

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
19 MARCH 2010

TWO MOVIE PIRACY BUSTS IN TWO DAYS UNCOVERS THOUSANDS OF ILLEGAL DVDS

Sydney: In two separate actions over two consecutive days NSW Police, assisted by investigators from the Australian Federation Against Copyright Theft (AFACT) raided movie piracy operations in Claremont Meadows and Marrickville, seizing a total of 2,800 pirated DVD movies with a street value of \$25,200.

In the first incident, on 17 March, NSW Police, supported by investigators from AFACT, conducted a raid on residence in Claremont Meadows in Sydney's western suburbs, following information supplied by members of the public. Inside the residence, Police discovered more than 1,500 pirated DVD movies, including copies of *Avatar* and *Alice in Wonderland*, which are still showing in Australian cinemas, computer equipment used for the illegal manufacture of pirated DVDs.

A woman in her thirties is helping Police with their enquiries and copyright charges are expected to be laid.

On 18 March, NSW Police, supported by investigators from AFACT, raided a video store in Marrickville, NSW, seizing 1,300 pirated movie DVDs and a burner operation used for manufacturing illegal DVD movies.

Titles confiscated during the raid included *The Book Of Eli*, starring Denzel Washington, which is yet to be released in Australian cinemas, and is not legitimately available on DVD. Fake copies of the popular Australian movie *Charlie and Boots*, which stars Paul Hogan, Shane Jacobsen and Roy Billing were also seized.

It is alleged that customers to the store chose titles from a folder full of new and yet-to-be released movies, and the pirated copies were then burnt to order. The pirated movies were selling under the counter for between \$5-15 per disc.

A man in his mid-thirties is helping Police with their ongoing enquiries.

Commenting on the raids, Neil Gane, Executive Director AFACT, said "The important work conducted by the NSW Police over the last two days is vital to protecting the rights of those in the creative community who make the movies, and the 50,000 people supported by the film and television industry who rely on legitimate tickets sales and DVDs for their livelihood. Those involved in copyright theft should be under no illusion that their illegal businesses will not be investigated and brought before the courts."

The star of *Charlie and Boots* and *Underbelly*, Roy Billing said: "It's a shock to see pirated copies of great Australian films changing hands all over Sydney

knowing full well that not one cent of those profits are going to the Australians who worked so hard to make them, or to the cinemas, DVD stores or back to the investors – including the Australian tax payer. The losses to piracy hurt many people within our community – it's not a victimless crime.”

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.

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.

You can view footage from the movie piracy operation in Marrickville on the NSW Police YouTube Channel at www.youtube.com/watch?v=AIGe6QjsBDQ

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 \$94million.

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.

Contact:

For interviews with Neil Gane, AFACT, please contact:

Stephen Jenner
02 9997 8011
0409 776 196

info@afact.com.au
www.afact.com.au

ENDS

