

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
NATIONAL FILM AND SOUND ARCHIVE OF AUSTRALIA

**Group: 1**

**Program: Other Agency**

**Question: BE14/021**

**Senator Wright asked the following question at the hearing on 26-29 May 2014:**

Senator WRIGHT: I have some questions that relate to the non-theatrical lending collection. First of all, I am interested in looking at the status of the collection and its future. How many borrowers use the collection?

Mr Loebenstein: It is difficult for me to establish right here how many borrowers use the collection, but I am happy to take that on notice. What I can confirm is that for the non-theatrical lending collection, which is a film collection that is kept at the National Film and Sound Archive, and licensed for the purpose of non-theatrical screening—so it is for community groups, film societies et cetera—there are about 1,600 transactions a year. This is a rough figure based on averages over the last couple of years. But I am happy to take it on notice and confirm the exact figures in writing of making our films available at a very low cost to registered film societies.

Senator WRIGHT: Thank you. If you could take on notice, then the break-up of the figures—the disaggregation into groups like educational institutions, cinema techs, film societies and other individuals, if it is possible for individuals to borrow from the collection. What is the cost of making the collection available to the public?

Mr Loebenstein: I would have to take that on notice.

Senator WRIGHT: If you come up with a figure, could you then explain how that figure has been arrived at.

Mr Loebenstein: Yes.

Senator WRIGHT: I would be interested to know how much of that cost is recovered from users of the collection. You indicated that there is some kind of fee, so if you could give me some information about that. Do you have that now?

Mr Loebenstein: I can take it on notice and provide the exact revenue figures. I do not have them here with me. In terms of a general statement, the program falls way beyond thresholds of cost recovery. So it is de facto funding or our regional screenings. We do charge fees, very modest fees, that enable film societies, community groups et cetera to screen those films, and particularly cover the licence cost of it so that they do not have to go off and licence those films individually from distributors and producers. However, this does not even come near cost recovery.

**The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:**

**In 2012-13**, 1,962 titles were borrowed from the Screen Lending Collection (non-theatrical), with reported audiences of around 55,000 people. These titles were loaned to 180 clients in all states and territories for non-commercial and community screenings.

**Client group breakdowns**

Film societies account for 51%;  
Community groups (non-FS) 9%;  
Cinematheques 7%;  
University of Third Age 3%.  
Public Libraries make up 14%;  
City Council Arts 4%;  
Federal and State Cultural institution 7%  
Universities/TAFEs 5%

**Rates for borrowers**

Rates range from \$16.60 for a DVD to \$27.50 and \$38.50 for 16mm films. A short film package of 6 titles on 16mm is \$77. All rates include outward freight.

**2012-13 Cost to provide Screening loans (non-theatrical) service (\$)**Costs

Staff costs	185,000
Licences	29,000
Supplier expenses	12,000
Infrastructure and other internal services	56,700
<b>Total costs</b>	<b>282,700</b>

Income

Revenue from client fees	30,800
<b>Total income</b>	<b>30,800</b>

**Net cost of service (2012-13) 251,900**