

## TARA MOSS DONS MEDICAL MASK TO INVESTIGATE KILLER DISEASES

(**SYDNEY – July 5, 2006**) – Australia's number one crime writer is set to investigate a new set of mysteries in her namesake programme, *Tara Moss Investigates*, Thursdays at 7:30pmAEST on National Geographic Channel in August and September.

Using computer graphic imaging (CGI), personal accounts from victims, doctors and scientists as well as news footage, some of the world's deadliest outbreaks are brought to life in gripping detail.

Tara guides viewers into a world where teams of scientists try to stem life-threatening viruses from becoming global pandemics. Tracking them to their source is difficult but often vital in ensuring sufferers receive effective treatment, and even then survival is not guaranteed.

"I think of myself as a forensic tourist," Tara Moss says. "I am not an expert, but over eight years of research I have become acquainted with fascinating areas of investigation and study. Through 'Tara Moss Investigates', I can be a moderator between the scientists and investigators and the general public."

*Tara Moss Investigates: Outbreak* examines diseases such as SARS, E.Coli and Smallpox from the perspective of the people who succumbed to the sickness and the survivors who lived to tell the tale.

A former host of National Geographic Channel's flagship Sunday night programme **natgeo presents**, and with *Tara Moss Investigates* currently introducing viewers to the underworld of serial killers, mobsters and life behind bars on National Geographic Channel in Australia the UK and Europe, Tara is a devotee of the documentary genre.

With first-hand experience behind-the-crime-scenes, Moss is able to readily draw on her forensic and investigative knowledge to educate viewers.

"I'm very interested in the extremes of human nature and the things that go on behind the scenes in a lot of important cases," she said.

As one of Australia's most successful female authors, Tara Moss' fourth thriller featuring feisty heroine Mak Vanderwall, *Hit*, will also be released in September. *Fetish*, *Split* and *Covet*, also featuring Mak Vanderwall, have notched up successes as internationally bestselling crime novels published in ten countries in six languages.

Writing has been a lifelong passion for Moss, who began penning gruesome "Stephen King-inspired" stories for her classmates when she was only 10. She started writing her successful debut novel, *Fetish*, when she was just 23 and to date her crime novels have been nominated for both the Davitt Award and the Ned Kelly; two of Australia's most prestigious honours.

Not a writer to rely solely on imagination, Moss' in-depth research has seen her tour the FBI Academy at Quantico, spend time in squad cars, the morgue, prisons, the Hare Psychopathy Lab, the Supreme Court and criminology conferences world-wide, take polygraph tests, shoot weapons, conduct surveillance with private investigators, pass the Firearms Training Simulator (FATSII) with the LAPD, pull 4.2 G's doing loops over the Sydney Opera House flying with the RAAF Roulettes, acquire her CAMS race driver licence and much more. She is currently studying for her private investigators licence.

Born in Victoria, British Columbia, Tara is now a proud dual Australian/Canadian citizen. When not researching and writing novels, Moss enjoys riding her motorcycle and spending time with her 7 foot Diamond python 'Gomez', her baby black-headed python 'Thing', her faithful dog 'Bogart', and serving as Ambassador for both the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children and the Bone Marrow Donor Institute among others.

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# Tara Moss Investigates

## Outbreak – Series Summary

In the past 30 years, at least 30 new diseases have been identified, while old ones resurface year after year. Outbreak examines how investigation teams saved lives and stopped deadly outbreaks from becoming global epidemics. It also tells the stories of innocent people who succumbed to sickness and the survivors who lived to tell the tale. Using computer graphic imaging (CGI), personal accounts from victims, doctors and scientists as well as news footage, some of the world's deadliest outbreaks are brought to life in gripping detail.

## AUGUST

### Australian Premiere

#### Tara Moss Investigates

#### Outbreak: The Bacterial Serial Killer

Thursday August 31, 2006 at 7:30pmAEST/9:30pmNZ

Hundreds become violently ill in 1996 as an invisible bacterium multiplies rampantly in a meat found in Scotland. The culprit is E. Coli 0157, a dangerous pathogen that can cause kidney failure, haemorrhage, paralysis and even death. The search for the source of the contamination leads investigators to a popular butcher's shop that is selling the deadly meat. The epidemic becomes the deadliest recorded outbreak of E.Coli, as 21 people eventually succumb to the illness and 13 are left with permanent kidney damage.

## SEPTEMBER

### Australian Premiere

#### Tara Moss Investigates

#### Outbreak: The Killer In Room 911

Thursday September 7, 2006 at 7:30pmAEST/9:30pmNZ

One man's journey from China's Guandong Province to Hong Kong's Metropole Hotel in March of 2003, triggers a chain of events that could lead to a global pandemic. As the virus spreads across continents, Dr. Carlo Urbani, a World Health Organisation doctor based in Hanoi, starts to suspect what he is seeing is not "atypical pneumonia" as it was described by Chinese doctors. As he alerts the world to the presence of a new virus, his battle to save lives threatens to cost him his own.

