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Chairman: The Rt Hon Kenneth Robinson  
Secretary-General: Roy Shaw

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Dear

This year, South West Arts is organising its second 'film tour', bringing British independent film-makers and their work to a number of venues which would not normally be able to mount such events. This year's tour will also include 'retrospective' programmes presented by critics active in discussing and promoting independent film. As before, the tour has been subsidised by (in addition to South West Arts): the Artists Films Committee of the Arts Council (AFC/ACGB), and by several departments of the British Film Institute, operating relatively independently of each other, the Production Department (PD) and Film Availability Services (FAS).

In view of the considerable problems involved in presenting independent film, the South West tour seems to offer a useful model for the efficient deployment of subsidy, time and effort - a model which other RAAs may be interested to develop in ways appropriate to their regions. However the experience of those involved in subsidising and organising the South West tour indicates that the different criteria and procedures of the various potential 'sponsors', and their lack of co-ordination, can produce additional difficulties. Therefore, representatives of ACGB, FAS, PD, along with the BFI Regional Department (RD) and the Educational Advisory Service (EAS) have recently met to consider what liaison is possible. They have agreed that it might be desirable for any RAA interested in mounting such extended programmes to discuss the overall scheme with a group representing the BFI/ACGB, which could then determine the individual contributions available from various budgets and funds.

The impulse behind this is a wish to minimise the irritation and confusion arising from conflicting criteria in ACGB and BFI departments, which often seem merely obstructive to those active in the regions. It is emphatically not seen as an 'executive' which would sit in judgement on RAA policy and initiatives. Specific proposals should still be made to the individual funding agencies but where a large programme is envisaged, it may be possible to maximise the subsidy available by drawing on a combination of ACGB and BFI sources. Since it is not possible at this stage to introduce standard criteria and procedures, the responsible officers feel that they can at least solve some of the present administrative problems amongst themselves. We would appreciate your comments on this proposal.

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