

New South Wales film and TV crew and performers let down by lemma Government

**For more information contact Simon Whipp on 0413 153 059
The Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance - the people who inform and entertain Australia**

This week's budget from the NSW Government has failed to deliver on Morris lemma's promises to revitalise the deeply depressed film industry in New South Wales.

Not only is the Premier yet to introduce his previously announced reforms to cut red tape and stamp out profiteering by local councils, but his budget package this week contained no additional funding or incentives to solve the crisis which is stifling NSW's once-thriving film industry.

Mr lemma raised the hopes of everyone in the industry in March when he announced that his government planned to make NSW "the back-drop to movies throughout the world" but introducing a raft of measures that would "boost the film and television industry in this state" as well as delivering a fillip to the tourism business.

He said councils and government departments were taking too long to process applications and too often refused those applications. He said he wanted to change that.

But Mr lemma and Mr Costa have allowed the best opportunity to go begging. Additional funds for the film and television industry in this week's budget would have been a signal that he and his government take the industry seriously. But no additional allocation was announced this week and the industry is still awaiting his reforms.

Acting federal secretary, Simon Whipp, said that NSW was leaking productions to other states which operate more film-friendly environments: "Unlike Queensland, Victoria and South Australia which have provided incentives to attract production, NSW is no longer seen as a friendly location for film and television productions. This budget has simply reinforced this general view," Mr Whipp said.

"They don't seem to realise that foreign and local producers can and do pack up and move to other locales that offer clearer and more attractive incentives."

Mr Whipp said that as far as he knew there were now no major international productions currently considering coming to NSW.

"This is a dire situation for the industry and will continue to be the case until the NSW Government recognises the contribution and value of the film and television production industry to the NSW economy," Mr Whipp said.

"We need to level out the playing field. NSW needs to introduce a significant new film and television support package including regulatory reforms, open, transparent and well defined film incentives to attract and retain foreign and local productions and additional funding for NSWFTO."

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ABN: 84 054 775 598

FEDERAL OFFICE
245 Chalmers St
Redfern NSW 2016

POSTAL ADDRESS
PO Box 723
Strawberry Hills
NSW 2012 Australia
Tel: [61] 2 9333 0999
Fax: [61] 2 9333 0933

Email
mail@alliance.org.au

Alliance Inquiry Desk
1300 656512

Alliance Membership
Centre 1300 656513

Website:
www.alliance.org.au

Federal President:
Patricia Amphlett

Federal Secretary:
Christopher Warren

