

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

Division: Office of the Arts

Inquiry: Inquiry into the Australian Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Inquiry Date: 30/06/2020

Question Type: Spoken Question - Hansard Page 31

Senator Gallagher asked:

CHAIR: ... It says in the minister's media release:

Thousands of jobs across Australia's arts industry will be backed with a new \$250 million targeted package ...

Do you have the modelling that supports that statement, or can you give us an indication of what 'thousands of jobs' means? There's another figure I think the minister uses, saying it will support more than 600,000 Australians. Is that the figure that the modelling is based on?

Dr Arnott: There are two slightly separate things. When we talk about the cultural and creative sector, it's a very broad sector that includes all kinds of businesses across arts, entertainment, fashion, design and architecture. That sector employs 645,000 people, so that's what the '600,000' is referring to. In terms of estimates of employment for this fund, yes, we have done some estimates of what we think, based on the proportion of funding that would be spent. I don't have the details with me here, but Caroline might be able to help you with at least the screen component.

Ms Fulton: I can probably expand on the job numbers that we expect with the temporary interruption fund. We estimate, following discussions and modelling with Screen Australia, that that \$50 million fund would be able to support 50 Australian productions commencing over the course of the 12 months. From feedback from state and territory film agencies, we have what average employment across film and television production is. For a film, average employment is about 140 people. TV averages about 280 people. With the estimate of about 50 productions, we think that in the area of 11,000 jobs, or employment opportunities, could be created through the temporary interruption fund, just from productions starting again.

Senator HANSON-YOUNG: Sorry, what was that final figure?

Ms Fulton: About 11,000. We won't know until the course of the 12 months. But, from looking at average figures for a film or television production, it is about 11,000.

CHAIR: What about the other elements of the package—not the loans but the other parts of the \$160 million? We've got the seed investment and the RISE fund and the sector-significant organisations, in particular. They would be the two others outside of the loans, so that's \$110 million there. What do you reckon?

Dr Arnott: Obviously, as I said before, we expect the \$75 million to create significant employment opportunities—certainly in the tens of thousands. While we've done some preliminary modelling, I don't have all the detail, but I'd be happy to provide that to the committee afterwards.

CHAIR: That would be useful if you can't provide it to us now.

Answer:

Office for the Arts' early estimates are that the Creative Economy Support Package could support around 26,000 employment opportunities in the arts and screen production sectors.

Around 11,000 of these estimated opportunities would be in the screen production sector. The estimate is based on industry advice regarding the productions that would be able to commence once the Temporary Interruption Fund is in place, over a 12 month period.

Around 15,000 of the estimated employment opportunities would be in the arts sector, with around half of those attributable to the Restart Investment to Sustain and Expand (RISE) Fund and the support for the sustainability of sector-significant organisations. The actual employment opportunities of these investments may be higher, depending on the types of events and activities that are able to be supported. For example, a large festival supported from the RISE Fund could provide employment opportunities for up to 2,000 staff, performers, crew and contractors.

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ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications

Division: Content

Inquiry: Inquiry into the Australian Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Inquiry Date: 30 June 2020

Topic: modelling, analysis or briefing documents in relation to SVODs having regulations for Australian content

Question Type: Hansard Ref: 30 June 2020, page 38

Senator Hanson-Young asked:

Senator HANSON-YOUNG: Have you provided any modelling, analysis or briefing documents in relation to SVODs having regulations for Australian content?

Dr Arnott: In the Office for the Arts, we deal with the incentives for production and Screen Australia funding. Another part of the department deals with the quota arrangements and regulation on the screen sector. So, while I know a little bit about it, that advice doesn't come directly from the Office for the Arts.

Senator HANSON-YOUNG: It's more about communications?

Dr Arnott: Yes.

CHAIR: Would you be able to take that on notice for the committee? That would be helpful.

Dr Arnott: Yes.

Answer:

The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (the Department) routinely provides advice to Government on a range of issues associated with the provision of Australian content, including legislative and regulatory arrangements.

The options paper prepared by Screen Australia and the Australian Communications and Media Authority – *Supporting Australian stories on our screens* – canvassed a number of issues associated with the provision of Australian content by Subscription Video On Demand (SVOD) services.

The submissions period for this consultation closed on 3 July and the Department has provided the Minister for Communications, Cyber Safety and the Arts (the Minister) with advice on the views of those that submitted to the review.

The Department also expects to provide the Minister with advice on regulatory arrangements to support the availability of Australian content to Australian audiences.