



AUSTRALIAN
**VIDEO
PRODUCERS**
ASSOCIATION

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MINIMUM PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

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1. AIM OF STANDARDS

These standards have been produced so that the AVPA will be recognised as an association of professionals, promoting professional standards, which distinguish the professional from the amateur. The consumer/client will, in time, expect this professionalism from our members.



In the event of one member consistently not operating above the minimum standards set, the whole association will soon be seen to accept those low standards, and in turn this will diminish our credibility as professionals.

2. AIM OF VIDEO PRODUCTIONS

Video productions will have various aims. However, the one common thread in all videos is that they are devices intended to communicate a purpose (message) to the intended viewers.

The aim of the message may vary:

- (a) Entertainment / Arts
- (b) Documentary
- (c) Sales / Promotion
- (d) Training / Instructional / Educational Information Dissemination
- (e) Security / Surveillance

The AVPA deals with the first four of these aims. Each of these aims incorporates a variety of productions, ranging from weddings to large-scale corporate productions.

3. THREE AREAS OF VIDEO PRODUCTIONS

All video productions can be classified in a distinguishable production area.

1 LIVE EVENTS

- (a) Weddings



- (b) Parties
- (c) Sport
- (d) Theatre
- (e) Bands (live)
- (f) Concerts
- (g) Lectures
- (h) Conferences
- (i) Fashion parades
- (j) Cultural / Community Events

2 LIVE EVENTS (plus editing)

As above.

3 NON-LIVE, SCRIPTED EVENTS (including web based)

- (a) Training Videos
- (b) Promotional Videos (including web based solutions)
- (c) Documentaries
- (d) Movies (entertainment / arts)

Basic rules for video production are applicable for each area. However, the advantages of precise scripting, editing and location conditions should ensure that each area produces superior productions.

4. MINIMUM PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS OUTLINE

The minimum professional standards are distinguished by the skills employed in each area of production.

SKILLS EMPLOYED IN THE THREE AREAS OF VIDEO PRODUCTION



1 LIVE EVENTS

- (a) Client / Contact working relationships
- (b) Pre-planned structure
- (c) In-camera assemble editing (maintaining useable frames as directed)
- (d) Camera technique (steadiness, focus, composition, zooming, tilting, panning, tracking, colour balance, iris control)
- (e) Lighting (portable & stationary)
- (f) Sound
- (g) Titling
- (h) Live Mixing (multi-camera filming, which should be of superior standard to single-camera)

2 LIVE EVENTS (plus Editing)

As above, plus:

- (a) Editing techniques (regarding continuity)
- (b) Editing Special effects
- (c) Pre-planned structure and use of camera techniques and shot making to bear relation to the editing process.

3 NON-LIVE, SCRIPTED EVENTS

As above, plus:

- (a) Scripting
- (b) Directional capacity, i.e. decision-making regarding re-taking scenes in order to maximize potential of the production.

5. MINIMUM PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR INDIVIDUAL SKILLS

1 (a) Client / Contact Working Relationships

The video producer must:

- Portray knowledge of their field.
- Instill confidence in the client regarding their ability.
- Advise client professionally.
- Determine accurately the client's needs.
- Encourage feedback from the client.
- Respect the client's viewpoints and behaviour.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding dealings with client.



- The video producer must avoid embarrassing or demeaning behaviour towards the client.

(b) Pre-Planned Structure (live events, unscripted)

The video producer should:

- Gather all possible information through meaningful client contact before production begins.
- Engage a written or (at least) mental structure dictating a pre-planned treatment.

(c) In-Camera Assemble Editing (live events)

The video producer should:

- Employ equipment of a standard that allows clear assemble edits in a live recording situation.
- Ensure that shot-making occurs with regard to continuity in two ways:
 - (i) Shot continuity i.e. Avoiding 'JUMP CUTS', 'CROSSING THE LINE'. Sometimes, due to the immediacy of recording live events, minor variances may be tolerated.
 - (ii) Action continuity.
In situations where control is exercised, as later editing will not occur, action should follow in a logical progression.

(d) Camera Techniques

NOTE: In general, cameras represent the human eye and human perspective. Therefore, the mechanical altering of the viewing perspective should not interfere or distract the viewer from the subject on the screen. Excellent camera work is usually unnoticeable. There may be exceptions to this rule, when unusual camera operations are purposely used to create special effects.

