

Documentary production in Australia: A collection of key data

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Australian Government



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Also available online via the AFC website at:

www.afc.gov.au/gtp/docos

See also *Get the Picture Online* at:

www.afc.gov.au/gtp

This report is based on key data from *Get the Picture Online*, the Australian Film Commission's comprehensive web-based statistics collection.

ABOUT THE DATA

What is a 'documentary'?

The AFC's definition of 'documentary' follows that used by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA), specifically 'a program that is a creative treatment of actuality other than a news, current affairs, sports coverage, magazine, infotainment or light entertainment program, and corporate and/or training programs'. The AFC data covers documentaries intended for cinema and/or TV release. Non-broadcast documentaries are not included, nor are online documentaries.

In practice, it can sometimes be difficult to distinguish documentaries from programs such as infotainment, travelogue or light entertainment programs, which adds to the difficulty of gathering data on this area of Australian production activity. The ACMA released guidelines on the interpretation of its definition of documentary in December 2004; see www.acma.gov.au

Data sources

The AFC has collated research from a number of sources, including the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the Film Finance Corporation Australia, Film Australia, GfK Marketing, OzTAM and the AFC.

The AFC monitors the production of documentaries throughout the year via an extensive range of sources, including funding agency announcements, production reports and media monitoring. Many titles are located through the AFC's monitoring of Australian documentaries screened on Australian free-to-air and pay TV. A point of contact first needs to be established; then data can be requested from the filmmakers, including details of the producer, director, writer, production company, sales contact, synopsis, duration, budget, location, sources of finance and subject headings. The AFC also monitors festival screenings, awards, cinema and Australian TV screenings, ratings and box office.

Documentary production is also included by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in its survey of the film and video production and distribution industries (cat. no. 8679.0, Television, Film and Video Production). Results from the last survey, in 2006/07, are due for release later in 2008. Variations between AFC and ABS data are due to differences in survey methodology. The AFC data is compiled using information on titles, whereas the ABS data is based on a survey of employing businesses. The AFC includes productions that commenced principal photography during the financial year; the ABS includes all productions that a surveyed business spent money on during the year.

Data limitations

Because of the difficulties involved in monitoring documentary production, particularly in-house production by the television broadcasters, the AFC includes an estimated number of additional titles in each year's figures.

Data quoted in this report is the latest available. Updates are published online when available at www.afc.gov.au/gtp.

ABBREVIATIONS

ABC	Australian Broadcasting Corporation
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACMA	Australian Communications and Media Authority
AFC	Australian Film Commission
FFC	Film Finance Corporation Australia
MPDAA	Motion Picture Distributors Association of Australia
NIP	Film Australia's National Interest Program
SBS	Special Broadcasting Service

Summary

HOURS PRODUCED AND PRODUCTION BUDGETS

Documentary production in Australia is estimated at around 296 hours (326 commercial broadcast hours), with production costs of \$62 million a year. It makes up 3 per cent of total audiovisual production in Australia.

DOCUMENTARY BUDGETS

Not including broadcaster-produced titles, 89 per cent of single documentaries made between 1996/97 and 2005/06 had budgets of less than \$500,000, with more than half made for less than \$200,000.

ACTIVITY BY STATE

Most documentaries (55 per cent of titles, 61 per cent of hours) are made by production companies based in NSW, followed by Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia.

DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKERS

There are around 400 producers, 330 directors and 300 writers currently making documentary films/programs in Australia.

DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKING ACTIVITY

Sixty-two per cent of documentary producers, 63 per cent of directors and 68 per cent of writers made only one documentary between 1990 and 2006, as did 63 per cent of production companies.

GOVERNMENT FILM AGENCY FUNDING

In the past 13 years, federal and state government agencies have provided an average \$1.5 million annually for documentary development and an average \$19.8 million annually for documentary production.

SOURCES OF FINANCE

Government sources provide the highest proportion of funding to the annual documentary slate in Australia (48.8 per cent), with broadcasters (including public broadcasters) providing 23.5 per cent and foreign finance 14.1 per cent.

TV RELEASE

A total of 300 hours of first-release Australian documentaries were broadcast on Australian free-to-air TV in 2006.

PROGRAM SPENDING BY COMMERCIAL BROADCASTERS

Australian commercial free-to-air broadcasters spent \$12.4 million on Australian documentary programming in 2005/06, representing a 35.2 per cent increase on 2004/05.

TOP-RATING DOCUMENTARIES ON TV

On Sydney TV, the Australian documentary series *RPA* was either the no. 1 or no. 2 documentary overall between 1998 and 2003, while *Border Security* topped the national ratings for documentaries in 2005 and 2006. Other top-rating Australian documentaries in recent years include *Who Killed Dr Bogle and Mrs Chandler?* and episodes of *Australian Story* and *Dynasties*.

TOP DOCUMENTARIES AT THE BOX OFFICE

The most successful non-IMAX Australian documentary of all time at the Australian box office is *Bra Boys*, which has grossed \$1,698,976 since its release in March 2007.

DOCUMENTARIES ON VIDEO

Of the top 500 documentaries sold on video in 2007, 19.2 per cent were Australian titles.

FESTIVALS AND AWARDS

In the ten years between 1997 and 2006, Australian documentaries won an average of 27 international awards each year, peaking at 48 in 2000.

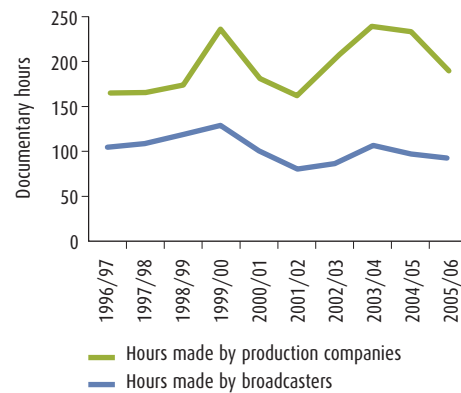
Production Activity

HOURS PRODUCED AND PRODUCTION BUDGETS

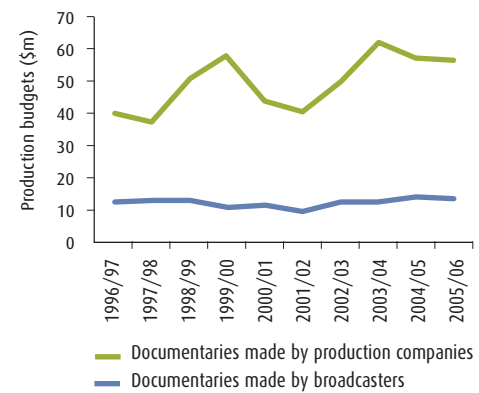
Annual documentary production in Australia is estimated at around 296 hours (326 broadcast hours), with production costs of \$62 million. Although television broadcasters play a significant role in Australian documentary production, most documentary activity occurs in the independent sector. An average of 195 hours, totalling \$50 million, have been produced annually by production companies in the ten years from 1996/97 to 2005/06, compared to 101 hours, totalling \$12 million, by broadcasters.

