



# MEDIA RELEASE

**The Hon Peter Garrett MP**

*Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts*

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## **Screen Australia CEO announced**

Arts Minister Peter Garrett today announced the appointment of the first Chief Executive Officer of the government's new film agency, Screen Australia.

"It gives me great pleasure to announce the appointment of Dr Ruth Harley as the CEO of Screen Australia," Mr Garrett said.

"Following an extensive global search the government was particularly impressed by Dr Harley's experience and commitment to the development of a successful and sustainable local film industry.

"I am confident that Dr Harley will provide the leadership necessary, as well as a fresh perspective, in this new era of Australian film and television production."

Dr Harley has been the CEO of the New Zealand Film Commission since 1997 and has more than 20 years experience in the film and television industries. During her tenure as New Zealand Film Commission CEO, Dr Harley has overseen the transformation of the commission and has been part of a strengthening of support and resourcing for New Zealand filmmaking. The international profile and domestic audiences for New Zealand filmmaking have grown during this time.

Dr Harley has held other important roles in the sector including the Executive Director of New Zealand On Air, Commissioning Editor at Television New Zealand Ltd (TVNZ) and the National Media Director of Saatchi and Saatchi in New Zealand. She holds a PhD from the University of Auckland, is a former Fulbright Scholar and is currently Chair of Fulbright NZ. Her commitment to broadcasting and the arts was recognised in 1996 with an OBE and in 2006 she received a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit for her services to film.

Dr Harley has accepted a five year term as CEO of Screen Australia and will bring to the agency extensive skills, knowledge and experience in all aspects of film and television culture. Her leadership, management and governance expertise will ensure the agency is well placed to face the challenges of being a major influence for change in the industry.

Dr Harley will take up her appointment by 15 November 2008. Ms Lyn Maddock will continue in the Acting CEO role and will be in ongoing contact with Dr Harley on major decisions as required.

"I want to extend my appreciation to Lyn Maddock, who took on the complex and crucial task of merging the Australian Film Commission, the Film Finance Corporation and Film Australia Limited into a new body," the Minister said. "Her work has placed Screen Australia in an ideal position to start revitalising and expanding our film and television industry."

Australia's screen production industry contributes more than \$1.5 billion to the economy, and employs 50,000 people.