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Suite R1 116
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Ph: (02) 6277 4601
Fax: (02) 6277 4827
e-mail: cita.reps@aph.gov.au

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE SETS OUT BLUEPRINT FOR THE FILM AND ELECTRONIC GAMES INDUSTRIES

Australian films need to direct their focus more towards audience appeal in order to grow the Australian Film Industry in the current internationally competitive market, according to a House Communications Committee report tabled by chair Bob Baldwin MP today.

He said that the opportunities for both the Film and Electronics Game Industries are only restricted by the imagination.

The Committee recognises the significant contribution these industries have made to Australia, not only in jobs and investment, but also by raising Australia's profile internationally.

The report *From reel to unreal: future opportunities for the film, animation, special effects and electronic games industries* includes some future directions, in particular:

- the benefits of developing and exploiting our own intellectual property and copyright, rather than relying on fee-for-service work for overseas productions;
- the need for Australian films to generate more audience appeal; and
- some of the industries' future opportunities, including:
 - digital production in animation and special effects
 - co-productions with other countries
 - cross platform content such as game/film spin-offs.

"The Committee fully supports the artistic and historical need for documentaries and films. However, the film sector especially needs to pay greater attention to audience demand," Mr Baldwin said.

"Australia continues to lose too many of our best people overseas. I am disappointed that these industries often amount to no more than training grounds for overseas businesses, forfeiting further opportunities.

"Although government programs usually have a cultural basis, the people with the most potential often go overseas to pursue audience-driven projects. If our best people want to make films that connect with audiences, maybe our government programs should reflect that."

A media conference, which will be web cast at www.aph.gov.au/live on HMS 10, is scheduled for 9:30 am on 23 June 2004 in room 2R1. The report can be downloaded from www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/cita along with other information on the inquiry. Hard copies of the report are available from the secretariat (ph 6277 4601).

For comment: Bob Baldwin MP on 0419 694 620.