

Film Distributors' Association

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THOMAS DILLON ANNOUNCED AS CHAIR OF FILM COMPLAINTS PANEL

London, 20 October 2015: Thomas Dillon has been appointed as the new Chair of the Film Complaints Panel, the industry body established to adjudicate on competition disputes within the UK cinema sector.

Dillon's appointment was announced today by the Film Distributors' Association and the UK Cinema Association, the trade bodies representing the interests of UK film distributors and cinema operators respectively, each of which is also formally represented on the Panel.

The body was established following the publication of "*Film: A report on the supply for films for exhibition in the UK*", a 1994 report by the (then) Monopolies and Mergers Commission. Noting a number of industry practices which were of concern to individual operators, the report proposed the establishment of a dispute resolution panel to address any such issues as they arose.

Although in the years since its establishment, the Panel has only adjudicated on a small number of cases, its continued existence is seen as an importance commitment by companies on all side of the cinema sector to ensuring that the interests of the customer remain paramount.

Welcoming his appointment, Thomas Dillon said:

"The Film Complaints Panel shows an industry regulating itself to preserve fair competition in the consumer interest. I am honoured and delighted to contribute to its work."

The previous Chair of the Panel, Stan Fishman, CBE, stood down from the position in 2014.

Note for editors

Background to the Panel

The Film Complaints Panel (FCP) was set up following the 1994 report of the Monopolies and Mergers Commission (MMC), "*Film: A report on the supply for films for exhibition in the UK*".

The report identified certain commercial practices which, although not at that time operating in such a way as to affect the public interest in free competition in the market, were nonetheless of concern to individual operators in the industry and could, if they

became widespread, affect the public interest. Examples of such practices were the unreasonable refusal to supply films to exhibitors, the unjustifiable imposition by distributors of restrictions on screen use and the practice of conditional booking, that is, requiring an exhibitor to accept one film as a condition of being supplied with another. The report proposed the establishment of a dispute resolution panel to address any such concerns.

In 1994, when the MMC published its report, the applicable competition law framework in the UK was contained in the Fair Trading Act 1973. For relevant purposes that law has been superseded by the Enterprise Act 2002. The FCP's revised Principles of Operation seek to reflect the applicable law.

Thomas Dillon

Thomas Dillon is a member of the English Bar (also admitted in California). Since February 2014 he has held the post of Counsellor at the World Intellectual Property Organization, Geneva.

Thomas Dillon read Classics and Law at the University of Cambridge. He took the Diploma in Intellectual Property and Competition Law at Queen Mary & Westfield College, University of London (1990), and an MBA at Sir John Cass Business School, City of London (2009).

From 1984 to 2000 he practised as a barrister in Birmingham, UK. From 2001 to 2009 he worked in Brussels for the Motion Picture Association (MPA), becoming Vice President and Deputy General Counsel EMEA, in which post he managed international anti-piracy cases and undertook policy work on IP issues. From 2009 he worked as a lawyer and policy consultant in London, advising various bodies such as the MPA, the UK Film Council, the Federation Against Software Theft and the British Video Association and also undertook commercial legal work. In March 2013 he joined the Chambers of Timothy Straker QC at 4-5 Gray's Inn Square.

He is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators and an accredited mediator. He is an arbitrator under the Association of British Travel Agents Arbitration Scheme, in which capacity he has delivered many arbitration awards.

He is the chairman of Creative Advantage Fund, a venture capital fund for the creative industries, and a member of the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) and the Royal Television Society.

For further information

Please contact the Film Complaints Panel on 020 7734 9551.