



**AFACT**

AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION AGAINST COPYRIGHT THEFT

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## **ANTI-CAMCORDING TRAINING PROGRAM TARGETS MOVIE SOURCE PIRACY IN CINEMAS**

### ***“Make a Difference 2” for Cinema Staff Launched at Independent Cinemas Conference***

SYDNEY – On 18 March, the Australian Federation Against Copyright Theft (AFACT) stepped up action to prevent the illegal camcording of movies in cinemas, launching its new interactive DVD training program “*Make A Difference 2*” (MAD 2) for cinema staff at the annual Independent Cinema Association of Australia (ICAA) conference. Over 85 people attending the conference received a copy of the training package and more will be distributed to every cinema in Australia. An accompanying web site [www.make-a-difference.sg](http://www.make-a-difference.sg) is also available.

The anti-camcording training program helps cinema managers and staff detect and prevent persons using recording devices to illegally copy movies being screened in their cinemas. Effective action by front line cinema staff is a vital component of the movie industry’s strategy to stop illegal camcording along with continuing to raise public awareness, stepping up security measures, offering rewards to cinema staff and lobbying for specific, effective laws against camcording.

“Illegally camcorded movies start the movie piracy ecosystem and are the source of over 90 per cent of first release pirated movies on sale in Australia and around the world,” said AFACT’s Director of Operations, Neil Gane at the launch of the training program. “Preventing camcording is a key strategic focus for our industry because although very damaging, it can be stopped. The updated version of our “*Make A Difference*” training package for cinema staff gives front line cinema staff the information they need to prevent camcording, identify camcorders and assist enforcement authorities when someone is caught making these recordings.”

Denis Parkes, owner of The Picture Show Man cinema in Merimbula, NSW, said: “Rural cinemas provide much needed jobs and entertainment in our communities but they are under threat from widespread movie piracy. Movie piracy has contributed to the recent closure of several regional cinemas and has the potential to close more, so it’s vital that every cinema in Australia does everything possible to stop those few people who are threatening out industry from illegally recording movies in our cinemas.”

With more movies being released globally at the same time and improving camcord technology, Asia Pacific has seen an increase in the number of movies camcorded in the region and forming the source for the production of pirated DVDs around the world. In 2008, 916 illegally camcorded movies were forensically matched to their cinema of origin, with 122 of these originating from cinemas in the Asia Pacific region. Forensic monitoring in the first two months of 2009 has shown

that Australia has become a major hub for regional camcording, recording the second most forensic matches after the Philippines.

Australia's first criminal conviction for making and distributing an illegal camcord copy of a theatrically released movie was in November 2007. Mr Jose Duarte, 21, from Prairiewood in NSW, was convicted of recording "*The Simpsons Movie*" on his mobile phone and uploading it to the internet. Within 72 hours of Duarte making and uploading his unauthorized recording, it was tracked to streaming sites and P2P systems where it had been illegally downloaded more than 110,000 times and, in all probability, copied and sold as a pirated DVD all over the world.

On 13 February this year, New South Wales Police, supported by investigators from AFACT, raided a residence in Sydney's west, seizing sophisticated video camcording equipment which was alleged to have been used for making illegal video recordings of a number of latest release titles including "*He's Just Not That Into You*", "*Marley and Me*", "*Yes Man*", "*Bedtime Stories*", and "*Beverley Hills Chihuahua*"

Following the raid, a 26-year-old man was arrested and charged with 18 Copyright offences. He was granted bail and is set to appear at Blacktown local court on 2 April.

Penalties for copyright crimes are a maximum of \$60,500 and/or 5 years' jail per offence.

### **About AFACT**

AFACT works closely with industry, government, police and educational institutions to address copyright theft and protect the interests of the film and television industry as well as the interests of Australian movie fans.

In 2008, state and federal police conducted 51 raids involving movie piracy and seized 544,697 pirated DVDs. They also seized 488 burners capable of producing 12 million pirated DVDs a year with a potential street value of over \$61million.

AFACT acts on behalf of the 50,000 Australians and small businesses under threat from copyright theft, including independent cinemas, video rental stores and film and television producers across the country. AFACT has its own anti-piracy hotline: 1800 251 996.

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