



Factual Contract Code

A Handbook for Screen Directors



In this document, SDGI seeks to provide guidelines for a good practice code that will not only help create a healthy production culture for the future but will also establish creative rights for directors that will allow them to function to their full creative and production capacities.

We recommend you use these contract guidelines as a checklist when signing a contract. We also recommend you attach this as an appendix to your contract and go through these with your producer. Please see additional copyright and finance guides for specific information related these clauses to also include in your contract .

Queries and issues arising from the operation of this document will, in the first instance, be dealt with directly between the director (and/or their agent) and the [production company/producer]. Any issues or queries that cannot be resolved in this way can be referred by a director (and/or their agent) to SDGI, who will attempt to resolve the issue with [the appropriate Head of Talent] at the production company. Any unresolvable issues will not be brought to RTE or BAI unless there is complete negotiation breakdown which will mean involving stalling the production, delaying broadcast or involving legal representation.

1 - Contract

The director shall have the right to have a contract for the production that lays out the terms of the employment.

2 – Pre Production

A director will be given a pre-production period to prepare the programme or series in agreement with the production company. Recommended guidelines are a minimum 3 weeks prep period per hour of television and 1 week for a half-hour and on established series the an appropriate duration shall be reach to match the length of series.

3 – Pre Production

It is mutually beneficial to both producer and director that the director will have an input into how budget resources are spent as early as possible. The director has the right to know the top line budget and elements of the budget where it is relevant to the work of the director and can effect the quality of the project.

4 – HODS

The director, in consultation with the producers, selects and briefs the production Heads of Department. On returning series the director will accept already established cast and crew but will be advised of this requirement prior to engagement.



5 – Schedule

The director will be fully consulted on and agree the shooting and post-production schedules. In continuing and returning series the director will be given notice of and agree the shooting and post-production schedules prior to engagement.

6 – Shoot

All 'on-set' creative directions to talent and crew will be given by the director. The director undertakes to share responsibility with the producers for delivery of the shoot on schedule.

7 – Reshoots

The director has the first right of refusal to direct 2nd units, pick-ups and or to supervise those shoots whenever possible.

8 – Post Production

The director will be the sole voice and supervise all stages of post-production. Once a first rough cut has been made by the director, the director will accept notes from the producer during the latter stages of the edit. Where possible producers notes will be compiled clearly and as one set of notes.

9 – Budget

If any stage of the production overruns, goes over budget or is behind schedule, the director and producer will negotiate a solution to complete the production that is fair to both parties.

10 – 1st Cut

The director will be allowed an exclusive period to edit the film or episode, and create a '1st rough cut'. The recommended timeline is this will be circa 1-3



weeks for a 25 min factual/doc TV and 3-6 weeks for a 52min duration or 50% of the edit time (unless other wise agreed with a producer and director). Additional time may apply for longer projects.

11 – Edit

The director will be engaged to supervise any re-editing or reversioning. Therefore it is agreed that: On single, special productions and serials involving a single director, the director will supervise re-editing and re-versioning for key territories and key uses, subject to the director's reasonable availability and subject to negotiation with producers.

12 – Title

The principal director of the programme will be the only person entitled to be credited as director on that programme either a) last at front b) first in end 3) last in end.

13 – Grade & Mix

The director will be invited to attend and supervise the on-line, picture grade and mix and will be paid to do so.

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