

Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Answers to Senate Estimates Questions on Notice
Supplementary Budget Estimates Hearings October 2016
Communications Portfolio
Department of Communications and the Arts

Question No: 45

Program 2.1

Hansard Ref: Written, 28/10/2016

Topic: Funding Cuts

Senator Bilyk, Catryna asked:

1. Since the Coalition came to power in 2013, what is the total amount that has been cut from the arts sector (including the screen area and the national cultural institutions)?
2. Are there any plans for further cuts to the sector in the upcoming MYEFO or next year's Budget?
3. How many organisations and companies in the arts sector have had to close since funding cuts were made in the 2014/15 budget?
4. How many jobs have been lost due to the funding cuts from the 2014/15 budget onwards?
5. How many programs and funding initiatives and other work have had to be discontinued or closed since the funding cuts from the 2014/15 budget were made at each of the Australia Council, Screen Australia and the national cultural institutions?
6. What has been the effect of the funding cuts from the 2014/15 budget in each state/territory of Australia?
7. For the current year, what is the effect of the announced funding cuts on each funded organisation in the arts sector and what are the planned cuts year by year over the forward estimates?
8. In relation to the National Library, what has been the cultural impact of the cuts in funding to the Trove program?
9. What information was used to determine that the Trove program was not needed and able to be cut?
10. What preservation work has been halted due to the cuts to the National library?
11. How many programs and jobs at the National library will be cut over the next twelve months and over the forward estimates in this area?
12. Has any modelling / estimates been done on the effect of the funding cuts from the 2014/15 budget onwards on the overall size of the arts sector and its impact on Australian culture overall and have the benefits of the arts sector been considered?
13. We know that the Australia Council and Screen Australia were not advised of the funding cuts in the lead-up to the 2014 and 2015 Budgets or MYEFOs. What communications does the First Assistant Secretary or other departmental executives have with agencies in the lead up to Budget announcements?
What are the details of the timing, form and content of communications between agencies and the Minister's office and/or the Department relating to the funding cuts prior to those cuts being announced?

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Answer:

1. Approximately \$147 million of savings have been realised in the arts portfolio from 2013-14 to 2016-17. This includes efficiency dividends which apply across the Commonwealth.
2. Consistent with long standing practice, governments do not speculate on upcoming budget processes.
3. To answer this question would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.
4. Estimates of staff resources for the national collecting institutions are available in Budget Paper No. 4 each year.
5. **Australia Council**

A number of programs, including ArtStart, Artist in Residence and the Creative Communities Partnership Initiative have been discontinued.

Screen Australia

Three programs have ceased since the 2014/15 Budget: Games funding, organisational funding to Screen Resource Organisations, and funding to Arts Law.

National Collecting Institutions

Australian National Maritime Museum

As at 30 September 2016, no programs, funding initiatives or other work have been discontinued or closed.

National Film and Sound Archive of Australia

Discontinued services include:

- Big Screen (discontinued November 2014)
- NFSA Library (discontinued 30 June 2014)
- NFSA Shop (discontinued 30 June 2014)
- Acton exhibition gallery (discontinued July 2014)
- Scholars and Artist in Residence (discontinued 31 December 2014)

National Gallery of Australia

Since the reductions in appropriation were announced for the National Gallery of Australia (NGA) in 2015-16 MYEFO budget round, the NGA has ceased the following functions:

- NGA Contemporary Gallery;
- two of food and beverage outlets;

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National Library of Australia

The following programs/services have been discontinued or closed:

- closing reading rooms on all public holidays;
- ceasing stack retrieval on Saturdays and requiring all requested material to be pre-ordered (as for Sundays);
- ceasing our e-publishing program and curtailing the Library's trade publishing;
- ceasing Library funded digitisation of collections;

Old Parliament House

Three programs have been discontinued:

- Research Library
- Australian Prime Ministers Centre (which has online presence only now)
- fellowships and summer scholarships offered for research into Australian Prime Ministers.

6. To respond to this question would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.
7. To provide a comprehensive response to this question would require an unreasonable diversion of resources.

Program funding to Screen Australia will decrease between 5 and 6 per cent in 2016/17, that is, by approximately \$4 million. In 2017/18 there will be a further \$2.5 million reduction in funds with the cessation of the Online and Multi-platform fund.

Funding to the national collecting institutions is detailed in individual portfolio statements. The effect of funding reductions are described in the responses to questions 4 and 5 above.

8. The Library continues to support the Trove service. Use of the service has not diminished, and available evidence suggests that the service continues to be useful to a broad cross-section of the Australian community. The Library has not evaluated current or potential cultural impacts resulting from changes to the Trove program as resources to conduct such an analysis are not available.
9. The Library continues to support Trove, a national discovery service visited by more than 55,000 Australians each day. The Library is committed to maintaining Trove's infrastructure, and to working with partners to build Trove content.

From 1 July 2016, the Library ceased funding digitisation of newspapers and other content. The Library has funded more than 60 per cent of Trove's full text content from within its budget appropriation, with the remainder funded by state and territory libraries, and small community organisations.

The Library continues to work with these organisations to build full text content; in 2016-17, the Library anticipates adding 1.5 million pages of contributor-funded content to the service. The Library ceased Library-funded digitisation on the basis that contributor funding will ensure that content continues to grow.

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From 1 July 2016, the Library ceased aggregation of metadata from university research repositories, museums, galleries, archives, historical societies etc. The Library has previously funded this work from within its budget appropriation, but will now seek supporting revenue from third party organisations which wish to expose their collections through Trove. The Library ceased this activity on the basis that it is reasonable to seek membership or other fees from third party organisations benefiting from inclusion of their collections in Trove.

10. No preservation work has been halted.

11. See answers to Questions 4, 5 above.

The cumulative reductions in funding due to the increases to the efficiency dividend announced in the 2016-17 budget are:

	2017-18 \$m	2018-19 \$m	2019-20 \$m
Operating Funding	0.731	1.215	1.458
Capital Funding (Collection Development and Acquisition Budget)	0.148	0.246	0.296

12. No modelling has been done on the overall size of the arts sector. Budget decisions are considered in the broader context of the Government's commitment to budget repair.

13. The Department must adhere to the APS Code of Conduct and cannot discuss Budget details ahead of their public release by the Government.