

## **CAPE TOWN FILM LOCATIONS MANIFESTO**

**6 December 2007**

“Film” is an umbrella term that is understood to include Feature Films, Television Programs, TV Commercials and Stills Photographic Productions. A 2007 study of the industry revealed that this sector generates R3.5 billion in revenue to the regional economy of the Western Cape.

The signatories of this Manifesto are representative of this sector – they are Business Owners, Producers and Locations Professionals who use the streets, parks, beaches and buildings of the City of Cape Town as primary locations for the production of film, television, commercials and stills photography productions. Access to these locations is a fundamental requirement to the continued sustainability of this industry.

This manifesto defines the **urgent interventions** that have been identified by the industry in order to safeguard the sector.

At an emergency meeting held in Cape Town on December 6<sup>th</sup> 2007, the signatories of this document concluded that the City of Cape Town is unaware of the needs of the sector. Furthermore, our collective experience is that the bodies appointed by the City to manage the sector – namely the Cape Film Commission and the Cape Town Film Permit Office – are, through the framework in which they are currently authorized to operate, becoming disadvantageous to the development of the industry through poor performance and lack of response to the needs of the sector.

We believe that the core function and mandate of the Cape Film Commission & Cape Town Film Permit Office should be to facilitate and improve the functionality of the film industry in the Western Cape. We are unclear why this has not been achieved as we have met repeatedly over several years with the appointed authorities with the express purpose of bringing our concerns to the City's attention.

**In order to rectify the situation, we therefore seek the following interventions as a matter of urgency:**

1. The City of Cape Town to publicly declare its support for the film industry and to actively promote a “film friendly” Cape Town;
2. The City of Cape Town to instruct all staff, line departments and officials that “Film is everyone’s business” and to respond to the needs of the industry accordingly;
3. The City of Cape Town, with the input of the industry, to urgently overhaul the operations of the Cape Town Film Permit Office to ensure that it functions efficiently. This may entail the implementation of a functioning location booking system; the hiring in and training of staff members, the overhaul of outdated office systems and the extension of office hours during peak season. Although a new manager has been recently appointed to the Film Office, this was done late in the season with no lead in time – it appears that staff morale in the Film Office is also very low;
4. A comprehensive list of locations currently problem areas and “off limits” areas to be circulated as a matter of urgency, with explanations of the unavailability, so that production companies are able to plan ahead for the immediate future. The City and CFC to engage with the relevant location authorities to repair relations with them and make a case for the film industry;
5. The City of Cape Town to desist from unilateral decision making with regard to location availability with immediate effect as this is prejudicial to the film industry. Restrictions on locations should be made following a process of proper consultation with the industry i.e. recognized producer’s associations;
6. Legal parking to be permitted outside of all locations (with the exception of pre-designated & agreed “hot spot” locations) i.e. the recently implemented “ 3 parking rule” to be withdrawn with immediate effect;
7. A moratorium on all new location restrictions and an urgent explanation of all current location restrictions.

This includes:

- Parking
- City beaches
- City Pools & Stadiums
- City Parks
- City Buildings
- Roads
- Water Department

8. The urgent introduction of blanket permits for micro shoots whereby a single permit would allow micro crews (stills, actuality, news & documentaries) to shoot at numerous locations in and around the City. It is accepted that a production company in possession of a specific permit will take precedence over a micro shoot permit in which the location is unspecified;
9. The lifting of restrictions on overtime for traffic officers (including retired officers) and other city officials. The industry is fully prepared to compensate the City for overtime worked by these personnel. This will enable filming after hours and on weekends and public holidays. It will also create employment for traffic officers and add to the City's resources;
10. The fair and equitable application of City by-laws – as adhered to by the film industry – to all other activities and events in Cape Town i.e. road closures, construction, concerts, sporting events & deliveries. We call for an immediate end to the discrimination by the City against the film industry.
11. A review of requirements for concurrence and/or consent by neighbours & residence associations
12. The role, function & responsibility of Environmental Control Officers (ECO) to be properly defined. A list of locations requiring ECO's to be specified in advance and the specific reasons for ECO's to be present on these locations to be supplied to the industry;
13. The Cape Film Commission to urgently embark on a marketing campaign to the City of Cape Town regarding the importance of the Industry & its economic contribution to the Western Cape;
14. The Cape Film Commission to urgently meet with problematic residents associations to explain the importance of the film industry & its contribution to the region's economy;
15. The Cape Film Commission to urgently reprioritize its focus and concentrate its efforts on resolving logistical & location issues;
16. City authorities and the Cape Film Commission to work together with the industry to identify and resolve locations & logistical issues before they become barriers to entry;
17. The Cape Town Film Permit Office and Cape Film Commission to inculcate in their respective organizations the values of accountability, professionalism, integrity, impartiality, transparency, innovation and respect and to refine their focus to include correct procedure and service delivery.
18. The Cape Film Commission & Cape Town Film Permit Office to create a reporting procedure through which information is freely distributed to their industry partners and by which clear communication channels and report back mechanisms are implemented so that when issues are raised they are immediately recognized, properly documented and a strategy & time line set in place for their resolution. The Commission & the Film Office to report back and to advise the industry of the outcome of their interventions.

**The signatories to this agreement believe that the Cape Film industry is in crisis due to the on-going neglect of the issues by the City of Cape Town. We also believe that the future of the Cape Film Sector depends on the URGENT redress of these issues.**

We therefore call for the City of Cape Town's urgent acknowledgment of this Manifesto by **28<sup>th</sup> December 2007**, and a commitment by the City to address the 18 points detailed above, before **15<sup>th</sup> January 2008**.

We trust that the City will recognize the severity of this Manifesto and accept that the industry has expended every effort to resolve these issues with no result!