

Submission to Options paper on Supporting Australian stories on our screens
Sent via email to contentoptionspaper@communications.gov.au

16th April 2020

Dear sir/madam,

I write as an Australian taxpayer, voter and resident and a movie buff. I'm a consumer and I'm one who supports Australian movies and loves Australian stories. My comments below are mostly about movies as that is what I mostly see, and I own a large DVD library that has a massive number of Australian movies in it and these are all original DVD's.

I make a big effort to see and support Australian movies and I will see anything if it is made in Australia, low budget, large budget but it is not easy as if you don't look you will not even know these films are coming until they are gone. That could happen after just one week of screenings. Also it is very hard to support Australian film as most Australian movies are shown at very select theatres mostly independent theatres and only in the large cities and maybe at only two or even just one theatre. We live in country Victoria so it is even harder to see and support Australian films. I can really only see these films when I travel to Melbourne for work.

I support Australian movies by buying tickets to see movies at theatres then telling my friends via Facebook or word of mouth etc to go and see these movies and I then purchase DVD's of the movies.

I think the stories are great but there is a large problem with the promotion and support from the main theatre groups that is poor by any standard.

As a taxpayer, I totally support my taxes being used to support Australian made and to promote Australian stories.

Maybe we need mandated screenings of Australian made movies or discounted screenings or some sort of mandated advertising of these films via trailers before movies or even at the very least that theatres should have posters up of these movies before they come out? Maybe a dedicated Australian made film night at theatres? If we leave it to the market and the operators, then nothing will change. We need change as these films deserve more but I think the main problem is that people just don't know about the films, maybe Facebook etc can be used to promote all Australian movies about a fortnight before release date and to tell people what theatres are going to be screen them as that alone can be hard to find out. There is no central place for information, it is all over the shop and is not always updated or correct.

Nothing is easy when it comes to seeing Australian movies and that is the biggest challenge.

Also, it is not just about box office takings etc, as some of the best Australian movie I have ever seen have been low budget and under the measure of takings would have failed. Take

Mystery Road for an example when I saw that movie at an independent cinema in Belgrave in Melbourne I was the only person in the cinema, I loved that movie and look at it now, a second film came out and now a tv series that is in it's second season. This should be a case study that Screen Australia and the Australian Communications and media authority should look at as part of this inquiry. I think the first Mystery Road was made for \$100,000? What an amazing achievement.

Good luck with the options paper and I look forward to seeing more Australian movies as I love them.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Koci