[MT] Film Commission Officially Launched - Liability of an Internet Service Provider

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The Malta Film Commission (MFC), set up in 1999 under the auspices of the Ministry for Economic services was officially launched on 3 February 2000. Winston Azzopardi, nominated last year, has now been appointed Film Commissioner. MFC defines itself as a non-profit making organisation offering its services free of charge to foreign film and television productions. As well as helping to raise awareness of Malta as a film location, it also serves to facilitate and assist film crews before and during their stay on the island, by dealing with issues ranging from permits to organising hotels accommodation to providing local crew.

The promotion of Malta as a film location is backed by a number of political initiatives. Government officials have been quoted saying that a policy for the film industry should be incorporated in the Film Act, currently in preparation. At present the question of if and how incentives under the Industrial Development Act (IDA) can be extended to the film industry as a whole is being examined. Under the current legislation only support services to the film industry qualify for receiving benefits.

Another important item on the agenda is the furtherance of co-operation with other countries. Malta is looking at how to co-operate with countries offering financial assistance as an incentive to film companies to use services and locations available in Malta. In the light of Malta's renewed application for EU membership, the country also aims at obtaining funds under the Media+ programme starting next year.

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