

Hero Frock Hire, Specialist costume hire for film & TV, Sydney. Suzy Carter

I started in our industry at age 17, forty years ago, and my partner and I started Hero in 1992 to supply everyday clothing and uniforms for TV ads, Film and TV. Our aim was to ensure costumes were not disposed after one production, but kept as hire stock for use on other productions. We supply most of the bulk stock for many Australian productions. Some of those include Muriel's Wedding, Shine, The Sapphires, The Water Diviner, Mystery Road and Miss Fisher's Crypt of Tears. Government policy is critical to the future growth of the industry and we at Hero wholeheartedly support the recommendations of the MEAA "3. Significant Change" requiring incentives and obligations across platforms.

In the past TVC commercial work has significantly underwritten the businesses and crews of our industry, though it's not generally acknowledged in policy discussions. The decline of free to air TV and its advertising has notably affected industry viability, as social media ads, Instagram influencers, web series compete for advertising budgets. Govt policy urgently needs to adapt to this.

Hero's most recent large projects have been for platforms like Netflix, Apple and Amazon Prime [Jane Campion's "Power of the Dog" NZ, Shantaram [india/Aust], The Luminaries[NZ]. It's clear to us that there is enormous potential for industry growth in this area, however Australia needs to sharpen up to be competitive. Apart from the incentives MEAA suggests, it's also critical to have facilities available for "footloose" productions. Studios, production offices, supplier businesses, crew and cast. We do not compare well for studio and workspace. There are many current examples of this, especially here in NSW, where the govt focus is on selling off assets, not building up industries.

Unfortunately since the local content rules have been relaxed we have seen a decline in quality drama and children's TV productions. We learn much of our history from film and TV. These are often challenging budget wise, but usually something to be proud of. "My Place" was a significant childrens TV series, sadly we don't make more of these. Our children need to grow up knowing they're Australian [not American]. Deregulation will not produce quality outcomes.