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Press Release

Moroccan Wind Storms, Burned London Sound Stage Play Havoc With Holiday Films Insured by Fireman's Fund Insurance Company

NOVATO, Calif. (Nov. 6, 2007) -- When the holiday movie season kicks off this Friday with the release of "Fred Claus," movie goers can relax and enjoy the screen antics of Vince Vaughn and Paul Giamatti. But behind the screen, they would never know that a major insurance risk created havoc for filmmakers – a burned London sound stage.

International locations are appealing to filmmakers for their different looks. In addition to "Fred Claus," several of this season's holiday features were shot in foreign settings, including the Swiss Alps, Croatia and Morocco. But sometimes, filming overseas is anything but a vacation from Hollywood, causing behind-the-scenes headaches.

That's where Fireman's Fund Insurance Company comes into the picture. As the leading insurer of major Hollywood films, it helps production companies manage unexpected risks. With an over 80-year history of insuring everything from independent films to major blockbusters, Fireman's Fund entertainment division is dedicated to helping producers and studios achieve the artistic results they are seeking, yet also ensuring they are filmed safely, finished on time and on budget. This is done by analyzing risks and finding solutions to cover specific exposures.

Set to release on Christmas day, "Charlie Wilson's War" starring Tom Hanks and Julia Roberts in a drama based on a Texas congressman and his covert dealings in Afghanistan, was shot in American-friendly Morocco. While Morocco may have seemed a good substitute for Afghanistan, in the end the country suffered from high wind problems. The result? The entire set was blown down in a freak, off-season wind storm.

Another film production nightmare occurred on the set of "Fred Claus," the comedy starring Vaughn as Fred, Santa's bitter brother who is forced to move to the North Pole. The sound stage where the film was set to shoot burnt down while it was being dismantled from a previous movie, thus forcing the production to scramble for a new location.

"We often find that international locations pose a wide variety of challenges for filmmakers. This includes the set, transportation of film, equipment and costumes, and dealing with illness in a foreign country," said Joseph Finnegan, head of Fireman's Fund entertainment division.

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Other productions insured by Fireman's Fund for release in November are "Lions for Lambs" starring Tom Cruise, Meryl Streep and Robert Redford (November 9), and "Elegy" with Ben Kingsley and Penelope Cruz (November 16).

For December release, Fireman's Fund insured "Golden Compass" with Nicole Kidman (December 7), "I Am Legend" starring Will Smith (December 14), the Disney sequel "National Treasure: Book of Secrets" featuring Nicolas Cage (December 21), "Sweeney Todd" with Johnny Depp (December 21), and the Hanks-Roberts drama "Charlie Wilson's War" (December 25).

About Fireman's Fund

Fireman's Fund Insurance Company is a premier property and casualty insurance company providing personal, commercial and specialty insurance products nationwide. It is rated 'A+' by Standard & Poor's Ratings Services. Fireman's Fund is a member of the Allianz Group (NYSE: AZ), one of the world's largest providers of insurance and financial services. For additional information, visit www.firemansfund.com.

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