

MEDIA RELEASE

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New TV tax offsets to boost economy by more than \$103 million annually and give Australia competitive edge internationally

More than \$103 million in economic activity would be created if the tax offset for Australian television production was equalised with the film industry offset. Australia's international competitiveness in the globalised screen production and finance industry would also be significantly enhanced, new data has revealed.

The data, contained in a report produced by PwC, also shows that 360 new television production jobs as well as the net \$103.9 million in economic activity would be created if the tax offset available to qualifying television productions was doubled from 20% to 40%, the same value enjoyed by film.

The report was commissioned jointly by the Australian Subscription Television & Radio Association (ASTRA) and Screen Producers Australia (SPA) as the major political parties frame policies for the approaching federal election.

"Employment in the domestic television production sector is challenged by the arrival of new offshore streaming services, making it important that measures be taken to encourage the creation of local jobs. We also want to ensure we retain existing jobs by enhancing our competitive edge," ASTRA CEO, Andrew Maiden, said today.

"The disparity between the tax offsets available for film and television no longer make sense in a market where content is produced for distribution on multiple screens and in a production environment of increasingly complex financing structures where our producers are competing on the international market," said SPA CEO Matthew Deaner.

The two organisations, in their first ever joint announcement, called on the Coalition and Labor to pledge to raise the tax offset to create the new jobs and economic activity in the coming election year.

"The Australian production industry plays a vital role in defining our culture, and this simple and relatively inexpensive measure would deliver great benefits to the creative community, local audiences and the national economy," the two chief executives said.

The PwC report shows that a doubling of the tax offset from 20% to 40% would cost the Commonwealth a maximum of \$15.5 million in foregone tax revenue, but would generate an additional \$119.4 million in economic activity, making the overall economy better off by more than \$103 million.

About ASTRA – The Australian Subscription Television and Radio Association (ASTRA) is the peak body representing the subscription media industry in Australia. Members include television operators, independent content companies, technology companies and the industries that support them. ASTRA members produce content seen by nearly nine million Australians. In 2014/15 members invested \$796 in local production, generating 253,000 hours of Australian content and creating jobs for 8370 Australians.

About SCREEN PRODUCERS AUSTRALIA - Screen Producers Australia unites screen businesses to campaign for a healthy commercial environment and supports the interests of businesses large and small in their production of feature films, television programs, interactive content and games across all genres and formats. Members employ writers, directors, cast and crew; they navigate a range of industrial agreements, commercial arrangements and negotiate rights deals with theatrical distributors, television broadcasters and increasingly, online aggregators.