

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications

Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice

Budget Estimates May 2017

Communications Portfolio

Department of Communications and the Arts

Question No: 197

Program 2.1

Hansard Ref: Page 54-55, 25/05/2017

Topic: Statistical Paper – Role of the arts in the economy

Senator Kakoschke-Moore, Skye asked:

Senator KAKOSCHKE-MOORE: Last estimates Ms Holloway advised that the department was working on a background statistical paper regarding the role of the arts in the economy. Is that paper available yet?

Mr Eccles: That is the paper that is being produced by the Bureau of Communications and Arts Research. I will need to check on that. It is close.

Senator KAKOSCHKE-MOORE: It is close. So once it is finalised and in the department's hands what do you plan to do with the information?

Mr Eccles: I would imagine that it would be released, as is the usual process for the bureau research pieces, but I will check. I am not sure if there is anyone here.

Dr Smith: Perhaps I can comment. We see the paper as the base from which to build a greater statistical understanding of the economic contribution of the arts and cultural sector. It is based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics data but it is quite old data. It is really to establish, as I said, a base from which we can start to analyse, over time, the contribution of the sector.

Senator KAKOSCHKE-MOORE: When you say it is using quite old data, how old is the data?

Dr Smith: It is in parallel with ABS Census data. I think the data is 2014-15. We can certainly take that on notice for you.

Senator KAKOSCHKE-MOORE: I understand that you will using it as a base on which to build further statistics about the relationship between the arts and its contribution to the economy.

Dr Smith: Yes.

Senator KAKOSCHKE-MOORE: Would you also be using it as a base to advance arts policy more broadly?

Dr Smith: Absolutely. It is based on, from memory, five-year Census plus a very esoteric thing called an input/output table which breaks up value added across individual sectors. They come in blocks of four or five years as well. That is why the first one will be a few years old in terms of the data but we will be updating it also, I think, over the next year as well.

Senator KAKOSCHKE-MOORE: So perhaps, on notice, if you could let the committee know a release date if that happens before the deadline for responses are due, if that makes sense.

Dr Smith: Certainly.

Answer:

- The paper being produced by the Bureau of Communications and Arts Research is a background statistics paper which shows the impact of cultural and creative activity on the Australian economy.
- The paper is expected to be released in the near future.