

# Guide to Location Filming

## For Businesses and Government Properties

A request to use a property as a filming location is a business proposal. As each production has specific considerations and it is impossible to address all situations. However, VicScreen has provided some general advice when considering establishing an agreement with a production company.

### Location Manager

Your first contact with the film or television production will probably be the location manager or their Scout. The location manager is responsible for finding and securing locations to be used for the production and managing the logistics, permits and costs involved. They will be your point of contact with the production. They should be accessible to answer any questions you may have about the production or the filming.

After introducing the show and asking if the property might be available for filming they will ask to take some photographs to show the director. This can be a good time to discuss what is needed as well as any restrictions. The property may then be short listed for a second visit with the director, to see if it really works, and make a plan for filming.

If all parties agree on the proposed filming plan, then the location manager prepares the location agreement. A final technical recce visit will be organised. This is a short site visit by the location manager, director, and key crew members so everyone knows the plan for filming when the shoot day arrives.

Your discussion with the Location Manager may include:

- Who are the producers? What experience do they have?
- What is the film or TV show about? What is the action to be filmed?
- How long; a few hours or a day or more? Is this a day or night shoot?
- How big is the cast and crew that will be on site?
- Any preparation days needed e.g. to build a set, change furniture or rig additional lighting?
- What is the producer offering as a filming fee?
- Exact interiors and exteriors desired for filming.
- Will a staff member be needed on the day to help with the access, OH&S or for security?
- Where will equipment and vehicles be positioned or parked?
- Any "off-limits" areas as requested by the owner or manager.
- Any areas which may need to be used or altered during filming.
- Safety and security process.

## Location Agreement and Insurance

This is the contract between the location provider and the producer and will typically outline your permission for the production company to enter and use the property on the dates agreed for the purpose of making a film or TV show in exchange for a location fee. This document covers who is entering the agreement, the ownership of the copyright of the recordings made, insurance, the access fee, and the process for restoring the property if there is damage.

Production Companies typically agree to indemnify and hold the Location Provider free from any and all liability and loss and therefore have Public Liability Insurance cover for \$10-\$20 million which should include property insurance. You may ask to be noted as an Interested Party on the insurance Certificate of Currency.

## Safety Supervisor and Safety Report

The production's risk assessment document is the safety report, and it details the scenes to be filmed and what specific safety procedures need to be in place. The safety supervisor oversees the safety of the cast and crew and any other individual who may come in contact with the film crew or filming activities. The safety supervisor ensures the implementation of recommendations contained in the production safety report. They may work with the location's OH&S supervisor to address site specific considerations.

## Crew Size and Parking

A standard TV series filmed in Victoria has a crew of about 50. Up to 30 people is considered a small crew for a show like a comedy series or a TV commercial. A feature film or large-scale overseas TV series may have a crew of 100 or more. You will only see a part of the crew at the location as many are in support roles back at the production office or at the Unit Base and only visit the Set as needed.

Trucks and vans carry equipment and supply mobile working areas for the crew. A TV drama will need the equivalent of about 12 parking spaces at the filming location and 12 to 18 for the unit base.

## Council and Community Consultation

The Location Manager organises any parking or filming permits required from the local council or relevant authority. A letter to residents and stakeholders outlining the filming activity is distributed a week before the shoot day. If filming in a residential area, the stakeholders may be door-knocked to chat about any questions related to the filming such as parking.

Victoria Police, Vic Roads and Council are informed of any activity such as traffic management, weapons, or special effects that may impact on the general public or require additional permits and consultation.

## Filming Hours

A full "shoot day" can be 12 to 14 hours (day or night). This includes setup and bump out. Most of this time is setting up the equipment and rehearsing actors. Actual time with the camera recording may only be a couple of hours. A "half day" can still be up to 5 or 6 hours.

Late night filming in residential areas is generally not allowed unless the location manager can show consent from residents who may be affected.

## Site Preparation

Art Department may need access to dress the location with props and furniture, perhaps paint a wall or change signage. Parking spaces for the production essential vehicles may be secured overnight by a Security Guard.

## Standard Shoot Day on a Drama Series or Film (Day Shoot – Differs for a night shoot)

- 5:00am At the unit base the trucks and early crew arrive and set up. This is the area away from the filming location used for catering, makeup, costume and holding cast. The unit manager and his/her team are responsible for this area. Cast and crew private vehicles are directed to park in their allocated area.
- 6:30am At the filming location the essential vehicles (camera, sound, lighting, generator etc.) park in their positions. This is as close as is practical as per the parking maps supplied by the location manager. Filming trolleys containing the equipment are positioned in a safe area ready for filming. Location manager or their representative opens the location at the agreed time.
- 7:15am Breakfast at the unit base meals area.
- 7:45am Shoot Day begins. It will take about an hour to get cameras and actors ready for the first shot of the day. Crew will break after 5 hours for lunch then work for another 5 hours before "Wrap," which is the end of filming for the day.
- 6:30pm Equipment is made safe or bumped out and taken back to vehicles. If needed the security guards starts.
- 8:00pm Unit Base should have packed down and/or be driving away.

## Restoring the Property

The property is restored to its original condition as per the location agreement. Art Department return or remove any furniture or set dressings. A cleaner may also be booked to tidy up. Each location is different, and the restoration is tailored to what has occurred.

The Location Manager will usually suggest a quick site inspection with the owner to check for damage and to see if anything is out of place.

## Additional Resources

[Victorian Screen Industry Code of Conduct](#)

For any additional information, please contact the Locations and Production Support team.

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