

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Supplementary Budget Estimates 18-21 October 2010

Question: PM60

Asked By: Senator Humphries

Topic: Films produced in Australia

Type of Question: FPA 12, 19 October

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Senator HUMPHRIES-How many films produced in Australia would be subject to such a scheme, if it operated? How many people producing films are now giving the archive films voluntarily?

Mr Vogt-I would be happy to take that on notice. We do our best in establishing individual agreements with particular donors and large producers to make sure that we cover to the greatest extent possible the opportunities to acquire what we can. But that would fall significantly short of all of the producers.

Answer: For the National Film and Sound Archive (NFSA)

The volume requirements for legal deposit are able to be estimated for feature films and documentaries, but are less clear for short films. As a gauge, legal deposit would apply to all feature films (50-60 productions per year), and all documentaries (average of 196 per year). Short film production is more extensive and fragmented, and additional work is required to calculate numbers of short films relevant to legal deposit.

Feature films

Films receiving government funding are required to provide a copy to the NFSA. In 2009, 31 out of 32 films receiving government support were provided to NFSA.

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The NFSA estimates that an additional 20-30 feature films are made without government funding assistance in Australia each year. Of these films, less than 5 titles per year are voluntarily given to the NFSA.

Documentaries

Screen Australia reports that on average 196 documentary titles are produced each year for cinema, television or DVD release, 46 per cent with government funding, equating to 90 productions submitted as per the deliverables agreement to either the NFSA, or to the Screen Australia National Documentary Program which is proposed to be transferred, as part of the Screen Australia Library, to the NFSA on 1 July 2011.

Shorts

Short film making is the largest area of production, numbering beyond 2,000 titles per year (Flickerfest received over 1,500 entries for this year's competition). The NFSA receives on average 150 works from film makers per year, both new and retrospective, as donations or deposits. All acquisitions of this type must be actively negotiated.