After a peak in 1990/00, boosted by titles made for the Centenary of Federation, independent documentary activity fell in both 2000/01 and 2001/02, but rose in the following years. The high levels in 2003/04 and 2004/05 were due to an increase in production of documentary series. Production of single documentaries (in titles and hours) has been falling since 2003/04; however, there was a strong increase in their total production value in 2005/06 due to several high-budget titles made that year. Activity by broadcasters has remained relatively steady over the surveyed period.

HOURS OF DOCUMENTARIES MADE 1996/97 TO 2005/06



PRODUCTION BUDGETS



Source: AFC.

Notes: Figures are based on year when principal photography commenced.

Duration refers to actual program running time, not commercial broadcast hours.

Figures include large-format (e.g. IMAX) documentaries but exclude magazine-format documentaries, current affairs, news, information programs, corporate and training films/programs, online documentaries and other documentaries not produced for TV broadcast.

Figures include AFC estimates.

It is likely that the figures for 2005/06 will be revised upwards as more documentaries are located by the AFC.

BUSINESSES INVOLVED IN PRODUCING DOCUMENTARIES

In 2002/03, there were:

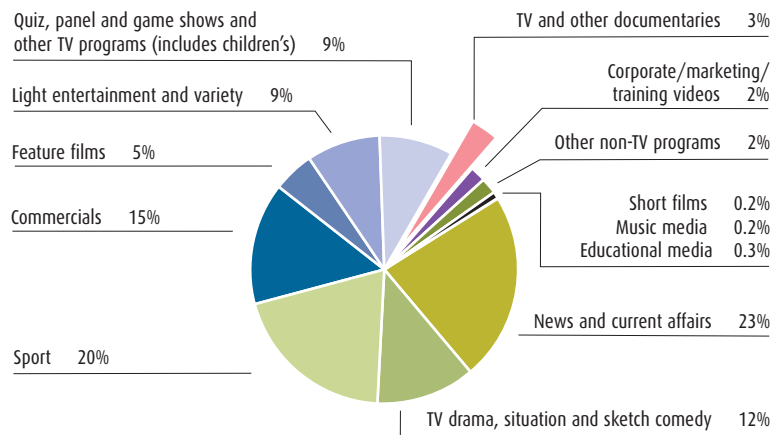
- 98 Australian businesses involved in producing documentaries for TV, down from 133 in 1999/00, and
- 21 businesses involved in producing documentaries other than for TV, down from 30 in 1999/00.

Source: ABS.



DOCUMENTARY PRODUCTION AS A PROPORTION OF THE AUSTRALIAN AUDIOVISUAL PRODUCTION INDUSTRY

Documentary production made up 3 per cent of total audiovisual production in Australia in 2002/03.



Type of audiovisual activity	Production value (\$m)	Share of value (%)
News and current affairs	351.0	23%
TV drama, situation and sketch comedy	^175.3	12%
Sport	305.1	20%
Commercials	219.3	15%
Feature films	73.5	5%
Light entertainment and variety	133.6	9%
Quiz, panel and game shows and other TV programs (includes children's)	*139.5	9%
TV and other documentaries	*37.9	3%
Corporate/marketing/training videos	^33.9	2%
Other non-TV programs	24.5	2%
Short films	^2.4	0.2%
Music media	*2.5	0.2%
Educational media	*3.8	0.3%
Total	1,502.5	

Source: ABS.

Notes: ^ Estimate has a relative standard error of 10-25 per cent.

* Estimate has a relative standard error of 25-50 per cent.

DOCUMENTARY PRODUCTION AS A SHARE OF TOTAL AUDIOVISUAL PRODUCTION IN AUSTRALIA, CANADA AND NEW ZEALAND, 2002/03

	%	\$m (local currency)	\$m (Aus)
Australia ¹	3	38	38
New Zealand ²	8	40	35
Canada ³	12	366	416

Notes: 1. Documentary as proportion of all productions made by businesses in television, film and video production services.

Source: ABS, Television, Film and Video Production 2002/03 (cat. No. 8679.0), Australian Bureau of Statistics.

2. Documentary as proportion of all funding for film, TV, commercials and non-broadcast media, covering tax year April 2002 to March 2003.

Source: Survey of Screen Production in New Zealand 2003, Screen Production and Development Association of New Zealand.

3. Total volume of Canadian documentary production as a share of total volume of Canadian content production, 2002/03 (including in-house station production by Canadian broadcasters, in-house production by the National Film Board, and independent production certified as Canadian content by the Canadian Audio-Visual Certification Office or the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission). Source: *Getting Real* Volume 2, 2004, Documentary Organisation of Canada.

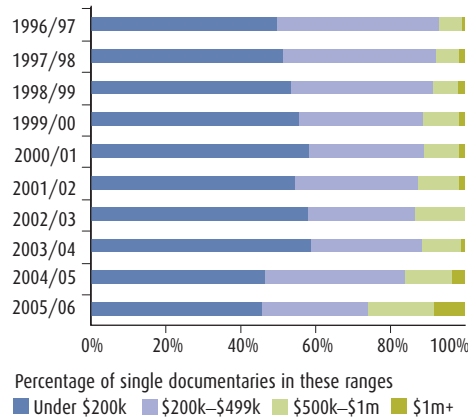
For comprehensive data see also *Get the Picture Online*: www.afc.gov.au/gtp – This report online: www.afc.gov.au/gtp/docos

DOCUMENTARY BUDGETS

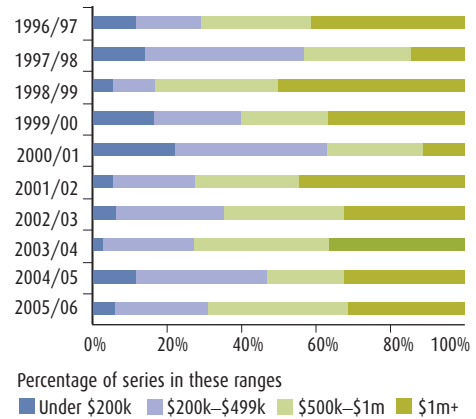
Eighty-nine per cent of the single documentary titles made by production companies over the ten years between 1996/97 and 2005/06 had budgets of less than \$500,000 (in 2006 dollars¹), with more than half made for less than \$200,000.

For series, budgets vary with the number of hours produced, but on average 38 per cent of titles were made for less than \$500,000, and 33 per cent for more than \$1 million. Average cost per broadcast hour for series has ranged from a high of \$334,000 in 1998/99 to a low of \$141,000 in 1997/98.

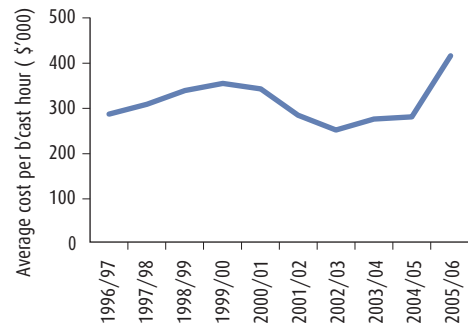
BUDGET RANGES FOR SINGLE DOCUMENTARY TITLES¹



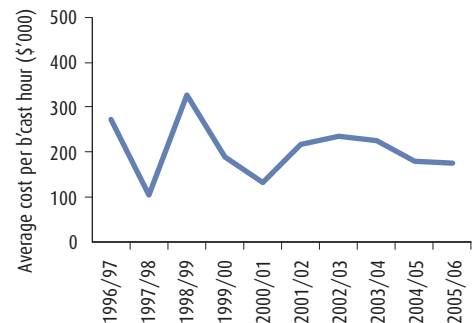
BUDGET RANGES FOR DOCUMENTARY SERIES¹



AVERAGE COST PER COMMERCIAL BROADCAST HOUR FOR SINGLE TITLES¹



AVERAGE COST PER COMMERCIAL BROADCAST HOUR FOR SERIES¹



Source: AFC.