### Australian Premiere

#### Tara Moss Investigates

#### Outbreak: Curse Of The Black Typhus

Thursday September 14, 2006 at 7:30pmAEST/9:30pmNZ

In 1963 three young American scientists are presented with the challenge of their lives: to find and control a virus that is attacking the small town of San Joaquin, Bolivia. Dubbed "El Typho Negro" (The Black Typhus), the disease causes fever, headaches and muscular pains. As it progresses, victims develop blood spots on the upper body and start to bleed from the nose and gums. Thrust into a remote corner of Bolivia, the scientists have no idea how they can protect themselves against a disease that threatens to wipe out an entire town. They are San Joaquin's last hope – but will they live to face the challenge?

### Australian Premiere

#### Tara Moss Investigates

#### Outbreak: Return Of The Speckled Monster

Thursday September 21, 2006 at 7:30pmAEST/9:30pmNZ

On April 6 1963 a sailor introduces a highly infectious disease into Stockholm, Sweden. This disfiguring virus kills one in three victims and leaves those who are lucky enough to survive blind or covered in horrifying scars. Stockholm is gripped by the deadly unseen killer for an entire month with doctors misdiagnosing it as chickenpox. This disease however, is far deadlier and it spreads virulently. When samples are sent away for testing, the worst suspicions are confirmed. The killer virus is Smallpox. Now two high security freezers, one in Russia and the other in America, hold stockpiles of a virus that is not even supposed to exist. If unleashed, this highly contagious viral disease could sweep across the globe in less than six weeks.

## **Australian Premiere**

### **Tara Moss Investigates**

#### **Outbreak: The Philadelphia Mystery**

**Thursday September 28, 2006 at 7:30pmAEST/9:30pmNZ**

American Legionnaires are struck down by a mysterious disease, only weeks after celebrating the USA's bicentenary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, July 1976. With the nation fearing it may be a victim of a bio-terror attack, a team of dedicated disease detectives from the Centre for Disease Control try to track down the killer. Scientists finally discover the bacteria responsible for the deaths: Legionella Pneumophila. Found in fresh water, Legionella is harmless at low levels however it becomes lethal in the path of air conditioning and central heating units. When breathed in, it settles in the lungs and replicates, causing fever, organ failure and, if not diagnosed quickly enough, death. In the summer of 1976 the killer bacteria took the lives of 29 men and women and hospitalised hundreds. Despite an antibiotic cure, the killer still takes many lives.

## **OCTOBER**

## **Australian Premiere**

### **Tara Moss Investigates**

#### **Outbreak: Killer Pigs**

**Thursday October 5, 2006 at 7:30pmAEST/9:30pmNZ**

In September of 1998 a farmer from the small village of Ampang in Northern Malaysia feels unwell. While feeding his pigs one morning he collapses and dies. Over the next few weeks other young men are struck down by the same disease. Doctors quickly decide the problem is Japanese Encephalitis, a mosquito-borne virus common in Malaysia, yet common cures aren't working. A trip to the US Centre for Disease Control reveals that a new virus – Nipah, previously unknown to science, is infecting the people. Throughout 1999 the virus sweeps across Malaysia killing almost half the people it infects. As the nation goes into meltdown, can a maverick investigator solve the medical mystery of a virus that has decimated pig farms and now endangers mankind? How is it moving across the country? And where did it originate? Scientists trace the disease back to Ampang and discover a fatal mixture of farmers, fruit bats and hungry pigs.

## **About National Geographic Channel**

National Geographic Channels International (NGCI) invites viewers to re-think the way they see television - and the world - with smart, innovative programming. A business enterprise owned by National Geographic Television & Film (NGT&F), FOX Entertainment Group and the National Broadcasting Company (NBC), NGCI contributes to the National Geographic Society's commitment to exploration, conservation and education.

Globally, National Geographic Channel (including NGC U.S. which is a joint venture of NGT&F and Fox Cable Networks Group) is available in over 290 million homes (including day-part households) in 164 countries and 27 languages.

### **For further information please contact:**

Marcus Cammack – Publicist

National Geographic Channel

T: 02 9813 6875 | M: 0417 684 585 | E: [marcus.cammack@nationalgeographic.com.au](mailto:marcus.cammack@nationalgeographic.com.au)

Or visit [www.nationalgeographic.com.au](http://www.nationalgeographic.com.au) or [www.taramoss.com](http://www.taramoss.com).