



8 August 2014

Dear Screen Industry members

RE: SCREENWEST RESPONSE TO *FOCUS ON THE FUTURE*

ScreenWest welcomes the Hames Sharley report, *Focus on the Future*, which provides a detailed needs analysis of Western Australian screen industry infrastructure and delivers a solid platform from which ScreenWest, in collaboration with the private and public sectors, can move to Stage 2 of this planning process.

Hames Sharley's research and analysis involved consultation with a wide range of Western Australian screen industry practitioners, stakeholders, guilds, associations and production companies, and we thank all who participated.

Focus on the Future proposes a range of activities associated with increasing industry capacity via the development and financing of human, built and technological resources. It is clear that structured, linked initiatives designed to grow the existing industry and develop the next generation will be essential in this time of rapid economic and technological change in the digital content sector and global screen industry. As such the report provides three key conclusions around professional development, production technology and financing to support the next phase of industry development:

- *Maintaining, sharing and building skills through collaboration, mentoring, creative hubs and education.*
- *Maintaining competitiveness and cost effectiveness in a challenging market through flexibility, technical awareness, best practice and effective production facilities.*
- *Distinguishing ourselves from the rest through understanding and use of effective distribution and finance models, marketing and production and finance partners.¹*

The report confirms the need for various parallel business and professional development programs essential to the ongoing development of the screen industry, which are in line with ScreenWest's Strategic and Operational plans, as well as building on existing ScreenWest initiatives.

Core to the report are two detailed proposals for appropriate built infrastructure in the form of an industry hub and public engagement space as well as a multipurpose production precinct including a studio. Case studies and analysis support the notion that a creative precinct will capitalise on the synergies associated with increased collaboration between industry professionals, emerging media producers and other arts and culture facilities. The notion of setting up a production hub is a strong one and is well supported by the Perth based screen industry. The report also underlines the

¹ Page 21 of the report

importance of providing a production precinct and noted that the current lack of suitable infrastructure is a major impediment to the growth of the Western Australian screen industry. As such *Focus on the Future* affirms the need for an industry standard studio to ensure the sustainability of the Western Australian industry.

While the report has calculated the notional funds required if the creative hub and multipurpose production precinct were built from the ground up, a number of existing sites listed in the report have the potential to be upgraded. In addition, a number of private and public institutions and industry associations already have strategic plans that include the development of a hub or plans for a studio precinct.

To further explore the key recommendations, ScreenWest is now in the process of commissioning a comprehensive Business Case. This stage will provide more detailed economic analysis of the viability of the built infrastructure options; will model the overall economic impact and opportunities for the screen industry arising from the implementation of the key recommendations; and will identify opportunities that can achieve whole of government outcomes as well as significant private and public sector collaborations.

We look forward to working with the screen industry, Government agencies and the private sector as we progress to Stage 2.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Peter Rowe', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Peter Rowe
CHAIR