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BALWYN NORTH MAN ARRESTED ON SUSPECT ILLEGAL DVD MOVIE RACKET

Over 2,000 illegal movie DVDs seized

Melbourne: On 28 May, Victoria Police from Croydon DTU, supported by investigators from the Australian Federation Against Copyright Theft (AFACT) raided a business address in Lilydale and a residence in Balwyn North seizing over 2,000 illegal movie DVDs.

A man in his 40s was arrested and has been charged in relation to the illegal DVDs.

Following the operation in Lilydale, Police then raided a residence in the suburb of Balwyn North where they seized over 2,000 illegal movie DVDs. The haul included illegal copies of *Robin Hood* and *Clash of the Titans*, which are both currently screening in Australian cinemas and not yet available legitimately on DVD.

Following the operation, Neil Gane, the Executive Director of AFACT, said: "We commend the work of the Victoria Police which lead to today's raid. The result puts a stop to the flood of illegal DVD movies being distributed throughout the community to the detriment of genuine businesses such as local cinemas and DVD stores. These businesses provide jobs, pay taxes, and make available a wide range of quality screen entertainment for their community. They deserve a fair go and should not have to compete with theft."

In the first quarter of 2010, AFACT was involved in 16 raids resulting in the seizure of 67,911 illegitimate discs and 148 DVDR burners.

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.

On 24 November 2009 in Sydney, AFACT and Crime Stoppers hosted an event to destroy an estimated 780,000 pirated DVD movies, the result of NSW Police, Victoria Police and Federal Police operations to counter movie piracy. Also attending the destruction ceremony were local DVD store owners and Australian actors Susie Porter (*East West 101*, *The Jesters*) and Roy Billing (*Underbelly*, *Charlie and Boots*).

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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