

# Bloemfontein Press hearings get input from real, working journalists

By [Carmel Rickard](#)

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Whichever way you look at it, submissions made by the *Volksblad* at the Press Council public hearings in Bloemfontein last week were something of a milestone. This was one of the few times that actual journalists - as opposed to media academics or members of civil society - gave presentations.



After the submissions by *Volksblad*'s acting night editor, Gert Coetzee, the council's chairman, Joe Thloloe, commented that this was the first publication that had responded to the council's request for dialogue and input at the hearings, adding: "Thank you". And, hearing that Coetzee was about to address the council, one media follower tweeted a comment expressing some relief that a practising journalist was eventually to speak.

Previous submissions had been dominated by media academics.

...The other major input was from media academic JD Froneman of the North-West University, Potchefstroom [whose] remarks critical of the "juniorisation" of newsrooms around South Africa will be met with widespread agreement.

Read the [full article](#), as well as [Press Council hearings in Cape Town - speaking to empty chairs, again](#) [Day two of press hearings in Cape Town affords casual debate](#), on [www.freeafricamedia.com](http://www.freeafricamedia.com), a [Daily Maverick](#) initiative.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Carmel Rickard has been a journalist for 30 years and specialises in writing about the intersection of law and politics, a job which, thanks to the internet, she does from a rural town in Free State where she has lived for the last 10 years. Rickard herself also made a submission at the Bloemfontein National Press Council public hearings. Follow her on Twitter at [\[\[@CarmelRickard\]\]](#).

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