

I am writing again concerning the two questions that I undertook to respond to during the hearing on 7 April. I hope that this email will serve as an appropriate response.

The first question concerned the size of the Indigenous art market in Australia. I have investigated a number of sources to seek out data on this question and have not been able to find any reliable statistics. The market is comprised essentially of two tiers. First, there is the primary market, with remote art centres playing an important role in promoting the work of the artists in their communities, and an unknown volume of sales by artists outside the art centre system who sell direct to buyers. The other component of the market is the secondary market which includes gallery sales and auctions of works already in circulation. The primary market could be worth around \$40 million annually, and probably more (before Covid), and the secondary market somewhat less than this amount. But it depends on the point in the value chain at which sales are measured, and these data do not account for a range of factors that affect the market size. Moreover, they give little guidance as to the amount of money eventually received by artists. The fact is that estimates such as these are no more than guesses, and indeed the few statistics that have been quoted on the overall market size for Indigenous art from time to time have varied so widely that it is pointless even to indicate the range of such data.

The second question concerned the cost of fake Indigenous art. Again the answer is that data on this matter do not exist. I note that an earlier House of Representatives Standing Committee on Indigenous Affairs report (*Report on the impact of inauthentic art and craft in the style of First Nations peoples*, December 2018) lamented the fact that there were no reliable estimates of the value of fake art sales in Australia at that time, and the situation has not changed since then. It can be hoped that the Government's decision to commission a Productivity Commission study into the nature and structure of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and crafts market (Government response dated September 2020) will enable the Commission to undertake a comprehensive assembly of primary and secondary data on the size of the market, including the effect on the market of fake art sales.

I might note in conclusion that gathering and publishing data on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art market could be something that the Australian Bureau of Statistics could undertake as a special-purpose study or as an ongoing commitment, if requested by the Government to do so. Such a project could be implemented by the former Adelaide-based ABS National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics, if it were re-established as a vital contributor to cultural statistics in Australia, as has been frequently recommended.

I hope these responses are of some use.

Regards,

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