

NZ ON AIR DOCUMENTARY STRATEGY
October 2003

Discussion

Under section 37 (c) of the Broadcasting Act 1989 NZ On Air is required to,

“Ensure that, in its funding of the production of television programmes, reasonable provision is made to assist in the production of ... documentary programmes.”

In line with its strategic plan the Board of NZ On Air examines all of its areas of interest to assess whether its actions in each area are still relevant and, if so, how outcomes can be improved.

This Documentary Strategy, brings NZ On Air documentary programming policy into line with the broad strategic direction of NZ On Air. It has been drafted following the 2003 Documentary Symposium and in light of subsequent feedback and discussion.

Objectives

In line with the strategic plan the objectives for Documentary Programming are as follows:

- To maintain and, where possible, improve audience satisfaction levels with the programmes funded on their behalf.
- To work with the industry to achieve a strong, growth-focused documentary programming sector, delivering consistently high-standard and innovative programmes and broadcasts (to both New Zealand and international audiences).
- To contribute, through documentary programming supported by NZ On Air, to the development of a knowledge economy and social cohesion in New Zealand.

Outcomes

As a result of achieving our objectives, NZ On Air expects the following outcomes:

- There will be a strongly visible presence of diverse New Zealand documentary programming across the range of public and commercial broadcasting services, representing good value for New Zealand taxpayer dollars.
- Locally produced documentary programmes and broadcasts will be well received by their intended audience, and will be seen to be “world class”.

New Zealand audience satisfaction levels with television documentary programmes will be maintained or increased.

- New Zealand made documentary programmes will be more visible internationally, as well as within New Zealand.
- Public and commercial broadcasters will be encouraged to take more risks with documentary programmes made with NZ On Air funding.
- Creative and innovative documentary programming, including programming that reflects our bicultural base, our multi-cultural society and our place as a South Pacific nation, will contribute to a stronger sense of New Zealand identity.

In line with these strategic outcomes and in light of the discussion and recommendations emerging from the Documentary Symposium, the following action points will be pursued.

Outcome

There will be a strongly visible presence of diverse New Zealand documentary programming across the range of public and commercial broadcasting services, representing good value for New Zealand taxpayer dollars.

Action Points

NZ On Air will:

Timetable

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| work with Government, broadcasters, other agencies and stakeholders to increase the amount of funding for documentary programming (together with other genres) over the longer term. | Ongoing |
| seek a sustainable increase in average documentary budgets for the projects within the primetime strands, by increasing both NZ On Air and broadcaster contributions – this increase to be balanced in part by the number of programmes within these strands. | Ongoing from October 2003 |
| ensure that these increases improve onscreen results by allowing for improvements in, research, filming, and editing time as well as archival resource. | Ongoing from October 2003 |
| secure broadcaster support for an annual “in depth” or “blue chip” funding initiative with parameters that ensure a range of themes, perceptions and treatments are encouraged over time. | Ongoing from October 2003 |
| secure broadcaster support for at least one low-cost innovative documentary strand that will allow for the emergence of new talent. | Ongoing from October 2003 |
| tender for new documentary programmes through normal processes and special initiatives. | Ongoing |
| develop NZ On Air documentary priorities in consultation with producers and broadcasters and communicate these priorities to stakeholders. | Ongoing |

Outcome

Documentary programmes will be well received by their intended audience, and will be seen to be "world class". New Zealand audience satisfaction levels with documentary programmes will be maintained or increased.

Action Points

| NZ On Air will: | Timetable |
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| Communicate NZ On Air priorities to producers and broadcasters. | Ongoing |
| tender for new documentary programmes through normal processes and special initiatives. | Ongoing |
| conduct research employing a range of methodologies (including snapshot research into individual programmes) and feed the results back directly to the relevant broadcasters and producers through a consultation process. | Ongoing |
| Consider funding for the <u>development</u> of selected documentary programmes within the various documentary strands. | Ongoing from October 2003 |
| Consider funding for the <u>development</u> of selected documentary programmes, with matching broadcaster contributions at any of NZ On Air's board meetings. | Ongoing |

Outcome

New Zealand-made documentary programmes will be more visible internationally, as well as within New Zealand.

Action Points

| NZ On Air will: | Timetable |
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| negotiate on the return on its investment in recognition of producers' intellectual property in line with NZ On Air's <i>Making and Marketing</i> policy and published guidelines | Ongoing |
| support the marketing of documentary programmes with development loans under the Making and Marketing initiative. | Ongoing |

Outcome

Public and commercial broadcasters will be encouraged to take more risks with documentary programmes made with NZ On Air funding.

Action Points

NZ On Air will:

Timetable

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| conduct research employing a range of methodologies (including snapshot research into individual programmes) and feed the results back directly to the relevant broadcasters and producers through a consultation process. | Ongoing |
| tender for new shows through normal processes and special initiatives. | Ongoing |
| host a triennial forum on documentary programming issues, to present research results and discuss directions with broadcasters, producers and other stakeholders. | Every three years |
| secure broadcaster support for an annual "in depth" or "blue chip" funding initiative with parameters that ensure a range of themes, perceptions and treatments are encouraged over time. | Each funding year |
| actively seek diversity within the primetime strands by seeing summaries of all proposals received and consulting with broadcasters to ensure that, over a range of projects, a good variety of themes, perspectives and treatments is achieved. This goal will also be reflected in the heads of agreement for the primetime strands. | Ongoing from October 2003 |

Outcome

Creative and innovative local documentary programming, including programming that reflects our bi-cultural base, our multi-cultural society and our place as a South Pacific nation, will contribute to a stronger sense of New Zealand identity.

Action Points

NZ On Air will:

Timetable

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| will continue with the quota of Maori projects, which applies to all documentary strands | Ongoing |
| use funding decisions, existing subcommittee structures and targeted initiatives to encourage and support of projects that reflect our multi-cultural society and our place as a South Pacific nation. | Ongoing |
| conduct research employing a range of methodologies (including snapshot research into individual programmes) and feed the results back directly to the relevant broadcasters and producers. | Ongoing |
| arrange regular, informal meetings between documentary producers, broadcasters and the Television Manager and Chief Executive | Ongoing |
| develop NZ On Air documentary priorities in consultation with producers and broadcasters and communicate these priorities to stakeholders. | Ongoing |