
Dear Australian Federal Government

My name is Kristan Dowsing. I work as an Assistant Director in the Film Industry.

Most people think that sounds fancy and go all wide eyed and excited and ask “who the most famous person I’ve worked with is” or “what would I have seen that you've worked on”?

I’ve worked in this industry for 10 years and still get slightly embarrassed when asked my profession because my job really couldn’t be less glamorous if it tried. I’m up most mornings around 4am (if not earlier) and don’t get home until 7 or 8pm at night. (I won’t go into the hours we do when we’re working nights) Doesn’t leave much for me to do but sleep. Very little.

It’s 100% my choice! And I wouldn’t choose any other profession! But for the government to overlook my whole industry when putting together their stimulus packages to support everyone (not us) during this recent pandemic. Is a slap in the face! My puffy, sleep deprived face.

And on top of this blatant disregard, there’s also talk of changing the rules surrounding Australian content obligations for broadcasters and putting my wonderful colleagues and my career in jeopardy.

To return to the most asked question when I tell people of my profession - “What would I have seen that you’ve worked on?” I most often wrack my brain for the most popular series or film I’ve done. I usually say “The Dressmaker”.. doubles as one of the most well known Australian productions of the last decade and has a Hemsworth. It was an incredible job! My legs were covered in sun cream and red dust all day every day. We worked a few 6 day weeks, surrounded by flies. I drove nearly 3 hours a day travelling cast to and from the set out near Little River in Victoria. It was a fantastic film, showcasing some incredible artists and actors and designers, technicians and crew. And it was Australian.

I wish I could name any one of the 50 or so productions I’ve worked on and it be recognised! Surely we as a country should be committed to producing content that the public can identify with. We should be encouraging Australian content. We should invest more to develop stories. Not take away from it. We should enrich our culture by celebrating and documenting and nurturing Australian productions.

Your government is currently focused on investing in construction and boosting the economy. Why wouldn’t you do the same with the Film and Television Industry? Why wouldn’t you want to invest in a business that will advocate Australians and their stories. And not only support and promote our wonderful diverse community, but share it with the world. Publicly. On a variety of platforms accessible to everyone.

If you reduce content obligations, it will gravely affect Australian productions from being made. It will be detrimental to our identity.

And so many hard working Australians will lose their jobs. Surely that's enough reason to implement better content obligations?!? Surely!?

I'm happy for my submission to be made public.

I hope you do the right thing.

Thank you for your time!

KD the AD.

Kristan Dowsing

*I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land. I recognise and respect their continuing connection to the land, waters & communities.
I pay respect to Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.*