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Most Aussies don't trust media professionals

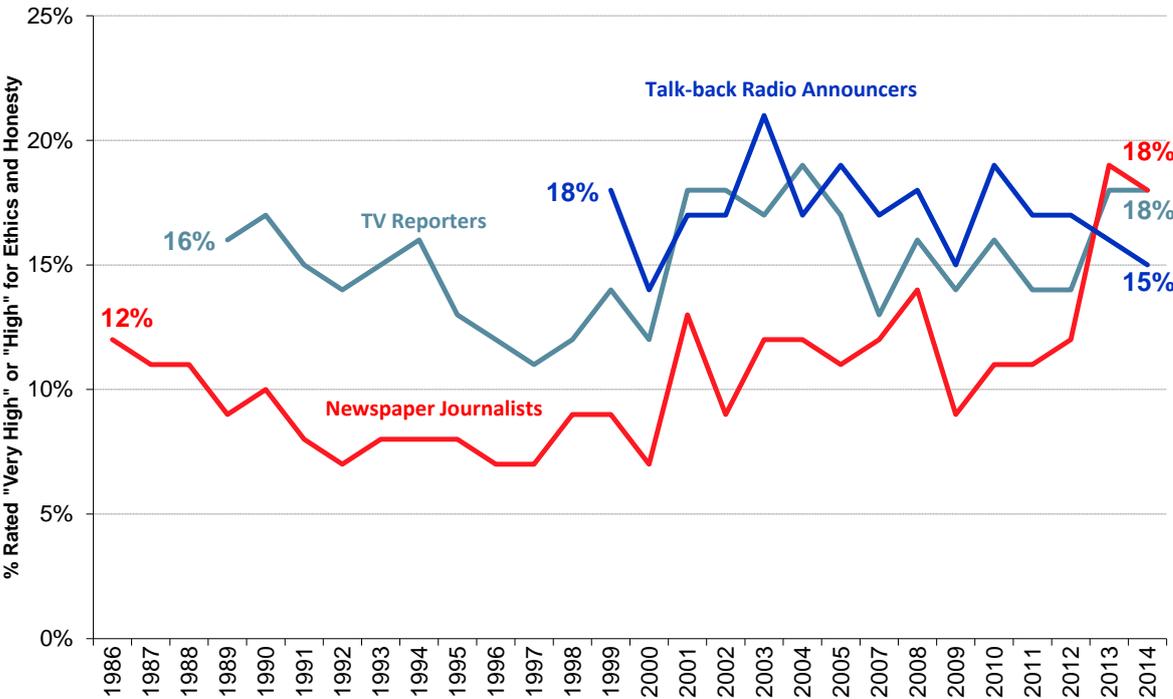
We've all heard the old chestnut "Honesty is the best policy," but it seems that certain sectors of the workforce may have forgotten it. More than half the professions covered in the [2014 Roy Morgan Image of Professions survey](#) have emerged looking a little less reputable than they did just 12 months ago, after their ethics and honesty ratings (as judged by the Australian public) fell year on year.

When we consider how different professions from the same industry performed in the survey, some interesting findings come to light. The reputation of the finance industry, for example, from Bank Managers to Accountants, Financial Planners to Stock Brokers, has improved across the board [since last year](#).

Ethics, honesty and media

On the other hand, the media industry might need to call in an image consultant. Historically among the less trusted professions, TV Reporters, Newspaper Journalists and Talk-back radio announcers continue to receive poor ratings. While TV Reporters have remained steady since last year, with less than one in five Aussies (18%) rating them favourably for ethics and honesty (compared to, say, 91% for nurses), Newspaper Journalists and Talk-back Announcers have each fallen slightly in the public's estimation, from 19% to 18% and 16% to 15% respectively.

Rating of Professionals in Media on 'Ethics and Honesty'



Source: Roy Morgan Research; Annual Image of Professions Survey 2014; n=644; Base: Australians 14+

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While an 18% score for ethics and honesty may not sound like a vote of confidence, it's the best result that TV Reporters have received in this survey since 2004 — and a significant improvement on the mid- to late-1990s, when their rating hovered between 11% and 14%. The 1990s was an even darker decade for Newspaper Journalists, making their current 18% score seem almost impressive — until we remember that it's less than half the rating received by the survey's biggest losers, Ministers of Religion (37%, down from 44%).

The public's faith in Talk-back Radio Announcers has been on the wane since 2010, and the profession's current rating of 15% is well down on its historic 2003 'high' of 21%. In fact, since last year, even Insurance Brokers and Stock Brokers are perceived to be more ethical and honest.

Gary Morgan says:

"TV Reporters, Newspaper Journalists and Talk-back Radio Announcers continue to rate poorly in the annual Roy Morgan Image of Professions survey, suggesting that ethics and honesty are not qualities widely associated with the Australian media industry.

"The political bias displayed by most newspapers in the lead-up to last year's Federal Election certainly wouldn't have boosted the public's trust in journalists; while recent talk-back 'shock jock' antics such as Howard Sattler's infamous interview with former PM Julia Gillard and Derryn Hinch's jail term didn't do that profession's reputation any favours.

"Roy Morgan has been tracking the image of Newspaper Journalists, TV Reporters and Talk-back Radio Announcers since 1986, 1989 and 2000 respectively, during which time they have performed consistently poorly, struggling to reach a 20% approval rating among the Australian public. If we can't trust our media to deliver the news in an honest, ethical manner free of bias and ulterior motives, how are we expected to get a well-informed, balanced perspective on current affairs?"

These are the main findings of a Roy Morgan telephone survey conducted on the nights of April 8-10, 2014, with 644 Australian men and women aged 14 and over.

Respondents were asked: *"As I say different occupations, could you please say – from what you know or have heard - which rating best describes how you, yourself, would rate or score people in various occupations for honesty and ethical standards (Very High, High, Average, Low, Very Low)?"*

[Explore a detailed, interactive data visualisation of the survey results here](#)

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About Roy Morgan Research

Roy Morgan Research is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in New Zealand, the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan Research has over 70 years' experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

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Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
500	±4.5	±3.9	±2.7	±1.9
1,000	±3.2	±2.7	±1.9	±1.4