

# COVID-SAFE SA TO STAR IN \$400M MOVIE AND TV BONANZA

GIUSEPPE TAURIELLO



South Australia was chosen as the location to film \$50m Hollywood blockbuster *Mortal Kombat*, which is based on the popular video game.



SOUTH Australia is tipped to play a starring role in a \$400m program to draw blockbuster film and TV productions Down Under.

Local film industry experts expect our coronavirus-free state to lure more big-budget productions after Scott Morrison confirmed details of the Federal Government's new scheme on Friday.

The Prime Minister announced that the existing location offset would be boosted from 16.5 per cent to 30 per cent for international films and TV shows shot in Australia.

South Australian Film Corporation chief executive Kate Croser, pictured, said the state was one of the first places in the world to restart its newscreen production, thanks to low COVID-19 numbers. She said that would make it an attractive location for major projects. "We know there is a significant amount of footloose production around the world looking for a new home, estimated by Ausfilm to be worth more than \$900m, and South Australia is perfectly positioned

to attract it to our state," she said. "This extension of the federal location incentive program will greatly assist SA to bid for that production and position our screen sector strongly to contribute to the economic recovery of our state post-COVID."

The government claims the new, boosted incentive will create about 8000 jobs each year over the next seven years and attract \$3bn of foreign expenditure into Australia.

Tony Clark, who heads Adelaide visual effects company Rising Sun Pictures, said SA's management of the pandemic would help to "supercharge" activity in local production.

He said SA had already proved it could produce Hollywood blockbusters, with the \$50m Mortal Kombat reboot shot here late last year.

"Mortal Kombat has shown that we have the ability to undertake projects of scale, it has really put us on the map, and you will now see more films coming to South Australia," he said.

"I know one producer who has a large international series who wants to come here, and there are multiple other projects looking to come to SA under this type of scheme."

Skills Minister David Pisoni said Mortal Kombat – the state's biggest ever screen production – had provided "significant work for our world-class post-production, digital and visual effect companies".

"With SA one of the safest places in the world right now, and one of the first places in the world to resume production, the state is ideally placed to take a slice of this new fund in the post-COVID recovery," he said.

Opposition arts spokeswoman Jayne Stinson said with its low COVID-19 infection rate, SA should "attract significantly more than its population share of the \$400m up for grabs".