



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Film and TV industry takes its fight to Canberra

Some of the giants of Australian film and TV have today descended upon Parliament House in Canberra to directly lobby politicians to support the industry's future.

Actors Bryan Brown, Sigrid Thornton, Sean Keenan, and Matt Day, actor-director-writer Leah Purcell, directors Gillian Armstrong and Peter Duncan, writer Katherine Thomson, Oscar-winning cinematographer John Seale and sound technicians Ben Osmo and David White, special effects guru Dan Oliver and producers Penny Chapman and Michael Tear are among a high-profile delegation from the [Make It Australian](#) campaign.

The campaign has brought together the Australian Directors' Guild, Australian Writers' Guild, Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance and Screen Producers Australia as well as members of the Australian Screen Industry Group to push for reforms and government support to ensure the sector's sustainability into the future. It was launched nationally last month and nearly a thousand Australians attended launch events in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide and Hobart.

The four organisations have combined forces to fight for:

- reform of local content rules to include the burgeoning digital platforms, including streaming video on demand;
- the restoration of funding to public broadcasters and Screen Australia, who commission a significant proportion of local comedy and drama; and
- the modernisation of our production incentives to make them globally competitive at all levels.

The four groups are also determined to fight any attempts by free-to-air commercial networks to reduce drama production and walk away from original children's programming altogether.

The new campaign comes as the House of Representatives and the Department of Communications, Screen Australia and the Australian Communications and Media Authority are conducting reviews which could have far-reaching implications for the industry.

"We are at a watershed in the history of the screen industry with the Government looking at sweeping changes that could effectively wipe away Australian content on our screens and take us back to the 1960's," said Kingston Anderson, chief executive officer of the **Australian Directors' Guild**. "The screen industry wants a constructive dialogue with the Government on changes that will benefit all Australians with an increase in Australian content on our screens not a decrease."

"Without a new regime of quotas and content regulations there will be no scripted drama, no kids television, and no stories or culture of our own to pass on to future generations whose screens, as well as their hearts and minds, will be filled instead with foreign content and reality shows." said Jan Sardi, president of the **Australian Writers' Guild**.





“The aim of today’s delegation is for politicians to hear directly from people working in film and television about the importance of supporting an industry that is of immeasurable cultural significance,” said Paul Murphy, chief executive officer of the **Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance**, the union which represents performers and screen crew. “Without real leadership from government to recognise how viewing patterns are changing and to properly support local production, our screens, both big and small, are in danger of being flooded with voices in American and British accents.”

“Our \$3.5 billion industry is at the intersection of culture and commerce. The tensions that arise between these complementary and competing objectives energise the industry and the nearly 20,000 Australians that work in it,” said Matthew Deaner, chief executive officer of **Screen Producers Australia**. “But to grow our industry so we can make more and better Australian stories, we need the right attention given to the policy settings. That’s why we’re here today – to bring our positive message to Canberra so our industry can continue to grow make and take our stories to Australia and the world.”

Throughout today, the delegation has met face-to-face with key politicians and tonight it will host a panel discussion in Parliament about the future of the screen industry.

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