



Film Inquiry Submission No. 7.....

CENTRAL CITY

S T U D I O S

HOLDINGS PTY LTD

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Submission to The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications, Information and Technology and the Arts.

It is important we maintain studios and facilities at world best practice standards for both overseas and our own local drama productions. In Victoria a lot of time, money and local government commitment has been dedicated to ensuring the development of Melbourne's first studio complex which will go a long way to facilitating our existing industry and attracting new productions. The industry in Australia has to compete in a world market which demands standards of services and facilities of the highest degree. In order to keep abreast of these standards and skill, we need a healthy industry in which to train as well as facilities of a world class standard to attract overseas productions to our shore. It is essential we continue to remain competitive with our incentives to attract overseas expenditure as well as retaining our own cultural integrity by supporting local production and providing a genuine training ground for young film makers.

Central City Studios in Melbourne's Docklands is designed for the production of film and television drama as well as live television. Of the first 5 stages under construction we have 2 stages ideally suited for Australian drama (film & television) production, one 'live' stage with motorised lighting grid plus a large and medium studio to attract larger Australian feature films and/or U.S. mini-series, telemovies and medium sized feature films.

The complex will also house a commercial precinct dedicated to film industry businesses and services in all facets of production and post-production. This precinct will create a central 'hub' for the industry and an atmosphere for communication and creativity amongst industry professionals. With local, interstate and overseas productions passing through the studios, all associated businesses will be 'in the loop' of the current and proposed production slate and well informed of current trends. The creation of a cluster of this type will not only enhance the local industry but also potentially provide a training ground for future film makers.

Until now Melbourne has been without sound stages and consequently not been in a position to attract some of the U.S. offshore production nor accommodate the local industry which has often had to make do with warehouse space. In the past, Victoria as a producer of Australian television drama was the training ground for a great number of technicians and artists but as the industry changes and shrinks these opportunities are diminished. We must maintain a healthy local industry in order to produce the sort of skills required to compete overseas with our product and to attract overseas productions. As the rest of the world is also competing for the offshore dollar we must remain competitive with our local incentives, offer the highest standard of skills and assist our facilities and services to maintain the highest technological standards. Existing government support programs should take into account the changing trends of technology throughout the industry.

It is also essential we continue to tell our own stories and create our own film culture or we will simply be training our actors and technicians for export to other countries. We have a strong history of excellence in our production history, which has given us an extraordinary profile overseas and has also had a direct impact on tourism to our country and we must ensure that we maintain this in the future.

Helen Watts
Head of Operations
Central City Studio Holdings