

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
BUDGET ESTIMATES 2011-2012

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: National Film and Sound Archive
Outcome/Program: 1.1 – Develop, preserve and present Australia’s national collection
Topic: Compulsory Collection Policy

Senator: Humphries
Question reference number: 74
Type of question: Hansard, p 79, 24 May
Date set by the committee for the return of answer: 8 July 2011

Number of pages: 2

Question:

Senator HUMPHRIES: How much are you missing out on by not having a compulsory collection policy?

Ms Landrigan: I think in terms of feature films we are doing very well.

Senator HUMPHRIES: I am sorry?

Ms Landrigan: In terms of feature films we are not missing out on too many. I think it is the independent area that involves us having individual relationships with stakeholders to ensure that material comes into the collection.

Mr Boden: This financial year we set ourselves a target of collecting 100 feature films, which was based on the estimate of funded production from both federal and state. As at the end of April, we have currently acquired 147 feature films.

Senator HUMPHRIES: That is great, but it does not answer the question as to how many you are not collecting because of a lack of a national compulsory collection policy.

Ms Landrigan: We do not have that answer with us, but we can provide it if you would like.

Senator HUMPHRIES: Thank you very much.

Answer:

Of the 20-30 additional feature films made each year in Australia without government funding assistance, the National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA) negotiates on an individual basis to ensure the deposit of film prints of approximately five such titles per year, and purchases prints of as many of the remaining approximately 25 titles as possible given funding constraints. This averages an intake of 75-80% of annual non-government funded production.

The major archival collection limitation which is due directly to the absence of a national compulsory collection policy, is the placement, preservation and long term accessibility of not only pristine film prints but also the original production components which ensure the future reproduction of these works. Active negotiation for this material forms some of the

most time consuming work for the NFSA's curators as they work on a case-by-case basis to alert producers to the fragility of master components; the opportunity for both preservation and long-term accessibility represented by the NFSA's partnership and services and the inevitable dangers of loss when these components remain with often transient production entities.