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ABC
Australian Broadcasting Corporation
Television

Screen Australia

Stage 2 Review of Operations :

**Marketing Support & Promotion,
and Research & Statistics**

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ABC Television welcomes the opportunity to make this submission to Screen Australia's Stage 2 review of operations, which is considering the organisation's Marketing Support & Promotion and Research & Statistics areas. The ABC's comments relate to specific program elements as well as the overall direction for each area.

The environment in which Australian content creators work is changing rapidly, due principally to the impact of digital technology and related changes in production and distribution technologies. Additionally, the manner in which the "audience" engages with content is changing. Finally, the mechanisms for financing content are also being impacted by these changes. In this environment it is important that public policy settings and programs address the range of issues confronting the industry.

Marketing Support & Promotion

We note the important role played over a long period by federal agency marketing and promotional support for the independent sector, operating at the micro (individual project support) and macro (industry and cultural support) levels. From individual travel grants to a presence at international markets and festivals this support has been a critical element in the development of the Australian audiovisual sector. It is also relevant to note the secondary benefits this has achieved in enhancing Australia's reputation for innovation and creativity at an international level.

The ABC also wishes to express support for the Regional Digital Screen Network and the Industry and Cultural Development (ICD) funding programs.

The ABC strongly values its partnership with Screen Australia (and prior to 1 July 2008, the AFC) and other agencies such as the Australian Ballet and the Australia Council, to bring projects such as live performance of Graeme Murphy's interpretation of *Swan Lake* to a national audience as it was performed at the Sydney Opera House. These partnerships between agencies provide an efficient and effective mechanism for ensuring the Australian community has access to creative content. Further, they provide important opportunities to demonstrate and develop the potential for digital technology to contribute to cultural development, especially in rural and regional Australia.

In relation to the ICD program, the ABC believes support for the range of organisations working in this field around Australia is important in developing new and emerging creative personnel for Australia's screen sectors. In many cases these organisations play an important role in

enhancing the creative and craft skills development undertaken by training agencies. They provide an opportunity for practitioners to further develop their skills in practical, industry-oriented environments. A key element of this development is the audience focus achieved in partnerships with agencies such as the ABC. The ABC has worked with organisations such as the Film and Television Institute in Western Australia to provide opportunities for program makers to develop and produce content that can be delivered to a wide audience. The ABC sees great benefit in the maintenance of these programs.

Research and Statistics

The work of the Research and Statistics unit in compiling and publishing a range of data about Australia's screen industries is recognised nationally and internationally for its comprehensiveness and accuracy. This deserved reputation extends to the high regard for the integrity and independence of its data. It is important to note that there are no other private or public agencies collecting or analysing this data holistically and cross-referencing with other organisations such as ACMA, state funding agencies and the public broadcasters.

The availability of this information has been and will remain critical to the development of the Australian screen industries. The need for research, collation and analysis of key industry data is critical is especially critical at a time of significant industry change and development.

It is important that the program continues to undertake research and data collection and analysis about the range of activity relating to the Australian screen industry; including film, television, drama, documentary, animation, short film, exhibition and audience activity, post-production and digital effects. It will also be important to continue to develop research and data relating to the emerging digital online production sector and "audience" engagement in the online environment.

ABC Television undertakes a significant amount of work to provide key information on television production and broadcast data to contribute to the Research and Statistics areas work such as the National Survey of Feature Film and TV Drama Production and Documentary Production in Australia: A Collection of Key Data. The ABC is keen to continue to contribute this information, given the agency's capacity to manage confidential information and produce accurate and comprehensive information for the industry

Conclusion

The Screen Australia Statement of Intent has identified the importance of "provid[ing] an integrated range of programs for Australia's screen industry" and the ABC believes that the programs undertaken as part of Marketing Support and Promotion and Research and Statistics play an important industry role beside project development and investment programs and enterprise and professional development activity.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kim Dalton', enclosed within a hand-drawn oval border.

KIM DALTON
Director of Television