of Planning and Community Development, Disability Outreach Officer at the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission and Manager at Deaf Victoria. He is a former President of Deaf Sports Australia, a voluntary position he held for eight years. Brent is currently Co-Chair of the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission Disability Reference Group.

Brent is a third-generation Deaf person in his family, married to a Deaf person and is the proud father of two young children. He has BA (Criminology) and MBA degrees and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