Notes: 1. Real dollar figures have been adjusted for inflation using the Non-farm GDP Deflator. This index has been used in preference to the Consumer Price Index as it more accurately reflects the cost increases experienced by the film industry.

WORDS FROM THE CITY

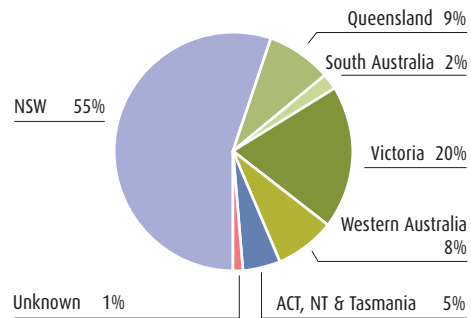
WIRE MC (on right) sitting in his car at Nambucca Heads, New South Wales. Courtesy: Film Camp Pty Ltd.



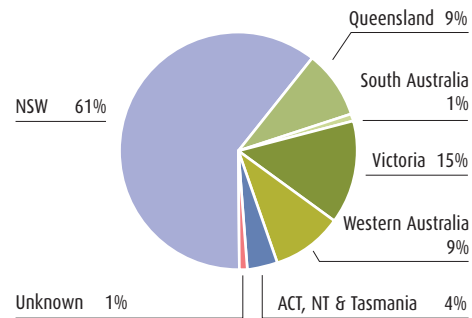
ACTIVITY BY STATE

In the ten years between 1996/97 and 2005/06, most documentaries (excluding in-house) were made by production companies based in NSW (55 per cent of titles, 61 per cent of hours), followed by Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia.

SHARE OF DOCUMENTARY TITLES BY STATE



SHARE OF DOCUMENTARY HOURS BY STATE



Source: AFC.

Notes: Analysis does not include in-house documentaries.



NIGHT

Courtesy:
Circe Films Pty Ltd.



Employment in Documentary Production

The main sources for film industry employment data are the ABS Census and Service Industries Surveys. Unfortunately, these don't categorise occupations by genre. However, some data is available from other sources.

DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKERS: NUMBERS

Based on AFC analysis of 2,956 Australian documentaries, including broadcaster-produced titles, shot between July 1990 and June 2006:

- 1,609 people produced a documentary (41 per cent of these were women)
- 1,406 people directed a documentary (35 per cent women) and
- 1,521 people wrote a documentary in this period (37 per cent women).

Source: AFC analysis.

Notes: Gender unknown for 33 producers (2%), 22 directors (2%) and 33 writers (2%).

Ten-year profile: two or more credits

Analysis of filmmakers who have made two or more documentaries in the last ten years indicates that there are around 400 producers, 330 directors and 300 writers currently making documentary films/programs in Australia.

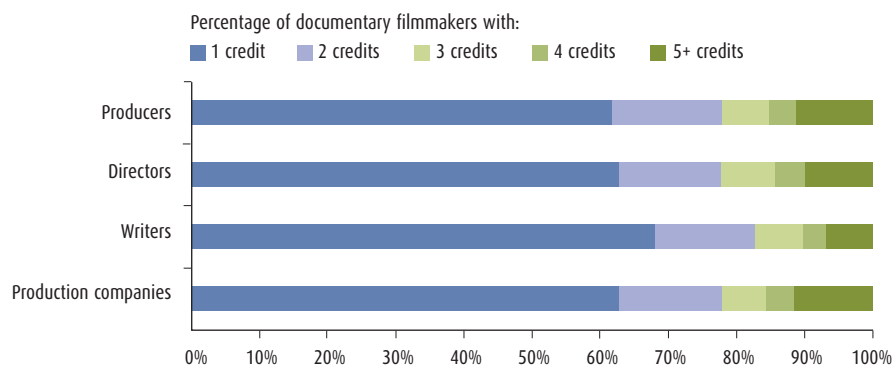
10-year profile: 2 or more credits	Men		Women		Total no.
	No.	%	No.	%	
Producers	222	54%	183	45%	410
Directors	215	64%	116	35%	336
Writers	191	63%	106	35%	302

Source: AFC analysis of the credits of 1,918 Australian documentaries, including broadcaster-produced titles, shot between July 1996 and June 2006.

Notes: Gender unknown for 5 producers (1%), 5 directors (1%) and 5 writers (2%).

DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKERS: ACTIVITY

Analysis of the producer, director and writer credits for documentaries made in the 16 years between July 1990 and June 2006 shows that a high proportion of documentary filmmakers made only one title over this period, with producers the most likely to have multiple credits – 38 per cent, compared to 37 per cent for directors and 32 per cent for writers.



Source: AFC analysis of the credits of 2,956 Australian documentaries, including broadcaster-produced titles, shot between July 1990 and June 2006.

Documentary Funding

GOVERNMENT FILM AGENCY FUNDING

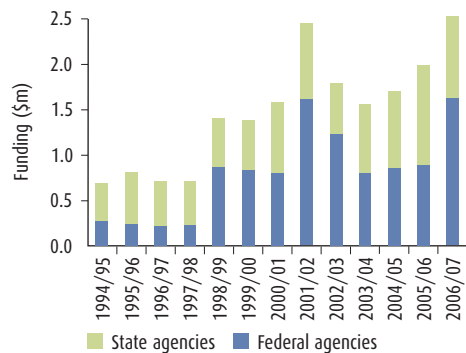
From 1994/95 to 2006/07, federal and state government agencies provided project-specific development funding for documentaries of \$19.2 million, an average of \$1.5 million annually, and production funding of \$257 million, an average of \$19.8 million annually. Most of the production funding comes from federal agencies, such as the Film Finance Corporation Australia, the Australian Film Commission, SBS Independent, Film Australia (National Interest Program and History Initiative) and the Commercial Television Production Fund (which operated from 1995/96 to 1997/98). Around half of development funding for documentaries comes from state film agencies (mainly the NSW Film and Television Office, Film Victoria and ScreenWest).

Production funding rose by more than 30 per cent in 2006/07, mainly due to increased funding from Film Australia, SBS Independent and the Film Finance Corporation.

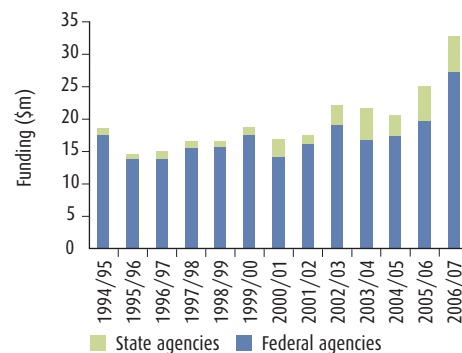
As part of the 2007 Budget, the Australian Government announced the creation of a new agency, Screen Australia, from July 2008 – a merger of the Australian Film Commission, the Film Finance Corporation and Film Australia.

