



The Walt Disney Company Australia

BY EMAIL

31 January 2018

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

To the Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications ("Committee"):

The Walt Disney Company (Australia) Pty Ltd ("Disney") appreciates this opportunity to contribute to the Senate's inquiry into the economic and cultural value of Australian content on broadcast, radio, and streaming services. In an era of technology-driven change across the media industries, this inquiry is timely and we commend the Committee for undertaking such a broad and diligent review of content consumption and production in Australia.

We launched the Disney Channel in Australia in 1996 and we now deliver a wide variety of entertainment content to millions of Australian consumers via cable, satellite, and streaming video media. Since that time, one of our key priorities has been to produce quality locally relevant content that features Australian talent and voices telling Australian stories. Disney currently has a greater volume of local content on its Australian television channels than ever before. Therefore, we strongly support the Committee's review of the economic and cultural value of Australian content across all media, and we share the goal of promoting an environment that fosters the production of quality content that is locally relevant for Australian consumers.

Disney's support for a marketplace and regulatory environment that fosters locally relevant content was a key part of our 2017 submission in response to the Australian and Children's Screen Content Review by the Department of Communication and the Arts.¹ This submission ("2017 Submission") remains highly relevant to the Senate's current inquiry. We have included the complete 2017 Submission as an attachment to this letter.

In addition, we would like to briefly address some of the specific issues the Committee highlighted in its request.

a. The current state and operation of the market for Australian television

There is no doubt that the media marketplace is more competitive and diverse than ever before. As discussed at **pages 2-3** of our 2017 Submission, people consume content across multiple screens using multiple platforms and this viewing behavior should guide the Committee's approach to regulation.

b. The contribution of the Australian television industry to the economy

Policies that support local creative infrastructure have the capacity to enhance the impact of the Australian television industry on the economy. As set out at **pages 3-4** of our 2017 Submission, our experience here and overseas, including in the UK, is that policies that incentivize the production of local content lead to a "virtuous cycle" that ultimately grows local creative

¹ Submitted by email on 21 September 2017 to Senator the Hon Mitch Fifield, Minister for Communications.

industries – including creating more jobs for local talent – while simultaneously increasing the quality of locally produced content.

c. The value and importance of Australian children television's content and the role of local content requirements

We agree that it is immensely important for Australian children to view quality local television content that features Australian voices and stories. However, as discussed at **pages 4-6** of our 2017 Submission, content quotas are an inefficient mechanism to achieve this end and can limit creative and innovative programming. The most effective way to bring locally relevant stories to Australian children is to support local industry so as to promote the production of quality content that captures the attention and imagination of Australian audiences.

We applaud the Committee's efforts to survey the economic and cultural value of Australian content on broadcast, radio, and streaming services.

Disney looks forward to working with the Committee on this project and continuing to invest in producing quality content for Australian consumers.

Thank you for your consideration of these submissions and please do not hesitate to let us know if you have any questions.

Gavin Ashcroft
Head of Content and Consumer Engagement
The Walt Disney Company (Australia) Pty Ltd