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SCREEN PRODUCTION INDUSTRY MARKETING TO BE CONSOLIDATED WITH FILM NEW ZEALAND

New strategic directions for Film New Zealand are confirmed in its annual report released today. Marketing and promotional activity for the New Zealand film industry which was previously carried out by New Zealand Trade and Enterprise's Investment New Zealand is being transferred to Film New Zealand, says the annual report.

Film New Zealand's chairman Julian Grimmond welcomes the new strategies which he says will focus on consolidated marketing of New Zealand as a screen production destination.

"We will be recognising the export strength of our screen production industry as a genuinely renewable and highly creative resource for New Zealand in the 21st Century," says Mr Grimmond. "As an organisation set up by the industry, Film New Zealand is proud that our work will be expanding. The changes, with agreement from all concerned, are confirmation of the results which we have achieved and our credibility with all stakeholders as New Zealand's national film office."

The annual report gives details of a Film New Zealand initiative to develop a sustainability policy for the screen production industry. It also reports an increase in the number of inquiries managed by Film New Zealand – 91 in the 2008/09 year compared with 85 the previous year. A majority of the inquiries came from the United States.

The annual report identifies three factors that are identified consistently by international producers who bring productions to New Zealand:

- Established relationships with screen production industry professionals;
- Creative considerations, having found locations required for a specific production and being satisfied that these could be combined with cost-efficiencies offered by New Zealand;
- Value to the production of filming in New Zealand, favourable production costs, value of the incentives and, in some cases, the exchange rate.

Acting Chief Executive Sue Thompson says it's "something we can be really proud of" that so many New Zealand companies and crew have worked on international projects during the year. The annual report lists *The Lovely Bones*, *Avatar*, *District 9*, *Warrior's Way*, *The Day the Earth Stood Still* and *Skyscraper*, as well as *Power Rangers*, *The Legend of the Seeker*, and *Spartacus: Blood and Sand*. She also refers to an episode of the US television series *The Bachelor* which was filmed in New Zealand – when broadcast by the ABC television network it drew an audience of over 12.5 million, "most of whom would be a key target demographic for the New Zealand tourism industry."

The annual report records the resignation of Judith McCann, Chief Executive Officer for the last five years. Sue Thompson pays tribute to her "marvellous work" for Film New Zealand and Julian Grimmond acknowledges her unflagging energy in building the credibility of Film New Zealand and positioning the organisation as one which gives the highest value to the screen production industry.

Film New Zealand, founded in 1994 by the screen production industry, is New Zealand's national film office, located in Wellington. It is constituted as a charitable trust, with governance by a board of trustees, representing the screen production industry, funders, and regional film offices. It has revenues/funding committed on an ongoing basis from the Ministry of Economic Development and the New Zealand Film Commission, together with annual project-based funding from Investment New Zealand, an agency of New Zealand Trade and Enterprise.

Further inquiries

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FILM NEW ZEALAND IS A MEMBER OF THE AFCA