DOCUMENTARY FUNDING BY FEDERAL AND STATE/TERRITORY AGENCIES

DEVELOPMENT FUNDING



PRODUCTION FUNDING



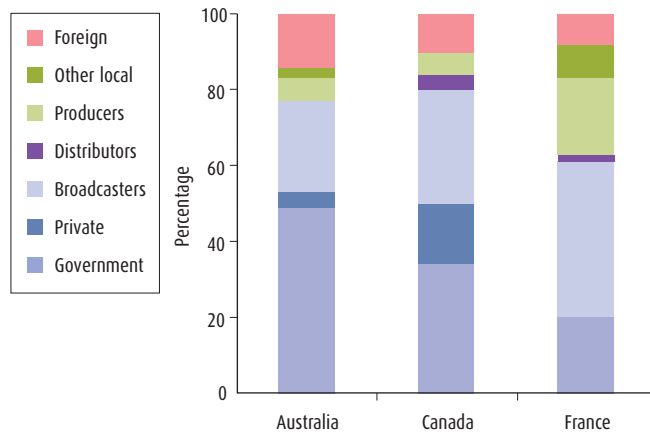
Source: Compiled by the AFC from information provided by the agencies.
 Notes: Film Australia has expended a minimum of \$500,000 annually since 1998 on documentary development.
 Funding figures are in current dollars (i.e. not adjusted for inflation).

SOURCES OF FINANCE IN AUSTRALIA, CANADA AND FRANCE

Government sources (excluding public broadcasters) provide the highest proportion of funding to the annual documentary slates in Australia and Canada (48.8 per cent and 33.8 per cent of the slate respectively), and the second highest in France (20.1 per cent), where producers provide almost the same proportion (19.8 per cent).

The largest contribution to the French slate comes from broadcasters (including public broadcasters) – 41 per cent, compared to 29.6 per cent in Canada and 23.5 per cent in Australia. Australia has the highest level of foreign finance – 14.1 per cent compared to 10.5 per cent in Canada and 7.7 per cent in France.

SOURCES OF FINANCE FOR DOCUMENTARY SLATE (% SHARE)

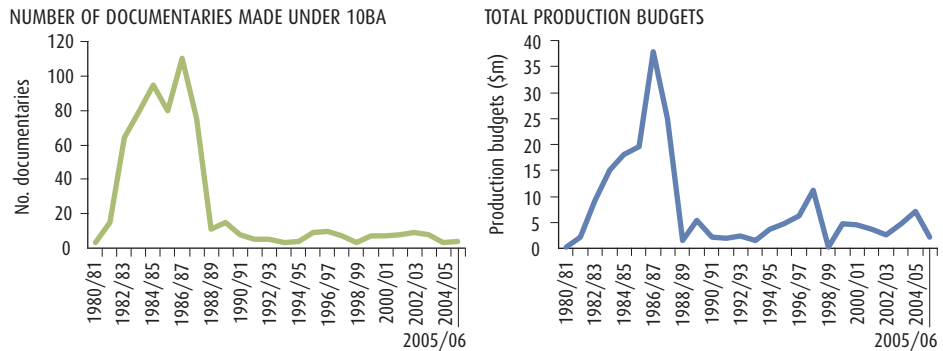


Source: Australia: AFC, seven-year average 1999/00 to 2005/06.
 Canada: *Getting Real* Volume 2, 2004 and Volume 3, 2007 Documentary Organisation of Canada, CFTPA Profile 2005 and 2006, ten-year average 1996/97 to 2005/06.
 France: *CNC Results* May 2007, nine-year average 1998 to 2006.
 Notes: Figures include AFC estimates.

TAX INCENTIVES

Documentary production boomed in the mid-1980s under the 10BA tax incentive scheme, but dropped when the incentive was reduced to 100 per cent - from 75 titles totalling \$25 million in 1987/88 to 11 titles totalling \$1.6 million in 1988/89.

Between 2000/01 and 2005/06, an average of seven documentaries a year were made with funds raised under 10BA; total value of production budgets raised averaged \$4 million per year.



Source: Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts.
 Notes: The 10BA tax incentive scheme was reduced to 100 per cent in 1988/89.

FFC DOCUMENTARY FINANCE

The Film Finance Corporation Australia has provided finance for an average of 36 documentaries per year since 1991/92, with total production budgets averaging \$15.6 million per year.

In 2006/07, the Accord system of financing documentaries was phased out by the FFC and replaced with financing through the domestic door and international door strands.

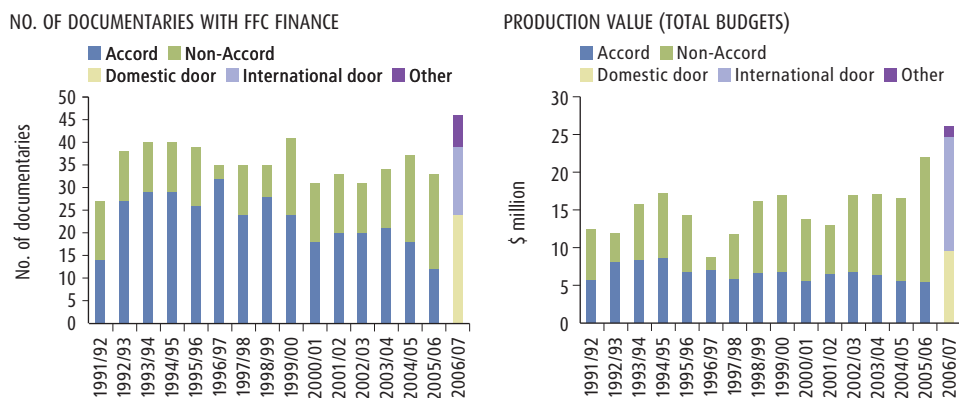
Accord documentaries were made as part of an agreement between the FFC and Australian domestic broadcasters. The domestic door strand requires a local television presale, with the FFC and the broadcaster each contributing 50 per cent of finance. The international door strand requires a local television presale as well as international presales/guarantees.

Accord documentaries to 2005/06 averaged 23 titles totalling \$6.7 million per year, with FFC investment contributing 69 per cent of budgets (\$4.7 million per year). Non-Accord titles to 2005/06 averaged 12 titles totalling \$8.3 million per year, with FFC investment contributing 49 per cent of budgets (\$3.7 million per year).

In 2006/07, 24 documentaries worth \$9.6 million were financed through the domestic door, with half the finance from the FFC, and 15 documentaries worth \$15 million were financed through the international door, with 31 per cent of finance from the FFC.

In addition, the FFC invested in two titles under the National Indigenous Documentary Fund (NIDF) and five films under the Special Documentary Fund in 2006/07. These funding programs were counted with non-Accords in previous years.

Figures quoted reflect FFC investment into projects contracted in those financial years.



Source: FFC.

