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18 August 2009

## **MAGISTRATE SHOCKS MOVIE PIRATE WITH SEVEN MONTH SUSPENDED PRISON SENTENCE**

### **Australian Federal Police close down DVD piracy operation in South Australia raids**

Sydney: 68-year-old Brian Rutherford received a shock when he learned the price of his criminal actions – seven months imprisonment (suspended). Rutherford was sentenced in the Magistrates Court in Waikerie, South Australia on multiple offences under the Copyright Act relating to the manufacture, sale and possession of infringing copies of movies.

In March this year, following an intensive investigation by the Australian Federation Against Copyright Theft (AFACT), the Australian Federal Police (AFP) conducted raids on an Adelaide and Morgan residential premises in South Australia, which led to the apprehension of Rutherford and the seizure of two computers, 17 optical disc burners and 10,000 pirated DVDs. Rutherford had been selling the illegal DVDs over the internet for up to \$6 each. Movie titles seized included “*Marley & Me*”, “*Hotel for Dogs*”, “*Gran Torino*” and “*Valkyrie*”, many of which had just been released in Australian cinemas at the time.

“Full credit to the Australian Federal Police for the professionalism which led to the termination of a sophisticated home-based movie piracy operation,” said Neil Gane, Executive Director of AFACT. “Legitimate businesses are facing a serious threat from movie piracy so the end of this particular illegal operation is good news for cinemas and DVD sales and rental businesses in South Australia.”

Penalties for copyright crimes are up to \$60,500 and/or 5 years jail per offence.

### **About AFACT**

AFACT works closely with industry, government, police and educational institutions to address copyright theft and protect the interests of the film and television industry as well as the interests of Australian movie fans.

Australia’s copyright industries are the 3rd largest contributors as a percentage of GDP in the world, second only to the US and UK.

In 2006/07 they contributed 10.3% GDP to Australia’s economy [up 66% since 1996], represented 8% of our employment and generated 4.1% of total exports.

The film and TV industry in Australia alone contributed \$4.4 billion to GDP and supports 50,000 jobs, including small businesses under threat from copyright theft, and independent cinemas, video rental stores and film and television producers across the country.

In 2007, the film and TV sector contributed an estimated \$1.8 billion in tax to the Australian Government.

In 2008, state and federal police conducted 51 raids involving movie piracy and seized 544,697 pirated DVDs. They also seized 488 burners capable of producing 12 million pirated DVDs a year with a potential street value of over \$61million.

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