

DEPARTMENT OF  
NATURAL RESOURCES, ENVIRONMENT AND THE ARTS

# THE TERRITORY ON SCREEN

2003 -2006



NORTHERN TERRITORY  
**FILM OFFICE**



Northern Territory Government

## Minister's Message



The Northern Territory is home to a rich and vibrant arts community, reflecting a huge diversity of peoples, cultures and stories. The screen industry forms an exciting and dynamic part of the Territory's arts community, one that is growing fast and gaining national and international attention for quality and innovation.

Creative and cultural expression is vital to developing our sense of being Territorian. The use of film, television, video, digital, and online media by Territorians to tell our own stories strengthens us and gives us the power to influence the perception of the Territory and Territorians at an international level.

Additionally, the screen industry forms a significant part of the Territory economy, worth over \$38M in 2003-04. It industry employs over 500 people and through its activities, markets the Territory to many more.

The Martin Labor Government continues to recognise this important industry, establishing the Northern Territory Film Office in 2003 with a remit to support, develop and grow the industry to the benefit of all Territorians.

This report on the activity of the NT Film Office during its establishment phase reveals an energy in Territory film, video, television and digital media production that is delivering a distinctly Territorian presence on national and international screens. In turn filmmakers from across Australia and the world are turning towards the Northern Territory as Australia's most exciting filming destination.

During the past 12 months alone two major feature films and a number of other television series, short films and documentary projects have been shot in the NT, showcasing the Territory's unique diversity of cultures, locations and stories. Other major productions have already committed to filming here in the coming months.

In turn, our own filmmakers are making waves. Films like *Green Bush* and *Yellow Fella*, have gained international acclaim. The television series *Bush Mechanics* has been sold around the world, and Territory stories, actors and crew are receiving awards at prestigious festivals including Cannes in France.

As this report makes it clear, the Territory screen industry has a very healthy future. I commend both the report, and the industry, to you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marion Scrymgour".

**Ms Marion Scrymgour**  
**Minister for Arts and Museums**



## Vision

The Northern Territory Film Office aims to encourage and develop a sustainable, creative and vibrant film, television and digital media industry in the Northern Territory.

## Mission

The NT Film Office works with the NT screen industry and government to support and develop a viable business environment that ensures a thriving local industry.

## Key Objectives

The NT Film Office:

- Strives to ensure a high level of production within the NT that promotes local job opportunities and generates a healthy economic impact.
- Guarantees to support a significant number of quality NT productions created by Territory film, television and digital media makers.
- Seeks to stimulate the NT industry through support of a vibrant and innovative screen culture.

## Report Audience

*The Territory On Screen* documents the activities of the NT Film Office during its establishment period. The report provides a current overview of the film, television and digital media industry in the NT based on an extensive industry survey conducted by the NT Film Office in 2004, *The NT Film Office Industry Survey 2004*; and identifies some possible opportunities for the future development and growth of the local industry that have emerged during the establishment phase.

## Abbreviations

AIDC	Australian International Documentary Conference
AFC	Australian Film Commission
AFTRS	Australian Film, Television and Radio School
ASC	Australian Society of Cinematographers
ASDA	Australian Screen Directors' Association
DCITA	Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts
FATANT	Film and Television Association of the Northern Territory
FFC	Film Finance Corporation
SPAA	Screen Producers Association of Australia



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## Director's Message



I am delighted to present this report on the film, television and digital media industry of the Northern Territory, *The Territory On Screen*.

*The NTFO Industry Survey 2004*, an extensive industry survey conducted by the NT Film Office in 2004, gave an indication of the current size and capabilities of the Territory screen industry, as well as identifying some of the exciting opportunities for future growth and development.

This Report outlines the findings of the survey, the activities of the industry and the achievements of the NT Film Office in its first three years of operations. It is clear that the NT screen industry has great creative and economic potential. The Territory has a reputation for a solid skills-base and a refreshingly dynamic “can-do” attitude. These attributes, combined with some of the most dramatic and desirable film locations on Earth, point to a healthy future for the Territory screen industry.

*The NTFO Industry Survey 2004* revealed that despite its small population the NT has a larger per capita of involvement in the film, television and digital media industry than any other jurisdiction in Australia. In addition, the Territory is positioned within easy reach of the burgeoning Asian markets and boasts some of the most prolific and acclaimed Indigenous film makers in the nation.

The NT Film Office has been established at a crucial time in the evolution of the Territory’s screen industry. The Territory sits on the crest of a new wave in the global screen industry, enjoying unprecedented national and international attention. The NT Film Office has been working closely with the industry to establish a firm basis for the future growth of a viable and creative business environment that ensures a thriving local industry, and is now planning future directions.

I would like to thank those who completed the survey, and have been involved with the NT Film Office, and look forward to continuing to work with you as the industry develops and grows.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. McDonald'.

**Penelope McDonald**  
Director  
NT Film Office