FILM AUSTRALIA DOCUMENTARY PRODUCTION

Film Australia aims to produce outstanding documentaries that shape a cultural record of Australian life. Its National Interest Program (NIP) is an agreement with the Australian Government to develop, produce, distribute and market programs that deal with matters of national interest to Australia. Its History Initiative, Making History, commenced in 2005 to develop, commission and produce a range of distinctive, high-quality history programs.

In 2006/07, Film Australia's total expenditure on production was \$14.1 million, an increase of \$4.5 million on the previous year, largely as a result of third-party funding, new strategic relationships and increased internal efficiencies.

From 1996/97 to 2006/07, Film Australia produced 181.1 television hours of broadcast documentaries. NIP funding from government averaged \$6.9 million annually in this period, with an average of \$6.7 million expended annually on development, production and promotion of completed broadcast documentary projects. This does not include new media and education projects, which have also been produced under the NIP, or drama programs, which were produced under the NIP before 1998.

In 2004/05, the government committed \$7.5 million additional funding over three years from 2005/06 for ten high-end documentaries about Australian history. The first Making History programs were broadcast in 2007.



THE FLOATING BROTHEL

Meagan Benson (centre) as *Mary Wade*.

Courtesy: Film Australia and the ABC.

Stills photographers: John Tsiavis and Brian J. Ritchie.

FILM AUSTRALIA'S BROADCAST DOCUMENTARY PROGRAMS 1996/97-2006/07

Year	Total TV hours*	Total budgets* for projects completed in the year (\$m)	
1996/97	29.0	5.5	* Includes 16.65 hours of archival materials reversioned and repackaged for broadcast and distribution. Educational programming produced but not included.
1997/98	12.0	4.3	* Drama and educational programming produced but not included.
1998/99	22.5	8.4	
1999/00	16.0	6.3	* 2-disc CD ROM also produced but not included.
2000/01	15.5	6.9	* Website also produced but not included.
2001/02	12.0	4.8	* A DVD and 5 x 5 min. animations also produced but not included.
2002/03	15.5	6.8	* 5 x 5 min. animations also produced but not included.
2003/04	13.3	6.8	* Website and 2 DVDs also produced but not included.
2004/05	15.0	7.0	* Website, new material for Australian Biography Online and a cross-platform initiative with ABC also produced but not included.
2005/06	15.3	8.8	* 3 new media projects also produced but not included.
2006/07	15.0	8.0	* Includes 3 projects made under Making History; 4 new media projects also produced but not included.
Annual av.	15.0	6.7	

Source: Film Australia.

Notes: These figures include expenditures for development, production and promotion of projects which are completed, but do not include development expenditure for projects which may not proceed to production, nor distribution expenditure for any projects.

AFC DOCUMENTARY DEVELOPMENT

The Australian Film Commission provided \$5.2 million in development funding for 417 documentary titles in the period 1996/97 to 2005/06.

Of the 417 documentaries funded, 141 were completed as of December 2007 (34 per cent).

Of the 141 completed, the AFC put additional production or post-production money into 49 titles.

Source: AFC.

DOMESTIC NON-THEATRICAL SALES

Documentaries are distributed non-theatrically by small educational distributors that specialise in supplying educational institutions, libraries, community groups and other niche markets. It is a labour-intensive and low-returning activity. However, documentaries often have a long life. For example, many popular older titles distributed by Film Australia, such as *The Back of Beyond* (1953) and *Exile and the Kingdom* (1994), have continued to sell to educational users and in niche markets looking for Australian content.

Another source of revenue for documentary makers is off-air copying of programs for educational use. Screenrights promotes documentaries to the education sector via its website, enhancetv.com.au, and collects and distributes royalties for the copying of programs from TV and radio by schools, TAFEs and universities for teaching purposes. Documentaries comprised 32 per cent of audiovisual material copied by educational institutions in 2006/07. In 2007, \$38 million in royalties was collected by Screenrights, including \$22.63 million for educational copying throughout Australia and New Zealand and \$14.01 million for retransmission. An estimated \$6.8 million of this will be allocated to documentaries.

Royalty returns from the off-air copying of programs for educational purposes can be substantial for documentaries. For example, a multi-part Australian documentary series that screened in 2005 earned \$260,000 in Screenrights royalties. In the case of the three-hour Film Australia *Federation* series (1999), the Screenrights returns were \$285,000, more than the \$240,000 domestic free-to-air television licence fee. The one-hour documentary *Seeking Asylum* (2002), made by Piper Films with a budget of \$260,000, generated \$50,000 in royalties through Screenrights, or 35 per cent of its total returns. Payments, however, can vary greatly, and with the recent introduction of royalty payments from resource centre copying, royalties can typically range from \$40 to over \$60,000 for individual documentary titles.

Source: Film Australia, Screenrights.

BOMB HARVEST

Australian bomb specialist Laith Evans and his interpreter/assistant, Linthong Syphavong, examine a live 500-pound aircraft bomb behind a village school in Savannaket province, Laos.

Courtesy: Lemur Films.
Stills photographer:
Tom Green Wood.



OVERSEAS SALES

Though mostly produced for Australian audiences, Australian documentaries are distributed internationally. Opportunities to license Australian documentaries in other territories increased along with the proliferation of speciality cable and satellite channels. However, the value of such sales has not increased. Market fragmentation and a rising Australian dollar have eroded the value of licence fees.

It is often necessary for major territories to be pre-sold in order to finance production. Of all the FFC-financed documentaries with international investment in 2006/07, 26 per cent of production budgets came from overseas presales and distribution advances, up from 22 per cent in 1995/96.

Twenty-eight FFC-supported documentaries were sold into the US market between January 2005 and June 2007; prices ranged from US\$1,000 to US\$73,400 per hour.

LOWEST AND HIGHEST PRICES PAID FOR FFC-SUPPORTED DOCUMENTARY FILMS IN VARIOUS TERRITORIES;
SALES REPORTED JANUARY 2005 TO JUNE 2007

Main territory	No. titles	No. buyers	Prices paid (US\$) per hour	
			Lowest	Highest
Belgium	12	6	900	6,450
Canada	23	16	1,000	13,050
China	3	3	850	1,400
Czech Republic; Slovakia	5	4	400	750
Denmark	10	5	1,000	6,000
Finland	15	5	1,000	5,100
Former Yugoslavia ¹	6	4	500	1,200
France & French-speaking Europe ²	11	8	2,500	34,200
Germany & German-speaking Europe	3	4	3,850	51,300
Hong Kong	6	4	750	3,500
Hungary	3	2	500	600
Indonesia	3	3	1,100	1,500
Ireland	15	3	1,450	2,600
Israel	25	6	300	1,500
Italy & Italian-speaking Europe	6	6	1,400	21,700
Japan	2	2	1,100	1,500
Middle East ³	10	7	400	3,500
Netherlands	5	5	3,450	8,350
New Zealand	22	6	250	14,300
Pan Asia	15	4	800	4,000
Poland	8	3	800	2,300
South Africa	2	1	1,250	3,500
South Korea	4	4	350	5,000
Spain; Portugal	12	10	500	2,500
Sweden	9	5	1,150	6,350
UK	13	12	1,000	12,350
US	28	20	1,000	73,400

Source: FFC.

