

## Anger over Hizbollah TV go-ahead

Contributed by Dan Goldberg, Sydney  
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Jewish leaders in Australia are outraged that a television station sponsored by Hizbollah has been permitted to broadcast.

The move last week by the Australian Communications and Media Authority to allow Al-Manar TV access to Australia reverses two previous decisions to ban it.

Dr Colin Rubenstein, executive director of the Australia/Israel and Jewish Affairs Council, blasted ACMA's decision that Al-Manar did not violate the government's amended anti-terror laws as "regrettable, if unsurprising.

"It is clear that changes made last December to broadcasting guidelines with regard to terrorism — designed to protect free speech and fair reporting — went too far," he said.

Robert Goot, president of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, said his concern was not whether the Lebanese-based, Iranian-funded TV station breached anti-terror laws but over the virulent antisemitism that it spouted.

Al-Manar has previously broadcast material lauding suicide bombers, calling for Israel's annihilation, resurrecting the blood libel and portraying Jews as apes and pigs, according to critics. The station is popular with the Australian Arabic community, which receives it by satellite.

Dr Rubenstein added: "Al-Manar is banned in France, Germany, Spain and the United States. It should also be banned in Australia." The subscription-only station is not banned in Britain.