

For Immediate Release

June 13, 2006

MOVIE PIRATE WHO STOLE AND DISTRIBUTED “SIONE’S WEDDING” IS ARRESTED

***Nationally Distributed Pirated Copies Containing Unfinished Version of Film
Traced to Single Disc Taken from Production Facility***

Auckland – On Thursday, June 8, following an investigation by New Zealand Police and the New Zealand Federation Against Copyright Theft (NZFACT), police officers arrested a 38-year-old Auckland man on suspicion of stealing a copy of the hit film “Sione’s Wedding”. The man was charged with theft and copyright offenses.

Pirated versions of “Sione’s Wedding”, all of which were traced by investigators back to the stolen version, were widely distributed throughout New Zealand even prior to the film’s theatrical premiere on March 30, 2006.

The suspect, who will appear in the Auckland District Court on Thursday, June 15, worked at an Auckland company providing post-production services to the film’s producers, South Pacific Pictures, Limited.

The stolen copy was an unfinished version of the film, which despite the damage – estimated at hundreds of thousands of dollars – done by the wide circulation of a pirated version to the film’s box office and future home video revenues, recorded the biggest opening weekend of any New Zealand film, ahead of “Whale Rider” and “The World’s Fastest Indian”.

“We are very pleased that an arrest has taken place in this case,” said producer John Barnett, CEO of South Pacific Pictures. “Piracy of local films has a tremendous impact on everyone in the film industry in New Zealand and worldwide, including writers, actors, directors, producers, exhibitors and home video distributors. There is no question that piracy can destroy the dreams of creative young people who have stories to tell and a talent for telling those stories.”

Tony Eaton, Director of Operations for NZFACT, which represents the Motion Picture Association (MPA) in New Zealand, said, “Within hours of the theft of a

digital copy of a film, countless identical copies can be made available for download via Internet and hard copies can be burned onto DVDs for resale, costing the film industry worldwide billions of dollars every year. This arrest sends a message that copyright theft is theft, plain and simple.

“What’s important is for people to understand that when they take movies for free off the Internet, or for next to nothing from a pirate street vendor, they are killing the thing they love. They are killing the movie business. And they are killing first of all the local movie business.”

About NZFACT: *The New Zealand Federation Against Copyright Theft was established in 2005 by the Motion Picture Association to protect the film industry in New Zealand from the adverse impact of copyright theft. NZFACT works closely with its members, government and enforcement authorities to protect the New Zealand film and television industry, retailers and movie fans. NZFACT members include: Village Roadshow Limited; Buena Vista International, Inc.; Paramount Pictures Corporation; Sony Pictures Releasing International Corporation; Twentieth Century Fox International Corporation; Universal International Films, Inc.; and Warner Bros. Pictures International, a division of Warner Bros. Pictures Inc. NZFACT works in association with the Motion Picture Association, which represents the interests of the film industry across the world.*

About the MPA: *The Motion Picture Association (MPA) represents the interests of major motion picture companies in the global marketplace. On behalf of its Member Companies, the MPA conducts investigations around the world, assists with the criminal and civil litigation generated by such cases, and conducts education outreach programs to teach movie fans around the world about the harmful effects of piracy. The MPA directs its worldwide anti-piracy operations from its headquarters based in Encino, California and has regional offices located in Brussels (Europe, Middle East and Africa), São Paulo (Latin America), Montreal (Canada) and Singapore (Asia-Pacific). The MPA’s anti-piracy activities have helped to transform entire markets from pirate to legitimate, benefiting video distributors, retailers, and foreign and local filmmakers alike. The MPA Member Companies include: Buena Vista International, Inc.; Paramount Pictures Corporation; Sony Pictures Releasing International Corporation; Twentieth Century Fox International Corporation; Universal International Films, Inc.; and Warner Bros. Pictures International, a division of Warner Bros. Pictures Inc.*

#

For more information, contact:

Mike Ellis
MPA Asia-Pacific
65-6253-1033

Margaret Fu
MPA Asia-Pacific
852-2785-8677

Tony Eaton
NZFACT
09 479 1602
tony@nzfact.co.nz