Notes: 1. Most sales for single country within territory.

2. Includes sales to Arte, which include German rights.

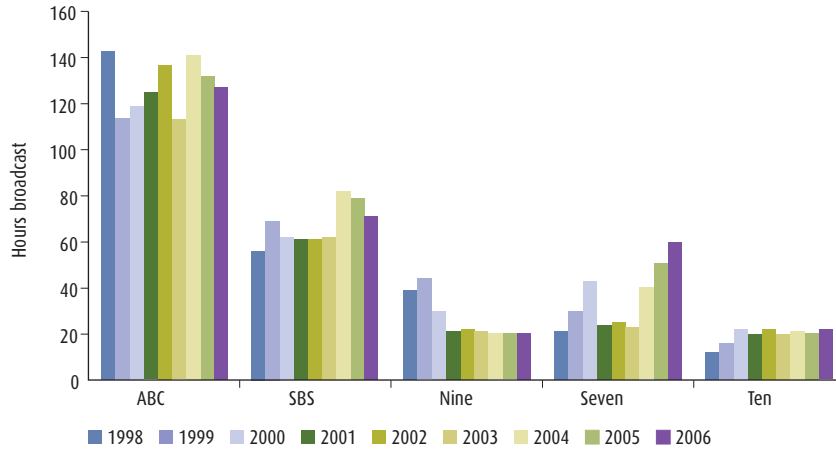
3. Includes some sales to a single country within the territory.

Documentaries on TV

FREE-TO-AIR TV RELEASE

A total of 300 hours of first-release Australian documentaries were broadcast on Australian free-to-air TV in 2006, including 127 hours by the ABC and 71 hours by SBS.

HOURS OF FIRST-RELEASE AUSTRALIAN DOCUMENTARIES ON TV, 1998-2006



Source: ACMA Compliance reports, ABC, SBS.

Notes: Commercial free-to-air network hours calculated using five-city average for the relevant year.

Figures for the ABC include the main channel and ABC2, and include documentaries screened across all genre categories, unlike figures quoted in the 'Documentary programming on public free-to-air TV' section opposite, which only include the documentary genre.

Documentary production in Australia: A collection of key data -- Australian Film Commission, February 2008

Clockwise:

BONDI RESCUE

Lifeguard Rod Kerr.
Courtesy: Network Ten.

SEX IN THE BUSH

Courtesy: ABC.

THE BIG BLUE

A Blue whale feeds in the Southern Ocean.
Courtesy: ABC.



DOCUMENTARY PROGRAMMING ON PUBLIC FREE-TO-AIR TV

On the ABC's main channel, 588 hours of documentaries (including repeats) were screened in 2006/07 (6.7 per cent of total hours broadcast). Australian documentaries comprised 2 per cent (177 hours) of total programming in 2006/07, compared to 4.7 per cent (411 hours) for foreign titles.

In addition to this, ABC2, the ABC's complementary digital-only service, broadcast 358 hours (including repeats) of documentaries in 2006/07 (5.3 per cent of total hours broadcast on ABC2). Australian documentaries accounted for 294 hours (4.3 per cent of total programming), compared to 65 hours of foreign documentaries (1 per cent).

The ABC is required to report across 16 genres and therefore some documentaries screened in genres such as arts and culture, education, Indigenous, natural history, religion, and science and technology are not included in these documentary genre figures.

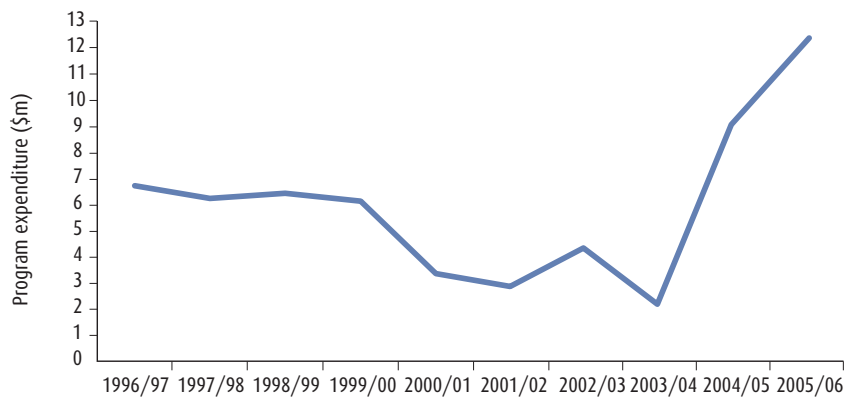
On SBS, 1,080 hours of documentaries (including repeats) were broadcast in 2006/07 (15.9 per cent of total hours broadcast). Australian documentaries accounted for 359 hours (5.3 per cent of total programming) were shown, compared to 720 hours (10.6 per cent) of foreign documentaries.

Source: ABC Annual Report, SBS Annual Report.

PROGRAM SPENDING BY COMMERCIAL BROADCASTERS

Australian commercial free-to-air broadcasters spent \$12.4 million on Australian documentary programming in 2005/06, representing a 35.2 per cent increase on 2004/05.

EXPENDITURE BY COMMERCIAL FREE-TO-AIR BROADCASTERS ON AUSTRALIAN DOCUMENTARY PROGRAMMING, 1996/97-2005/06










Source: Broadcasting Financial Results, ACMA.

**TWO MEN
IN A TINNIE**
John Doyle and
Tim Flannery.
Courtesy: ABC.



TOP-RATING DOCUMENTARIES ON TV

On Sydney TV, *RPA* was either the no. 1 or no. 2 documentary overall between 1998 and 2003. While *Border Security* topped the national ratings for documentaries in 2005 and 2006, other top-rating Australian documentaries include episodes of *Australian Story* and *Dynasties*.

	No. of local documentaries in top 10 ¹	Rank of top-rating Australian documentary
2000	5 	RPA (no. 1)
2001	2 	RPA (no. 1)
2002	2 	RPA (no. 2)
2003	3 	RPA (no. 2)
2004	4 	<i>Australian Story: Into the Forest - Part 1</i> (no. 3)
2005	4 	<i>Border Security</i> series 3 (no. 1)
2006	8 	<i>Border Security: Australia's Front Line</i> (no. 1)

Source: ACNielsen 1998-2000; OzTAM 2001-2004; 2005-2006 OzTAM data sourced from Channel 7 website, based on top 200 programs, weeks 7-48, all events.

Notes: 1. 2005 based on top eight documentaries nationally.

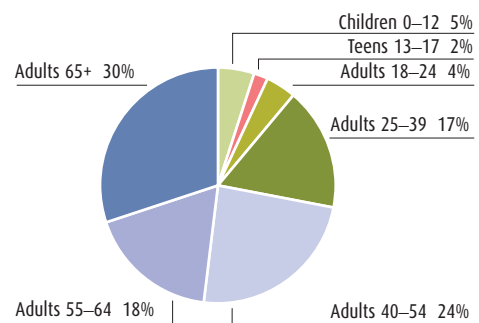
TOP-RATING DOCUMENTARIES ON TELEVISION, 2006 (AUSTRALIAN TITLES LISTED IN BOLD)

Rank	Title	Network	Viewers ('000)
1	Border Security: Australia's Front Line	7	2,119
2	Who Killed Dr Bogle and Mrs Chandler?	ABC	1,782
3	Border Security - Wed	7	1,569
4	Planet Earth	ABC	1,379
5	Missing Persons Unit	9	1,336
6	The Queen by Rolf	ABC	1,286
7	Medical Emergency - Sun	7	1,181
8	RPA	9	1,165
9	The ABC of Our Lives: 50 Years of Television	ABC	1,157
10	Bondi Rescue	10	1,064

Source: OzTAM data sourced from Channel 7 website, based on top 200 programs, weeks 7-48, all events.

