

Exercise 1

Writing a hard, succinct and gripping intro is a crucial skill that any radio reporter must have. Sub-edit the following statements so they're suitable radio intros.

1. "The Christchurch City Council needs to, to address the housing shortage in the city, fix its social housing urgently", said Earthquake Recovery Minister John Smith.
2. A protest against the government asset sales programme has attracted 1,026 noisy marches in the Hawke's Bay.
3. A daily serving of two hundred and fifty millilitres of milk is required for young children to get their calcium requirements, according to new research from Canterbury University.
4. Four police patrols are attending a car versus pedestrian accident on State Highway One five kilometres south of Kaikoura.
5. The final count for attendees at the Christmas in the Park concert in Auckland was 52,002. Last year the figure was 106,134. Inclement weather on the night of this year's concert is the reason for the poor turnout.
6. The Education Minister, Carol Avid, has just spoken at a conference in Hamilton and unveiled a new Government policy. The policy will see a billion dollars invested in making all of the country's 3,345 high schools able to cater for Year Seven and Eight students with all intermediate schools to close.

Exercise 2

Audio stories are a core component of any radio news bulletin. The art is in selecting a compelling clip that adds to your story.

Below is a transcript of an interview between a journalist and Environment Canterbury Councillor Ross Big. Read it, identify two cuts and write audio stories around these. Your stories should have different angles and a total duration of around 45 seconds, including the clip (which should be no more than 15 seconds).

Interview with Environment Canterbury Councillor Ross Big on Chilean Needle Grass

REPORTER: Can you outline for me what's happened?

RB: Two days ago a vineyard owner found small patches of Chilean Needle Grass – an invasive pest plant – on his property just north of Cheviot. He contacted E-Can and our biosecurity response team reacted, destroying all the plants on the site and taking precautionary measures to ensure it doesn't pop up again.

REPORTER: How concerning is this discovery?

RB: Very concerning – it's the first time it's been found in this area. It's a major problem for farmers in Marlborough and the Hawke's Bay, where it has completely destroyed some crops. It can literally take over land and is very difficult to get rid of.

REPORTER: How confident are you that you've eradicated it?

RB: We cannot be 100 percent sure that it's gone but we have done all we can right now to ensure this outbreak has been contained. We're lucky that the land owner knew what he was looking for and contacted us before it spread too far. We have put plans in place to ensure that particular outbreak is contained.

REPORTER: If it was on this one vineyard, how likely it's on others in the area?

RB: We cannot discount that as a possibility. However, our staff have surveyed neighbouring properties and found no evidence of the grass there. We removed the plants before they seeded and are now confident this was a one-off outbreak. But we're not resting on our laurels – we've sent information about what Chilean Needle Grass is and what to look for to all residents in the area, and we are holding a public meeting and are urging anyone who think they may have seen it to get in touch. If we work together we can stop this invasive pest in its tracks.

REPORTER: Any idea as to how it got there?

RB: That's still under investigation. We've focused so far on the eradication and prevention programme but our investigators and those from the Ministry are working together to find out how it got there. It could have come from any number of sources: contaminated seed, equipment, etc. We're taking this seriously and are confident we'll find the source so we can avoid similar outbreaks in the future.

REPORTER: How long will the investigation run for?

RB: As long as it needs to, but we hope to release a report on its findings by the 2nd of April.

REPORTER: Anything you'd like to add?

RB: No. Just for people to keep an eye out for the grass. It's got unusual, twisted, corkscrew-shaped seed heads, which are quite unlike the other grasses we normally see in pasture here. They're sharp and can penetrate skin - I wouldn't touch it.