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MARKET CRACKDOWN YIELDS OVER 4,500 ILLEGAL DVDS

Counterfeit Blue-ray DVDs, "burnt" DVDs and movie box sets found in haul

Sydney: On Sunday 31 October, New South Wales Police from Green Valley Local Area Command, assisted by expert investigators from the Australian Federation Against Copyright Theft (AFACT), conducted a search of Prestons' Markets in Camden Valley Way, seizing over 4,500 illegal movie and television DVDs.

The targeted operation identified five stalls within the market that are alleged to have been selling illegal DVD copies of current movies and television shows. At one stall, over 2,000 "burnt" movie DVDs, selling for up to \$5 each, were seized. The haul included illegal copies of *Devil* and *The American*, which are yet to be released in Australian cinemas. Police also discovered illegal copies of the Australian film *Wog Boy II: The Kings of Mykonos*.

At yet another market stand, Police discovered counterfeit movie box sets and new-release movie Blue-ray discs, all of which, it will be alleged, originated from China. The box sets were priced at up to \$150 per set and contained up to 100 movie titles. Last week China launched a new crackdown on copyright violations intended to target everything from pirated DVDs to food. The China nationwide anti-piracy campaign will last six months and will target those syndicates manufacturing counterfeit products as well as exporters attempting to ship illegal products to countries such as Australia.

Neil Gane, Executive Director of AFACT, commended the New South Wales Police on their operation: "The work conducted by Police today helps to ensure that legitimate businesses like cinemas and corner DVD stores can operate on a level playing field without having to compete with blatantly illegal film and television product on the streets and in the markets. While most of our community understands that the illegal sale and distribution of films and TV shows will be investigated and acted upon by the Police, it appears some people are slow learners, and that will likely be to their detriment when their time comes to front up in court."

Three males are assisting Police with their enquiries.

Members of the community can provide information on movie piracy to Crime Stoppers by calling 1800 333 000 or AFACT by calling 1800 251 996.

Penalties for copyright crimes under the Commonwealth Copyright Act 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 2009, State and Federal Police conducted 69 raids involving movie piracy and seized 194,233 pirated DVDs. They also seized 749 burners capable of producing over 18 million pirated DVDs a year with a potential street value of over \$94 million.

Australia's copyright industries are the 3rd largest contributors as a percentage of GDP in the world, second only to the US and UK. In 2006/07 they contributed 10.3% GDP to Australia's economy [up 66% since 1996], represented 8% of our employment and generated 4.1% of total exports. The film and TV industry in Australia alone contributed \$4.4 billion to GDP and supports 50,000 jobs, including small businesses under threat from movie and TV piracy, and independent cinemas, video rental stores and film and television producers across the country. In 2007, the film and TV sector contributed an estimated \$1.8 billion in tax to the Australian Government.

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