

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:

Financial year	Number of hours broadcast
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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Financial year	Number of sports supported
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:

Milestone	Amount (GST exclusive)	GST	Total paid (GST inclusive)	Date paid
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.