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Fairfax cuts pose a risk to quality Australian journalism, say unions

Fairfax Media's latest round of job cuts are a risk to the future of quality Australian journalism and another example of big business stamping on the employment security and rights of workers, say unions.

ACTU President Ged Kearney will today address a rally outside Fairfax's Melbourne headquarters in protest of the 82 redundancies as part of the company's outsourcing of sub-editing at *The Age* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

"I am speaking as a long-time supporter of *The Age*, which is a Melbourne institution, delivering quality journalism for more than 150 years and I am concerned as a reader that outsourcing the important sub-editor roles will diminish that quality," Ms Kearney said.

"I am also speaking as a union representative, standing up for the rights of workers against another big organisation that lacks understanding of what these job losses mean to the affected individuals and their families.

"This was a unilateral decision to slash jobs and then set about informing staff, giving them no chance of appealing what will have a real and lasting impact on their future.

"There is little doubt strong competition in the media marketplace presents challenges but we fail to see how slashing jobs could be a panacea.

"Cutting jobs will only lead to cuts in the reputation of quality for which *The Age* and *The Sydney Morning Herald* are known for and that will only create bigger challenges for Fairfax as more readers will undoubtedly turn away from its pages."

Ms Kearney said Fairfax Media had cut about 250 editorial jobs in the past six years alone.

"Pretty soon there will be few jobs left to cut and then there will be little left of *The Age* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*," she said.

Ms Kearney will address the *Maintain Your Age* rally at 12.30pm outside Fairfax's Media House in Collins Street, Melbourne.

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