

16 January 2020

**Subject: Inquiry into Western Australia economic relationship with the Republic of India**

Dear Committee

Thank you for providing us the opportunity to express our viewpoints towards the subject and a formal submission.

**Current status of India's trading relationship with Western Australia**

**What we are?**

We, Paramount Events Pty Ltd, is a registered entertainment company formed in 2014 with the prime intention to have a cultural exchange between India and Australia, Western Australia in particular. We are the first commercial entity formed in Western Australia with this intention primarily because until 2014 many Indian based cultural programmes used to happen in the Eastern States of Australia and the troop don't travel to Western Australia as there was no one to initiate or host the program in Western Australia.

The cultural exchange will benefit and add value to the Indians residing in Western Australia. We strongly believe that culture don't travel by its own from one country to another. The mode we have opted to achieve the cultural exchange was by organizing cultural programmes focussing on the Indian communities based in Western Australia. We are closely associated with the Indian community organizations in Western Australia to have their support and participation in our cultural programmes.

In addition to organizing cultural programmes, we have an import business as well. We import Indian Groceries regularly and supply to Indian grocery outlets and restaurants. We have a fully equipped warehouse on rent and its operation requires manpower and other resources like electricity and fuel etc.

**How we organize cultural programmes?**

We bring talented and renowned artists (singers, musicians and actors) from India as a troop to perform cultural program in Western Australia. We have performed 9 cultural programmes in Western Australia until today. Total value of the programmes we have performed is \$1.2 Million. Our name as an entertainment company is well known to the Indian community predominantly the South Indian community based in Western Australia. We have a very good reputation in the community in terms of we conduct our announced programmes on time irrespective of all hurdles which we face logistically and financially.

## Net Employment Benefits to India and Western Australia?

We are proud and privileged to list the following Net Employment Benefits to India and Western Australia.

1. **Venue Cost:** We host our events in decent venues namely Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre, Kennedy Baptist College Auditorium and University of Western Australia Theatre etc. Thereby, the Venue providers in Western Australia has got a revenue share towards the venue hiring cost.
2. **Employment Benefit:** The management staff, Ushers, Security staff and Sound light providers of the Venue providers are employed during our program.
3. **Sound and Light Cost:** We never compromise to the Sound and Light Quality in our programmes; hence we engage reputed Sound and Light providers in Western Australia to rent their equipment, service of technically skilled crew and logistic services etc. In return, we pay a considerable amount of fee to the Western Australian based organization.
4. **Hotel Accommodation, Domestic Travel and Food Expenses:** Most of our artists and crew stays in decent accommodation including 5-star hotels etc. We engage transport providers like Bus West etc. for travelling from Airport to accommodation, to venue etc. There is considerable revenue contribution to the business houses in Western Australia towards this.
5. **Economy Boost:** In addition to the above finance flow to Australian market, our shows are ticketed, and sponsors involved etc. will bring considerable financial movement to local economy. This will benefit the financial institution and credit card companies etc.
6. **Cultural Benefit:** The cultural programmes in Western Australia made lots of influence in the Indians residing in Western Australians. The cultural programmes provided an opportunity to local Western Australians to attend the program and have an understanding about the Indian culture. Of course, the cultural benefits are intangible.
7. **Benefit to the Indian Artists:** The artists in India are financially benefited towards the remuneration we offer to them.
8. **Tourism opportunity:** Mostly the artists are accompanied by their family members, non-performers (Managers and program coordinators etc.) with the intention to see the places in Western Australia. Couple of our programmes are telecasted in Indian Satellite TV channels with Australian scenic footages in it which influenced the Indians to visit Australia.

## Existing Barriers or impediments to trade?

1. **Visa issue:** We always had issues in getting Visa on time. When we organize a cultural program, we must book and pay deposit for the venue almost 1 year before, air tickets for the artists should be issued well in advance to get the best air fare, pay for sound and light etc. We normally get the Visa closer to the event, there is a scenario, the Visa issued 1 day prior to the departure, which put us in to lots of pressure. In a ticketed program, we must sell the tickets to the public well in advance. Think of a scenario, the Visa is not issued on time even though we have applied for the same well in advance with all required documents, we will end up in big financial lose and credibility in the Australian and Indian market. We are ok in getting the Visa issued few days prior to the event date provided we get a confirmation from the Department of Immigration stating that the documents submitted by you all correct and

the Visa will be issued in due course rather than keeping silence and whenever we call they just say “it is in process” etc. Also, there is no facility for us to go and meet any Visa officers etc. In summary, Visa issue is one of our major barriers which always put us in to a jeopardising situation. For your information, the Visa fee we paid for our last program is \$14,560.00 this is in addition to the union fee.

2. **Visa Fees:** Current Visa fee is \$310.00, please consider an option to reduce this if the number of applicants is 10 or more etc. Visa fee is one of the significant cost components.
3. **Grant:** Currently the grant offered by the local Councils are only for organizations registered as non- profit organizations. In reality, even though we are not registered as non-profit organizations our end result is always financially loss. A review on the grant criteria to consider organizations registered as commercial like us will definitely support us.

**Opportunities to strengthen and trading relationship, including:**

Due consideration to be given to the barriers mentioned above will definitely encourage organizations like us to bring more cultural programmes to Western Australia by inviting artists from India. Thereby, strong business relation ship between both the countries will be consistently maintained.

Sindhu Venugopal  
Director – Paramount Events Pty Ltd.