- Steadiness
 - (i) While in portable mode shots should be restricted to short sequences if possible. The utilisation of the telephoto end of the zoom should be avoided if possible as the camera may display too much movement in these situations. Wildly jerking footage should be avoided.
 - (ii) While using a tripod it is important to attain smooth transitions (avoiding jerkiness) between shots avoid mildly jerking footage.
- Focus
 - (i) Subjects should be sharp and in focus the greater majority of time.
 - (ii) Avoid constant use of automatic focus devices common on domestic cameras.
 - (iii) Scenes that are constant should be pre-focused before recording occurs.
 - (iv) Scenes that change the subject's perspective require constant adjustment of focus. This may cause small lapses in focus occasionally.
 - (v) In pre-scripted scenes where the ability to rehearse and re-take are available, subjects should not lose focus.
 - (vi) Depth of field; understanding of, and its use.
- Composition
 - (i) "Composition is often described in terms of 'rules', but in truth it can no more be rigidly taught than can any other instinct for beauty. Certain broad generalisations can be made about balance..."
Quote – Pg. 91 "The Video Manual", David Cheshire.
 - (ii) "Rules of Thirds" - This so-called "rule" dictates that horizontals and verticals should not bisect the frame exactly in the middle."
Quote – Pg. 91 "The Video Manual", David Cheshire.

The following principals of composition Nos. 1-9 are quoted from "Techniques of Video Programme Production" by Sony.

Principle 1: When taking a close-up of a person, always leave a space in the direction of



the line of sight.

- Principle 2:** When taking a close-up of a person, the upper space left in the frame must not be too large or too small.
- Principle 3:** Do not place any other objects on the same line as the person taken by the camera (the appearance of oneness may occur).
- Principle 4:** In a picture frame of movement, it is not necessary to leave too much space allowing the movement to pass out of the frame must be avoided.
- Principle 5:** In case you are filming a group of people, a composition in which a person is cut vertically by the frame edge line should be avoided.
- Principle 6:** Avoid arranging people in a line parallel to the picture frame (if possible).
- Principle 7:** When two people are conversing, avoid including unnecessary people who are partially viewed or more behind the two people conversing.
- Principle 8:** In order to arrange two people in equilibrium, it is neither good to gather them in the centre of the picture, nor to separate them on both sides with a space in the centre.
- Principle 9:** With a distant view, the whole composition becomes deep if certain objects are placed in the foreground.

- Zooming (the zoom lens was designed to aid in re-framing focal length quicker than a prime lens on a turret; it's use has been modified from inception to include valid movement potential)
 - (i) Zooming should be smooth.
 - (ii) Zooming should be with purpose to highlight specific objects.
 - (iii) Avoid jerky, stop/start zooming.
 - (iv) Avoid zooming in and out on the one shot.

NOTE: In a single camera live production, this rule cannot always be adhered to, as a shot of a lengthy nature may eventually require an alternative place to be recorded.

- Tilting
 - (i) Tilting should be smooth.
 - (ii) Tilting should follow subject or highlights aspects.
 - (iii) Tilting up and down on the one shot (in normal situations) should be avoided
 - Panning
 - (i) Panning should be smooth and consistent.
 - (ii) Generally, if visuals are to be viewable, scenic pans should be slow and deliberate.
 - (iii) When panning with movement of the subject, the pan should appear to be slightly ahead of the subject, i.e. leave a view space ahead of the subject.
 - (iv) Avoid jerky stop-start panning.
 - Tracking
 - (i) Tracking should be smooth and consistent.
 - (ii) Horizontal and vertical levels should be maintained during operation.
 - (iii) Avoid jerky, stop-start, bumpy tracking.
 - Colour Balance
 - (i) When lighting conditions change, white and / or black balances should be adjusted.
- NOTE: In live and portable conditions, indoor & outdoor lights may blend, e.g. sunlight



streaming through a window. This may cause colour balance problems not easily avoidable in this situation.

(ii) Pre-set understanding; Tungsten / Daylight / Colour Temperature Knowledge.

