

Film Inquiry
Submission No. 52



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29th June, 2003

**SUBMISSION TO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING COMMITTEE ON
COMMUNICATIONS, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND THE ARTS**

The Australian Screen Editors Guild (ASE) is an association of over two hundred and eighty highly skilled workers in the Australian film and television industry. The ASE represents picture and sound editors, post production supervisors and animators. Our work can be seen in all areas of the audio and visual post production industry.

One of the issues that is of major concern to the ASE today is the potential loss of Australian content regulations on television and subsidies by State and Federal Government film bodies if the entertainment and arts industries are included in the Australia – US Free Trade Agreement that is currently under negotiation. If Australian content and Government subsidies were removed due to a Free Trade Agreement it would be an economic, social and cultural disaster for the entire Australian film and television industries and future opportunities for the development of these industries would be severely limited.

In 1992 partial deregulation of television commercials allowed 20% of commercials to be imported from overseas. Slowly, Australian television commercial production companies reported a significant decrease in the production of high-end, high budget commercials. The ASE sees this as an indication of the trend that would occur under a Free Trade Agreement. Many of the Australian film and television industry practitioners, including editors, began their careers working on high end television commercials. These commercials provided us with invaluable training and experience that we took forward into television drama, feature films, documentaries and short films.

We have, for a long time, relied heavily on Governments, both Commonwealth and State to support the Australian film and television industry through the funding of film commissions and organizations. We need to see these structures kept in place so Australian writers, producers and directors can bring their stories to the screen. As editors, we don't generally create content, we rely on producers and directors to bring their vision for us to enhance and complete. Without continuing Government funding and support our members would find our skills and expertise eroded.

We need to be able to tell Australian stories in an Australian way and editors play a very important role in bringing these stories to screens, big and small, the world over.