

National Cultural Policy Submission

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Public

Individual

Scott Seddon



Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

Submission to National Cultural Policy Consultation

My Name is Scott Seddon

I operate Scottys Cinemas in Raymond Terrace in the shire of Port Stephens in NSW. I also operate Heddon Greta Drive-in near Kurri Kurri in the NSW Hunter Valley which is scheduled to close later this year to make way for a housing development.

I am the Vice President of Independent Cinemas Australia and totally support the submission made by this association but which to add the following.:

Scottys Cinemas is a five screen cinema complex with a total of 550 seats. Our patronage is demographically skewed toward the mature and retired people in the community for which we are a cultural meeting place. Our small café attached provides a meeting place and social outing for our patrons, especially our seniors. We were among the first cinemas to accept "Companion Card" and received an award from that organisation.

Our specialist programming includes the New York Metropolitan Opera which has a ferociously loyal following especially among our retired professional people. We also screen Nation Theatre Live. This brings very high quality stage drama to a geographic area which does not normally have access to this level of culture.

We were among the first independent cinemas to convert from 35mm film to digital projection from 2011 so like many independent cinemas we are about to reach the cliff where our original Series 2 projectors will need to be replaced. In our case we are looking at around \$300.00 to upgrade our projectors to the latest laser technology and a further \$120,000 to upgrade our air conditioning equipment. This will have the effect of a more than 60% reduction in our annual power bill which is around \$50,000 (after offset from our solar panels) and in turn and not to be understated, the same level of reduction of our carbon footprint.

As far as what we put on our screens, our patrons have shown they will gladly support good stories told by Australians about Australians. I acknowledge that offering tax incentive to "flag of convenience" productions absolutely provides employment for Australians but "Elvis" is not a story about Australians.

I urge Screen Australia to acknowledge that cinema attendance is the most popular cultural activity for Australians and restore focus on screening the content we produce, making it quality and commercial viable material, and ensuring that at least one member of the Screen Australia board represents the biggest screens in our nation.

Scott Seddon

Scottys Cinemas Raymond Terrace