

DRAMA REPORT STATEMENT

MEDIA RELEASE 31 OCTOBER 2017:

Today, our CEO, Matt Deaner welcomed the 2016/17 Drama Report.

“The Drama Report’s headline figure of \$1.3 billion total Australian expenditure is welcome. Increased investment in our industry demonstrates the strength of Australian creative talent in a global market. Record expenditure and hours of Australian TV drama is encouraging, but I caution this report is a point in time. I hope to see this continue to increase in the 2017/18 Drama Report and beyond.”

“The report confirms that the Australian children’s television is in a state of crisis. We know the commercial broadcasters have devalued the audiences for targeted children’s content and the numbers back this up – record low expenditure and hours. They should not be rewarded for this neglect by having children’s obligations abolished, as they have asked. We must instead look to adapting regulatory models to ensure our children are supported with Australia stories from a variety of formats and platforms now and into the future.”

“The number of Australian features is significant, particularly in the \$10m+ bracket, in which Australian creative talents can fully compete for foreign finance and international awards. Though the trending decline in Screen Australia’s funding that is affecting its contribution to features is an ongoing concern.”

“The report brings also highlights the record level of foreign investment in Australia. To maximize the benefits of this to our industry, the incentivisation and effect of foreign investment must be carefully considered and well managed. While the industry welcomes foreign productions to Australia, the inflationary effect on production costs can create problems for our small businesses. I also caution governments to ensure all boats – local and foreign – rise together, while enhancing the critical ballast provided by Australian production companies in developing Australian stories and co-productions to maintain and grow our international investment and engagement. If our industry is skewed too heavily towards an offshore fee for service sector, where global investment strategies are influenced largely by exchange rates and comparative incentives, this will destabilise our sector. Balance and stability in our content ecosystem is critical - as is certainty around Government incentives and regulation. The outcome of the current Government reviews for our industry have never been more important.”

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About Screen Producers Australia:

Screen Producers Australia was formed by the screen industry to represent large and small enterprises across a diverse production slate of feature film, television and interactive content. Our members employ hundreds of producers, thousands of related practitioners and drive more than \$1.7 billion worth of annual production activity from the independent sector. On behalf of these businesses we are focused on delivering a healthy commercial environment through ongoing engagement with elements of the labour force, including directors, writers, actors and crew, as well as with broadcasters, distributors and government in all its various forms. This coordinated dialogue ensures that our industry is successful, employment levels are strong and the community’s expectations of access to high quality Australian content have been met.