AUDIENCE FOR DOCUMENTARIES ON FREE-TO-AIR TV

On average, documentaries¹ aired on Australian free-to-air television in 2004 were watched by 251,000 people, an average viewing audience of 1.8 per cent of the population. People aged 40 years and over comprised 72 per cent of the viewers for this programming genre.



Source: OzTAM, free-to-air viewing in metropolitan TV homes for five capital cities, Sunday to Saturday, 02:00-26:00, 1/1/2004 to 31/12/2004.

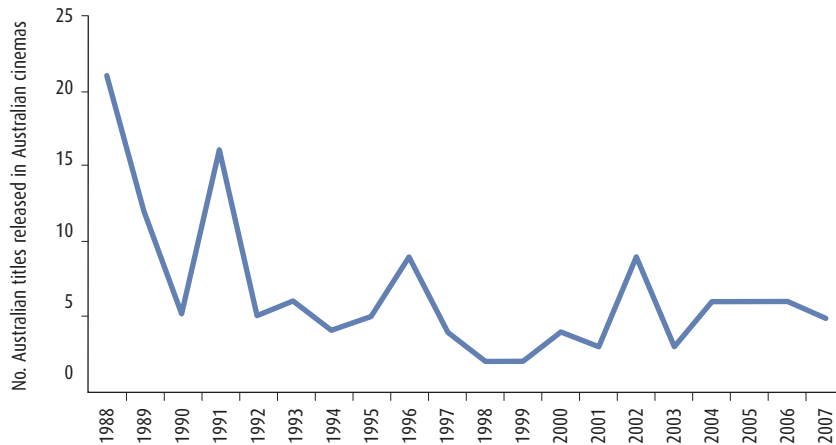
Notes: 1. Includes one-off documentaries, documentary series and documentary compilations. Excludes *Australian Story*, which is categorised as News and Current Affairs.

	Children 0-12	Teens 13-17	Adults 18-24	Adults 25-39	Adults 40-54	Adults 55-64	Adults 65+	Total people
Average viewing audience	13,000	6,000	10,000	42,000	60,000	45,000	75,000	251,000
Composition of viewing audience	5%	2%	4%	17%	24%	18%	30%	100%
Average viewing audience (%)	0.6%	0.6%	0.7%	1.4%	2.1%	3.2%	4.4%	1.8%
Share of viewing (% of total people watching television at that time)	5.0%	3.9%	4.7%	6.5%	8.7%	11.4%	13.7%	8.7%

Theatrical, Video, Awards and Festival Screenings

THEATRICAL RELEASE

Between 1988 and 2007, an average of seven Australian documentaries were released annually in Australian cinemas. A total of six Australian documentary titles were released in the UK over this period and 16 in the US.



Source: Compiled by the AFC.

Notes: Includes Australian productions and co-productions with overseas partners.

TOP DOCUMENTARIES AT THE AUSTRALIAN BOX OFFICE

Large-format films dominate the top Australian documentaries at the Australian box office.

There are two Australian-made IMAX titles in the all-time top 20 to December 2007: *Antarctica* and *Africa's Elephant Kingdom*. The most successful non-IMAX Australian documentary is *Bra Boys*, which has grossed \$1,698,976 since its release in March 2007.

Recent years have shown an increase in the popularity of documentaries at the box office, with 46 of the top 100 documentary titles of all time being released during the last four years (2004–2007), compared to only 19 during the four years before that (2000–2003).



BRA BOYS

Left to right:
Macario de Souza,
Koby Abberton and
Sunny Abberton.

Courtesy:
Bradahood Productions
and Hopscotch Films.

TOP 10 FROM ANY COUNTRY

Rank	Title	Distributor	Release date	Box office (\$)¹
1	Fahrenheit 9/11	Hopscotch	29 Jul 2004	8,404,378
2	Everest	IMAX	18 Mar 1998	6,334,124
3	Space Station 3D	IMAX	6 Jun 2002	5,193,927
4	Extreme	IMAX (CPL/Extreme)	18 Mar 1999	5,152,785
5	Bowling for Columbine	Icon/Hopscotch	26 Dec 2002	4,852,301
6	Deep Sea 3D	IMAX	6 Apr 2006	4,708,001
7	Titanic 3D: Ghosts of the Abyss	IMAX	4 Sep 2003	4,477,494
8	Mysteries of Egypt	IMAX (CPL/Destin)	21 Jan 1999	4,360,769
9	March of the Penguins	Roadshow	30 Mar 2006	4,345,437
10	Shackleton's Antarctic Adventure	IMAX	1 Nov 2001	4,241,364

TOP 10 NON-IMAX (AUSTRALIAN FILMS LISTED IN BOLD)

Rank in top 50	Title	Distributor	Release date	Box office (\$)¹
1	Fahrenheit 9/11	Hopscotch	29 Jul 2004	8,404,378
5	Bowling for Columbine	Icon/Hopscotch	26 Dec 2002	4,852,301
9	March of the Penguins	Roadshow	30 Mar 2006	4,345,437
12	An Inconvenient Truth	UIP/Paramount	14 Sep 2006	4,117,170
16	Touching the Void	Hopscotch	24 Jun 2004	3,080,689
18	Super Size Me	Dendy	3 Jun 2004	2,907,204
20	The Travelling Birds	Hopscotch	19 Jun 2003	2,564,215
22	In Bed with Madonna	Columbia	13 Jun 1991	2,241,064
30	Bra Boys	Hopscotch	15 Mar 2007	1,698,976
31	Buena Vista Social Club	Dendy	23 Dec 1999	1,696,381

TOP 10 AUSTRALIAN

Rank in top 100	Title	Distributor	Release date	Box office (\$)¹
11	Antarctica	IMAX	26 Sep 1996	4,234,376
14	Africa's Elephant Kingdom	IMAX	21 May 1998	3,491,995
30	Bra Boys	Hopscotch	15 Mar 2007	1,698,976
51	Australia: Land Beyond Time	IMAX	6 Mar 2003	803,717
53	Sydney: A Story of a City	IMAX	19 Aug 1999	694,853
57	Cane Toads: An Unnatural History	Ronin	29 Feb 1988	613,910
76	Unfolding Florence: The Many Lives of Florence Broadhurst	Dendy	24 Aug 2006	429,243
79	Forbidden Lie\$	Palace	13 Sep 2007	401,027
82	Sacred Sex	Premium	14 Nov 1991	381,844
87	God on My Side	Hopscotch	2 Nov 2006	355,120

Source: MPDAA, Nielsen EDI (Australia) and Ronin; compiled by the AFC.

