

A V S D A

Australian Visual Software Distributors Association Ltd

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AVSDA urges Australian Government to follow UK lead to stop online piracy

SYDNEY: 17 June, 2009. The Australian Visual Software Distributors Association (AVSDA) has today called on the Australian Government to follow the UK Government in showing leadership in combating online piracy.

The UK Government announced overnight its much anticipated Digital Britain report on the digital economy and a key recommendation is to ensure a "*robust legal and regulatory framework to combat Digital Piracy*".

Governments around the world including Britain, Canada, France, New Zealand and Sweden are actively focusing on addressing the problem of online copyright infringement, commonly known as piracy.

"AVSDA over many years has supported efforts for Australian copyright industries and ISPs to come together and agree on a code of conduct to reduce online digital piracy. The ISPs have steadfastly refused to cooperate and now is the time for the Australian Government to step in and ensure that ISPs do the right thing," AVSDA CEO, Simon Bush said.

"The release of the Digital Britain report shows the way for the Rudd Government when it shortly releases its report on the Future Directions of the Digital Economy which must include steps to reduce online piracy," Mr Bush said.

In particular AVSDA notes the following from the Digital Britain report:

- In relation to rights, the Government believes piracy of intellectual property for profit is theft and will be pursued as such through the criminal law. (section 45)
- We aim to provide for a graduated response by rights-holders and ISPs so that they can use the civil law to the full to deter the hard core of users who wilfully continue unlawful activity. (section 46)
-a duty to secure a significant reduction in unlawful file sharing by imposing two specific obligations: notification of unlawful activity and, for repeat-infringers, a court-based process of identity release and civil action. (section 46)

"AVSDA and its members are committed to embracing new digital business models to provide Australian consumers with choice and portability of content but no legitimate business model can compete with illegal and free," Mr Bush said.

Ends.

For more information contact: Simon Bush, AVSDA CEO on 0417 642 200.

About AVSDA

The Australian Visual Software Distributors Association (AVSDA) was formed in 1983 to represent the interests of owners of copyright in, and distributors of, videos in Australia. The video market is now 99% using the DVD format. In 2007, AVSDA members moved over 95 million titles worth \$1.347 billion in wholesale sales. According to ABS data, the wider film and television production and distribution industry in Australia employs directly or indirectly over 50,000 people.

The Association speaks and acts on behalf of its members on issues that affect the industry as a whole such as censorship, film piracy, technology challenges, free trade, copyright and enforcement.

Its 16 members include all the major Hollywood Studios and major Australian distributors such as Roadshow and Madmen Entertainment. More information can be found at www.avsda.com.au