Senate Committee: Education and Employment

QUESTION ON NOTICE
Additional Estimates 2014 - 2015

Outcome: Agency: AIATSIS

Department of Education and Training Question No. SQ15-000243

Senator Carr, Kim provided in writing

AIATSIS - Years to complete the digitisation of the Institute's existing non-digital materials

Question

If funding were to continue at the level provided in 2014 15, how many years would it take to complete the digitisation of the Institute's existing non-digital materials?

Answer

AIATSIS has provided the following response.

The table provides the size of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander Studies (AIATSIS) current collection across different media, the amount and percentage of each that has been digitised as at April 2015, the rate at which digitisation can occur as per 2014-15 resources, and our best estimates of the time to complete digitisation of the existing collection, based on available information and current resources.

Please note:
- the units of measurement for each medium are different
- AIATSIS' collections across all media are growing, and this growth includes significant and fragile materials
- further process (such as archiving, describing, cataloguing) may still be required before digital copies of material can be accessed by researchers and/or communities
- digitised material is not and will not necessarily be made available online
- digitised material requires regular migration to updated formats to ensure its preservation and accessibility in the long term
- projections to complete digitisation of the manuscript collection have not been made, as it is not of the same level of priority as other media.

On 29 April 2015, the Minister for Education, the Hon Christopher Pyne MP, announced that $5 million in funding is being provided to AIATSIS in 2015-16 to strengthen the capacity of the AIATSIS to manage and preserve its collection. This replaces the $3.3 million that was provided for the digitisation program in 2014-15.

Medium	Current collection size	Items digitised as at April 2015	Percentage of items digitised April 2015	Rate of digitisation at 2014-15 resourcing (per annum)	Time to digitise balance of current collection
Audio – sound recordings	38,469 hours	23,258 hours	60.5%	1703 hours (4.4%)	9 - 9.5 years
Photographic images	666,500 items (approx.)	202,946 items	30.5%	30,500 items (4.6%)	15 – 15.5 years
Film	6.25 million feet (837 titles, or 9,858 reels)	248 titles or 2936 reels	30%	180 reels (1.8%)	38 years
Film sound*	99 titles consisting of 2369 audio items	44 titles consisting of 1004 audio items	42%	Film sound is at very high risk and is being made a priority. It will be completed in 2015-16.	
Video	4000 titles (approx.)	1000 titles	25%	200 titles (5%)	15 years
Unpublished manuscripts	Priority manuscripts - 46 of various sizes (approx. 188,808 pages) Total manuscripts - 13,000 (0ver 8 million pages)	35 priority manuscripts (64,799 pages)	34% (of pages of priority manuscripts)	Variable	8 years (approx)

*audiotape reels which are related to film