Notes: *World Safari 2: Adventure Bound* (released 1984) is not included as national box office figures are unavailable.

1. Cumulative box office, reported on 25 January 2008 in current dollars (i.e. not adjusted for inflation). These figures may include revised MPDAA box office earnings.

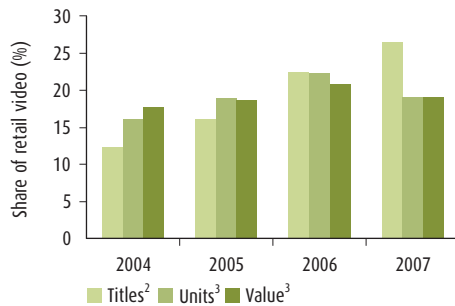
DOCUMENTARIES ON VIDEO (VHS AND DVD)

GfK Marketing tracked approximately 31,000 DVD and VHS releases sold in Australian retail outlets in 2007. These sales accounted for over 66 million units at a value in excess of \$1.2 billion in revenue. Around 3,000 of these were documentary titles, with a combined value of over \$37 million, compared to \$29 million in 2006.

When ranked by value, the proportion of sales achieved by Australian titles within the top 500 documentaries sold on video during 2007 was 19.2 per cent (\$6.5 million). Although the share of Australian titles in the top 500 continued to increase, as did the number of titles and their turnover, the share of both units sold and sales value fell slightly from the previous year.

Since 2004, the number of Australian titles in the top 500 documentaries has doubled, rising to 133 in 2007 from 113 in 2006. The highest selling titles in 2007 were *The Secret*, *Choir of Hard Knocks* and *Bra Boys*.

AUSTRALIAN SHARE OF TOP 500 RETAIL DOCUMENTARIES ON VIDEO (VHS AND DVD),¹ 2004-2007



Source: AFC analysis of GfK Marketing data.

Notes: Data from 2004 to 2006 has been updated to reflect changes in methodology.

1. Documentary does not include reality, light entertainment, music performance, sports coverage, infotainment or instructional titles. It does include documentary feature, TV series and made-for-video titles.
2. Refers to the number of titles sold during each calendar year (first-release titles issued that year and continued sales of previously issued titles). This may include multiple editions of the same content.
3. Although box sets are counted as a single title for ranking purposes, their units and value are proportioned according to the origin of discrete titles included in the collection.

TOP 10 AUSTRALIAN DOCUMENTARY TITLES ON VIDEO,¹ 2007

Rank ²	Title	Distributor	Release date
1	The Secret	Brumby	1 May 2007
2	Choir of Hard Knocks: The Voice of ReLink	ABC	13 Aug 2007
3	Bra Boys	Hopscotch	16 Aug 2007
4	The Slim Dusty Movie (plus CD)	Shock	4 Nov 2006
5	Ocean's Deadliest	EMI	24 Mar 2007
6	Phar Lap: The People's Champion	Chevron	11 Apr 2001
7	Wrecks to Riches: Season 1	Force Video	15 Aug 2007
8	The Australian Cricket Collection: Cricket in the 50s, 60s, 70s & 80s	ABC	1 Nov 2006
9	Crude: The Incredible Journey of Oil	ABC	6 Jul 2007
10	Mythbusters: Volume 1	SBS	4 Jul 2005

TOP 10 DOCUMENTARIES FROM ANY COUNTRY ON VIDEO,¹ 2007 (AUSTRALIAN TITLES IN BOLD)

Rank ²	Title	Distributor	Release date
1	Top Gear Collection (Box Set)	BBC	31 Jul 2007
2	Planet Earth: Part 2	BBC	7 Feb 2007
3	The Secret	Brumby	1 May 2007
4	Planet Earth: Complete Series	BBC	7 Nov 2007
5	Long Way Down: The Complete TV Series	EMI Indent	1 Dec 2007
6	Planet Earth: Part 1	BBC	17 Aug 2006
7	An Inconvenient Truth	Paramount	25 Jan 2007
8	David Attenborough: The Life Collection	BBC	22 Nov 2007
9	March of the Penguins	Roadshow	19 Jul 2006
10	Top Gear Collection (Slipcase)	BBC	31 Jul 2007

Source: AFC analysis of GfK Marketing data.

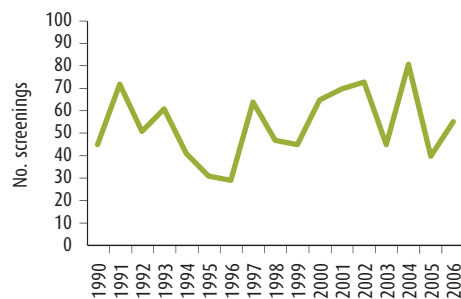
- Notes:
1. Documentary does not include reality, light entertainment, music performance, sports coverage, infotainment or instructional titles. It does include documentary feature, TV series and made-for-video titles.
 2. Ranked by value of retail sales (value ranking has been adjusted to reflect Australian proportion of collections).



SEARCHING 4 SANDEEP

Sandeep Viridi and
Poppy Stockell in
Croatia.
Courtesy:
Cecelia Ritchie Pty Ltd.
Stills photographer:
Tania Lambert.

NUMBER OF AUSTRALIAN DOCUMENTARIES SCREENED AT 80 KEY INTERNATIONAL FILM/TV FESTIVALS



Source: AFC.

Note: International refers to overseas festivals and awards only.

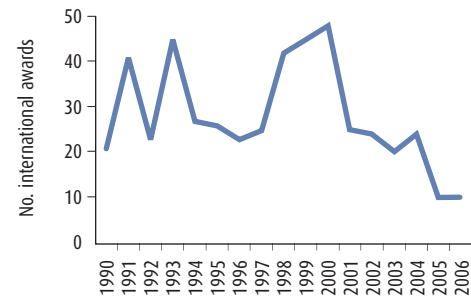
FESTIVALS AND AWARDS

The first Australian nomination for an Academy Award, and the first Australian Oscar winner, was the documentary *Kokoda Front Line!* (1942). Since then, Australian documentaries have regularly been invited to screen at the world's peak film and television and documentary festivals, events and competitions, where they frequently win major awards.

The AFC tracks screenings of Australian films at 80 key international film festivals. Australian documentaries (including short documentaries) tallied 55 screenings at 18 of these festivals in 2006.

In the ten years between 1997 and 2006, Australian documentaries won an average of 27 international awards each year, peaking at 48 in 2000.

NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL AWARDS WON BY AUSTRALIAN DOCUMENTARIES



ON THE COVER:

From top to bottom, left to right:

WORDS FROM THE CITY

Joelistic of TZU performing at St Jeromes, Melbourne. Courtesy: Film Camp Pty Ltd.

BUSHFIRE SUMMER

Courtesy: ABC.

4

Sayaka Shoji. Courtesy: Vast Productions.

THE BIG BLUE

A blue whale feeds in the Southern Ocean. Courtesy: ABC.

NIGHT

Courtesy: Circe Films Pty Ltd.

BOMB HARVEST

Australian bomb specialist Laith Evans examines a live 500-pound aircraft bomb behind a village school in Savannaket province, Laos. Courtesy: Lemur Films. Stills photographer: Tom Green Wood.



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