# Vision Australia pushing for audio description on Australian TV

Last week Vision Australia and a number of people who are blind or have low vision met with MPs at an event in Canberra to demonstrate audio description and lobby for its inclusion on TV. The event was organised in partnership with Greens Senator, Rachel Siewert, and was co-sponsored by Minister for Communications, Malcolm Turnbull MP, and Shadow Minister for Communications, Jason Clare MP.

Audio description on television is a verbal description - provided during gaps in dialogue - of visual elements such as scenes, settings, actions and costumes. You can get a sense of how it works from Vision Australia’s [YouTube video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_k_wsWrcbMo).

Vision Australia’s [Tell the whole story](http://www.visionaustralia.org/about-us/advocacy/campaigns/tell-the-whole-story-audio-description-on-tv) campaign encourages the Federal Government to implement audio description on Australian television so it can be enjoyed by the 350,000 people who are blind or have low vision.

ACCAN fully supports the campaign and encourages you to support it too by signing this [Change.org petition](https://www.change.org/p/minister-for-communications-malcolm-turnbull-help-people-who-are-blind-or-have-low-vision-to-get-audio-description-on-australian-free-to-air-tv) urging the Minister for Communications to amend the Broadcasting Services Act so audio description will become available on Australian free to air TV. Introducing audio description will ensure a more inclusive television experience for Australians who are blind or who have low vision by allowing them to fully experience a range of television content.

Previously a 15-month trial of audio described content was introduced on the ABC iview catch-up service. ACCAN [applauded this as a positive step](http://www.accan.org.au/news-items/media-releases/1043-accan-congratulates-abc-on-audio-described-iview-content), however, the content on iview alone will not meet the needs of all Australians who are blind or have low vision. Vision Australia estimated that around two-thirds of Australians who are blind or have low vision do not have access to the internet and would have no means of accessing iview.

Online streaming service Netflix [introduced audio described content](http://www.accan.org.au/news-items/media-releases/1044-netflix-audio-description) earlier this year. This was another positive step, however, at the time of the announcement there were issues highlighted with trying to access the Netflix platform using a screen reader. If audio description is to benefit the consumers who use it, then they must be able to independently access the platform using screen readers.

Please get behind [Vision Australia’s campaign](http://www.visionaustralia.org/about-us/advocacy/campaigns/tell-the-whole-story-audio-description-on-tv) and sign the [Change.org petition](https://www.change.org/p/minister-for-communications-malcolm-turnbull-help-people-who-are-blind-or-have-low-vision-to-get-audio-description-on-australian-free-to-air-tv) so people who are blind or have low vision can fully experience free to air TV!