

Dan Box documentary vodcast series funded for The Australian

Monday 24 July 2017: Walkley award-winning investigative reporter Dan Box, presenter of the *Bowraville* podcast, has teamed up with the producers of ABC's acclaimed *Hitting Home* for a six-part vodcast documentary series for The Australian newspaper, which has received production investment funding from Screen Australia.

The Queen & Zak Grieve tells the story of a young Indigenous man convicted of murder and facing a life in prison as a result of the Northern Territory's mandatory sentencing laws, a decision the judge himself described as an "injustice".

The team spent weeks in the Top End town of Katherine investigating the killing and the events that led to Zak Grieve being jailed, despite evidence he was not there when the crime took place. They conducted exclusive interviews with many of the people involved, including the judge who sent Grieve to jail, and obtained rare access to crime scene footage, forensic photographs, police interviews with suspects and trial recordings from the case.

The hard-hitting series raises questions about the criminal justice system itself. How could this apparent injustice have happened? Is it time for the mandatory sentencing laws that led to Grieve's lifelong incarceration to finally be revoked?

The Queen & Zak Grieve is written and presented by Dan Box, national crime reporter at The Australian, whose *Bowraville* podcast has been downloaded over half a million times. The series is produced and directed by Ivan O'Mahoney and executive produced by Nial Fulton at In Films, the Walkley and AACTA award-winning team behind *Hitting Home*, *Borderland* and *Matilda & Me*, with John Lyons as executive producer for The Australian.

Director **Ivan O'Mahoney** said: "This was a unique opportunity for us to work with one of Australia's best reporters, on a story of national importance and pioneer a new way of long-form documentary storytelling."

"*The Queen & Zak Grieve* brings together the talents of reporter Dan Box and the team at In Films for a powerful examination of justice that audiences will find shocking," said **Liz Stevens**, Screen Australia's Senior Manager Documentary. "It's an important development that The Australian is providing a new platform for audiences to view Australian documentaries."

The 6 x 10 minute episode series will be available to stream at no cost via The Australian online from Monday 28 August, with a new episode released each day until the final episode is made available on Saturday 2 September.

Subscribers to The Australian will be able to download the entire series from Saturday 26 August.

The series will also be reformatted as a one-hour documentary feature which will broadcast on Foxtel's Crime + Investigation channel on Wednesday 27 September at 7.30pm AEST.

John Lyons, The Australian's Associate Editor Digital Content, said: "We are delighted that one of our best journalists, Dan Box, is able to work with In Films for what will be one of the most important stories of the year. We are also extremely pleased that Screen Australia and Foxtel have backed a ground-breaking Australian investigation."

The Queen & Zak Grieve is produced by In Films for The Australian and Foxtel, with production funding from Screen Australia, in association with Create NSW.