



## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

**16 July 2018**

### **ECAJ lodges official complaint with ABC over Israel/Gaza coverage**

The Executive Council of Australian Jewry, the national representative body of the Australian Jewish community, yesterday lodged an official complaint with the national broadcaster, the ABC over its recent coverage of events in Israel and the Gaza Strip.

In particular, the ECAJ has objected to the lead report on ABC TV's Sunday morning news program on 15 July 2018, which wrongly implied that the latest round of violence in Gaza began with Israel's "wave of airstrikes". The report omitted critical facts that were highly relevant to the story and to an understanding of how the outbreak of violence began. Specifically, the report omitted to mention that on June 13 and 14, Hamas and Islamic Jihad launched more than 170 rockets and mortars at civilian population centres within Israel, hitting a home, a children's playground and a synagogue, and that the Israeli government had announced that the ensuing airstrikes were a response to this barrage of rocket and mortar attacks. These facts had already been publicly reported and were readily available to the ABC.

The ABC report's mention of "a rocket" which was "believed" to have injured three Israelis was entirely inadequate. It gave the viewer no information at all about the magnitude of the Palestinian rocket and mortar barrage into Israel, or the fact that that barrage had preceded the Israeli airstrikes, or the fact that the announced purpose of the airstrikes was to suppress further Palestinian rocket and mortar attacks against civilians in Israel.

By leaving out critical facts which were relevant to the story, this ABC news report: entirely omitted context; obscured cause and effect; and misled its audience about which side had initiated the outbreak of violence, which was the subject of the story.

The national broadcaster is relied upon by millions of Australians to provide balanced and accurate reporting of pressing events from around the world, including from Israel and the Palestinian Territories. Where the ABC fails to abide by the standards required of it by its Code of Practice, the ECAJ will continue to act to ensure the broadcaster is held to account in the interests of fair and honest reporting. The full text of the complaint can be accessed at: <https://www.facebook.com/517012308357082/posts/1896308683760764/>

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