

**Senate Select Committee on COVID-19**  
**ANSWERS TO INQUIRY QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications**

IQ: 20

**Division: Content**  
**Inquiry Name: Senate Select Committee on COVID-19**  
**Inquiry Date: 6 August 2020**  
**Topic: Australian Viewers**  
**Question Type: Hansard Ref: Page 35**

**Senator KRISTINA KENEALLY asked:**

Senator KENEALLY: as I just outlined. For the \$30 million, what were the total number of hours, the total number of sports supported and what is that on a per-dollar basis? In the consideration of this extension of a \$10 million grant to Fox Sports, does the department have an estimate of the number of Australian viewers who will be able to view that content?

Mr Atkinson: We can take that on notice as well.

**Answer:**

**Q.1 – For the \$30 million, what were the total number of hours, the total number of sports supported and what is that on a per-dollar basis?**

*The total number of hours of sports broadcast over the period 2017–18 to 2019–20:*

The total number of hours of sports broadcast over the period 2017–18 to 2019–20 was 15,538 hours. This can be broken down on an annual basis as follows:

| <b>Financial year</b> | <b>Number of hours broadcast</b>                                                                                           |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2017-18               | 4,800 hours of content was broadcast during the 2017-18 financial year, of which 1,600 of these hours were broadcast live. |
| 2018-19               | 5,850 hours of content broadcast in the 12-month period, of which 1,649 of these hours were broadcast live.                |
| 2019-20               | 4,888 hours of content broadcast in the 12-month period, of which 1,167 of these hours were broadcast live.                |

*The number of sports supported by the grant over the period 2017–18 to 2019–20:*

The number of sports supported by the grant over the period 2017-20 cannot be determined in total over the period as there has been annual variation between the sports broadcast for each year of the grant. However, over the three-year period 2017-20 in which the grant has been operating, on average around 40 sports have been supported annually, as outlined in the table below.

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| <b>Financial year</b> | <b>Number of sports supported</b>                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2017-18               | 42 different sport competitions benefited from funding, with 26 new programs or events receiving coverage or benefiting from grant funding |
| 2018-19               | 43 different sport competitions benefited from funding, with 19 new programs or events receiving coverage or benefiting from grant funding |
| 2019-20               | 36 different sport competitions benefited from funding, with 5 new programs or events receiving coverage or benefiting from grant funding  |

The lower levels of representation and reach of women's, niche, emerging and under-represented sports by Fox Sports over the last financial year can be attributed to the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on sports captured under the grant. Competitions that had televised events cancelled due to COVID-19 between March and June include: AFLW, SuperW, Rugby Sevens, Lawn Bowls, Surfing, Hockey and Gymnastics. While this resulted in a decrease in live hours during this time Fox Sports continued to support the exposure of these sports with an increase in delayed and repeat programming.

*The per dollar-basis under which the \$30 million funding was allocated in terms of total number of broadcast hours and total number of sports supported:*

The grant agreement does not require reporting on the per-dollar basis under which the \$30 million funding has been allocated to date over the three of the four years completed under the initial 4-year funding period, 2017–18 to 2019–20. However, the following payments have been made under the initial 4-year grant upon satisfactory completion of the relevant milestones, as follows:

| <b>Milestone</b>                                                                                   | <b>Amount (GST exclusive)</b> | <b>GST</b> | <b>Total paid (GST inclusive)</b> | <b>Date paid</b> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Acceptance by the Commonwealth of the 2017-18 Strategic Roadmap                                    | \$7,500,000                   | \$750,000  | \$8,250,000                       | February 2018    |
| Acceptance by the Commonwealth of the 2017-18 Performance Report and 2018-19 Strategic Roadmap     | \$7,500,000                   | \$750,000  | \$8,250,000                       | September 2018   |
| Acceptance by the Commonwealth of the 2018-19 Performance Report and 2019-20 Strategic Roadmap     | \$7,500,000                   | \$750,000  | \$8,250,000                       | September 2019   |
| Acceptance by the Commonwealth of the 2019-20 Performance Report and Strategic Roadmap for 2020-21 | \$5,000,000                   | \$500,000  | \$5,500,000                       | July 2020        |

**Q.2 – In the consideration of this extension of a \$10 million grant to Fox Sports, does the department have an estimate of the number of Australian viewers who will be able to view that content?**

Given that Fox Sports is a subscription-based rather than a free-to-air service, we are unable to estimate the number of Australian viewers who will be able to view that content.

However, Roy Morgan data indicates that nearly 4 million households had access to Foxtel and 879,000 Australians ages 14+ used Kayo in the previous four weeks in March 2020.