



## **Writers Guild of Canada Welcomes the Honourable James Moore Behind the Scenes of CTV's *Flashpoint***

March 9, 2009 – **Toronto** – The Writers Guild of Canada (WGC) today welcomed the Honourable James Moore, Minister of Canadian Heritage and Official Languages, to catch a glimpse of the work behind the scenes of the hit Canadian television show, *Flashpoint*.

The Minister's visit, hosted by the WGC in association with Pink Sky Entertainment and Avamar Entertainment, included a tour of the *Flashpoint* set and production offices. The Minister spent time with the series' creators, screenwriters Mark Ellis and Stephanie Morgenstern, and saw first-hand the central role of the writer in Canadian television production.

Rebecca Schechter, President, WGC, said that "*Flashpoint* is a shining example of Canadian writers telling Canadian stories that succeed internationally. The creative spark of Canadian screenwriters came together with public investment and launched a production employing hundreds of highly skilled Canadians. And the result is a hit show in our own market and internationally. This is the real success of the Canadian Television Fund (CTF) in action."

The Minister used the occasion of the visit to announce that the CTF was being combined with other existing funds and being renamed the Canada Media Fund. Though no new money was included in the announcement, the WGC was reassured by the fact that the Fund was not split, and that current criteria mandating Canadian writers and other talent remained.

Maureen Parker, Executive Director, WGC, said "a show like *Flashpoint*, with a budget of more than \$1.6 million an episode, could not have been made without the assistance of the CTF. We hope that the new Canada Media Fund maintains that focus on supporting the hard-to-finance, quality content like Canadian drama. We have a number of concerns about several aspects of the new Fund – the loss of the CBC's guaranteed envelope, a board structure that does not include creators or broadcasters, and talk of opening to more in-house production – and we are pleased to know that we are being invited to feed into the process for developing the criteria of the new Fund. The devil really will be in the details."

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