

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: 47

Program 1.1

Hansard Ref: Written 7/6/2017

Topic: Sports Programming & Gambling Advertising

Senator Urquhart, Anne asked:

1. In relation to the Government's 6 May 2017 announcement to provide \$30m to subscription television over four years for the provision of women's and niche sports:
 - (a) On what date was the decision to provide \$30m to subscription television made?
 - (b) On what date was the Department informed of the decision to provide \$30m to subscription television?
 - (c) Was the Department consulted on the proposal prior to the decision being made?
2. What legacy improvements to women's and niche sports will be realised as a result of providing \$30m to subscription television over four years?
3. What will the impact of the Government's decision to restrict gambling advertisements during live sports broadcasts be on free to air television broadcasters:
 - (a) In terms of overall advertising expenditure on free to air television, expressed in dollar terms or as a percentage?
 - (b) In terms of gambling advertising expenditure on free to air television, expressed in dollar terms or as a percentage?
 - (c) In terms of overall minutes of advertising on free to air television?
 - (d) In terms of minutes of gambling advertising on free to air television?
4. Based on contemporaneous programming on broadcast television and radio, what evidence does the Department have about the number and categories of live sporting events that are broadcast:
 - (a) in full prior to 8:30pm
 - (b) in part prior to 8:30pm and in part after 8:30pm
 - (c) in full after 8:30pm.
5. What process steps will be undertaken to determine the approach for restricting gambling advertising on online platforms and what timeframes apply to these steps?

Answer:

1. The decision was taken as part of the 2017-18 Budget, announced on 6 May 2017 and included as a measure in the 2017-18 Portfolio Budget Statements for the Communications and the Arts Portfolio. The Department provided advice to support the Government's decision as part of this process.
2. Guidelines to implement this measure will be developed in consultation with sports bodies, relevant Government agencies and departments and Fox Sports. This will consider the candidate sports that enjoy high levels of community participation but are under-represented in mainstream media coverage. The funding is expected to result in those sports having the opportunity to find and build their audiences through exposure on a well-established media platform.

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3. The Government did work on the impact on broadcasters of gambling advertising restrictions. The factors taken into account in this work included:

- the proportion of revenue derived from gambling promotions before and after the 8:30 pm cut-off
- the number and types of gambling promotions broadcast at various stages of live sporting events including pre and post-match, and during breaks in play, and
- the estimated 'replacement' revenue rate of gambling promotions with alternative promotions featuring non-gambling products or services.

Data used is both Cabinet in Confidence and Commercial in Confidence, however the analysis shows that these restrictions will result in a significant reduction in the amount of gambling advertising broadcast during live sporting events and the amount of money spent by gambling firms on broadcast advertising.

The Department did not undertake analysis of the impact of the restrictions on the overall number of minutes of gambling or general advertising.

4. The Department's analysis indicates that the majority of live sporting events broadcast on free-to-air television commence prior to 8:30 pm. The Department does not have specific data categorising live sporting events as they occur prior to, across, or after 8.30 pm.

5. Implementation options for applying the restrictions to online platforms are still under consideration. The Government intends for the new restrictions to commence across all platforms by March 2018.