- Iris Control
 - (i) Lighting levels should be monitored consistently.

(e) Lighting (portable & stationary)

NOTE: The use of additional lighting will vary according the mode of operation, i.e. – “Live events”, where the location and action is only partially predictable, will inevitably produce a lower standard of lighting than “non-live scripted events”, where it is possible to intricately plan lighting with regard to specific action. Professional video producers should possess at least a basic knowledge of the terminology and application of types of lighting:

- Base light : for lighting up the entire scene.
- Key light : for emphasizing the main object (spot light).
- Fill Light : supplementary light for the key light.
- Touch light : for special effect.
- Back light : for lighting from the back or the above of a person to get perspective effect.
- Horizontal light : for lighting the background.
Quoted from “Techniques of Video Programme Production” by Sony p. 42.

- Correct colour balance should be established to achieve a well contrasted scene (for studio type lighting situations).
- The subject needs to be correctly lit to be within the range of the camera’s capabilities (for portable lighting situations).
- Avoid insufficient light creating noise-filled grainy and poor-coloured pictures.

Good lighting makes the subject appear natural on the TV screen and draws the attention of the viewer to what you want seen.

Quoted from “Video The Better Way – Vol. II” by JVC p. 21.

(f) Sound

- Achieve clean crisp sounds, such as high signal-to-noise ratios, low distortion levels.
- Acquire knowledge and use of appropriate microphones to suit particular needs:
 - (i) Uni-directional (cardioid).
 - (ii) Omni-directional.
 - (iii) Lapel/ Lavalier
 - (iv) Directional (shotgun)
 - (v) Radio
- Achieve desired balance between live and studio soundtracks.
- Avoid low signal-to-noise ratio - tape hiss should not be easily noticeable.
- Avoid high distortion levels.
- Avoid intermittent recording of sound.
- Avoid sound interferences, such as radio, tape edit points, or camera operations.

(g) Titling

- Titles should be concise and accurately meet requirements



- Avoid unintentionally jittery and fluctuating borders and colours
- Avoid poor timing, both in allowable reading time and the rate of change of titles

(h) Live Mixing (multi-camera operation)

- All cameras must accept an external sync pulse.
- Cameras should be linked to a special effects generator (SEG) to allow mixing, cutting, and wiping between cameras.
- Adequate personnel should be employed to cover all aspect of operations.
- Preview monitors and talk-back facilities should be available for the benefit of the director, camera operators, chyron , or vision insert operators.
- Avoid flashing or frame-roll between shots at edit point.
- Avoid “jump cutting” between camera shots.
- Avoid misalignment of cameras, that is, not matching in vision aspects, for example, colour and resolution aspects.

2 (a) Editing Techniques (regarding continuity)

- Achieve flowing imagery.
- Utilise creative aspects, for example, appearance of multi-camera operations.
- Incorporate special effects to enhance the production (where appropriate).
- The production should be concise and directly to the point.
- Avoid lack of continuity, such as jump cuts unless for a specific purpose.

(b) Special Effects / Filters

- Camera filters should be clean.
- Camera filters should provide enhancement of the scene.
- Avoid panning with “spot” filters from one talent to the next.
- Avoid overuse of filters that detract from production values, such as continuity. The overuse of special effects can detract considerably from the end result.
- Special effects should not be incorporated without a definite reason.
- Special effects for the sake of special effects should be avoided.

(c) Pre-planned structure and use of camera techniques and shot making to bear relation to the editing process.

- Clear communication during a multi-camera recording so that shots are held for an appropriate time to accommodate for dissolves or other relevant transitions.
- A clear understanding of the subject matter being filmed.
- The ability to balance the needs of various parties that will view the production ie. the choreographer who would like to see the routine & the viewers who wish to see close ups.

3 (a) Scripting

Various methods and styles of scripting are available. Often they vary according to the production. Whichever script is chosen, it must clearly define the planned video production so that all concerned will understand the desired result. The script should show the relationship between all aspects of video production, e.g. picture, sound effects, narration, and background noises.

(b) Direction



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The director should stamp their authority and style on a production. However, collaborating with other personnel is a worthy technique. The final result is the director's responsibility, therefore, before any footage is accepted, the director must decide that all aspects are satisfactory.