

## The Marketplace for Film, Television, and Other Audiovisual Writers

### TOTAL EARNINGS AND EMPLOYMENT

Both the total earnings under WGAw contracts and the number of writers employed under those contracts increased in 2004. The earnings growth extends that trend to a third year; the increased number of writers employed reverses a three-year decline, though not by much.

Total earnings of \$866.5 million in 2004 amounts to a 2.5% increase over the 2003 figure. The growth in total earnings since the one-year decline in 2001 has totaled 10.2%, modestly better than the increase in the Consumer Price Index and the increase in minimums over the same period.

The 4,370 writers employed in 2004 were just a few writers more than the number employed in 2003. This steady state is better, however, than the declining number of writers employed in each of the three prior years. Statistics on television series employment show that the loss of 15 WGA-covered series in the 2004-2005 season as compared to the 2003-2004 season cost approximately 300 jobs on television series in just one year. This

### TOTAL EARNINGS UNDER WGAw CONTRACTS

YEAR	<i>(Millions of \$)</i>	
	TOTAL EARNINGS	PERCENT CHANGE
1999	751.2	---
2000	792.7	+5.5%
2001	786.2	-0.8%
2002	815.5	+3.7%
2003	845.2	+3.6%
2004	866.5	+2.5%

Source: WGAw Records. Note: Prior year figures are updated to include late-reported information.

makes the steady overall employment level a welcome trend. Early indications for the 2005-2006 television season indicate that the number of WGA-covered series will rebound somewhat, and that is expected to have a positive effect on employment for 2005.

### MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

Guild membership rules have functioned to keep the Current/Active membership at a fairly steady level in recent years. In April 2004, the Guild had 7,371 Current/Active members. The number of writers in the Asso-

### NUMBER OF WGAw MEMBERS EMPLOYED

YEAR	TOTAL EMPLOYED	PERCENT CHANGE	MEMBERS REPORTING	PERCENT CHANGE	PERCENT EMPLOYED
1999	4,600	---	9,040	---	51%
2000	4,654	+1.2%	9,181	+1.6%	51%
2001	4,571	-1.8%	8,978	-2.2%	51%
2002	4,372	-4.4%	8,543	-4.8%	51%
2003	4,364	-0.2%	8,256	-3.4%	53%
2004	4,370	+0.1%	8,285	+0.4%	53%

Source: WGAw Record. Note: Prior year figures are updated to include late-reported information.

ciate and Post-Current statuses has grown consistently in the recent past. The Guild now has caucuses for writers in animation, independent film, non-fiction and new media. Writers eligible to join a caucus who are not already members of the Guild join with associate caucus member status.

### EARNINGS & EMPLOYMENT BY WORK AREA

The season-to-season decline in television employment mentioned above is masked in the reporting here, which is tabulated on a calendar-year basis. By this count the number of writers reporting television employment in calendar 2004 was 3,225, just a fraction above the figure in 2003. Isolating employment in just the fourth quarter of the calendar year, the data shows a decline of about a hundred jobs, indicating that the sharp decline in series employment is somewhat offset by other employment in television.

Despite the softness in television employment levels, earnings grew 4.0%, to a new all-time high level. Note that these figures, which are based on earnings reported for dues purposes, do not fully reflect the above-

### NUMBER OF GUILD MEMBERS BY MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY

YEAR	<i>"Active" Status</i>		POST-CURRENT
	ASSOCIATE	CURRENT	
1999	396	8,141	247
2000	391	8,409	706
2001	371	8,349	868
2002	336	7,723	1,127
2003	400	7,391	1,323
2004	452	7,628	1,385
2005	576	7,371	1,428

Source: WGAw Records, April each year. Since 2002, the Guild Constitution has permitted members to remain in the Post-Current category indefinitely by paying an annual service fee. The Associate category includes members of WGAw caucuses. Current/Active figures fluctuate based on the timing of Guild dues enforcement efforts.

scale amounts paid, including such amounts paid for series employment. In a recent survey, 36% of series television writers reported a reduction in their above-scale writer-producer compensation.

Employment in screen rebounded by a modest 2.0% in 2004, to a total employment level of 1,825 writers. This reverses a two-year decline in the number of screenwriters employed, but not by enough to recoup more than one year of the lost jobs. Screen earnings

### NUMBER OF WRITERS EMPLOYED BY AREA OF WORK

YEAR	TV		SCREEN		OTHER	
	NUMBER EMPLOYED	PERCENT CHANGE	NUMBER EMPLOYED	PERCENT CHANGE	NUMBER EMPLOYED	PERCENT CHANGE
1999	3,368	---	1,868	---	78	---
2000	3,646	+8.3%	1,859	-0.5%	93	+19.2%
2001	3,463	-5.0%	1,894	+1.9%	88	-5.4%
2002	3,272	-5.5%	1,828	-3.5%	70	-20.5%
2003	3,217	-1.7%	1,790	-2.1%	69	-2.8%
2004	3,225	+0.2%	1,825	+2.0%	69	---

Source: WGAw Records. Note: Prior year figures are updated to include late-reported information. The work area figures add up to more than the Total Employment figure due to members working in more than one work area during a year.

grew 1.1% to a new all-time high of \$435.2 million.

### EARNINGS TRENDS

Earnings at the top and bottom of the range continued to grow more than earnings at the middle of the pack. The median earnings of an employed Guild member was \$98,049 in 2004, 0.6% higher than the 2003 figure of \$97,500. This figure had grown a more notable 8.3% last year and is 13.0% higher than five years earlier. At the bottom end of the range, the lowest-compensated 25% of the employment membership earned less than \$35,000 in 2004, a figure that increased 1.1% in the last year, but which had increased more dramati-

cally in 2003 and 2002, and which is 16.7% higher than five years earlier. At the top of the range, the highest-paid 5% of the working membership earned more than \$685,000 in 2004, 5.8% higher than the year before and 20.5% higher than five years earlier.

### TOTAL EARNINGS UNDER WGAw CONTRACTS BY AREA OF WORK

YEAR	TV		SCREEN		OTHER	
	MILLIONS OF \$	PERCENT CHANGE	MILLIONS OF \$	PERCENT CHANGE	MILLIONS OF \$	PERCENT CHANGE
1999	\$377.6	---	\$371.5	---	\$2.1	---
2000	\$398.9	+5.6%	\$391.3	+5.3%	\$2.6	+23.8%
2001	\$396.6	-0.6%	\$387.2	-1.0%	\$2.4	-7.7%
2002	\$402.2	+1.4%	\$411.6	+6.3%	\$1.8	-25.0%
2003	\$412.6	+2.6%	\$430.7	+4.6%	\$2.0	+11.1%
2004	\$429.2	+4.0%	\$435.2	+1.1%	\$2.1	+5.0%

Source: WGAw Records. Note: Prior year figures are updated to include late-reported information.

### EARNINGS TRENDS AT DIFFERENT EARNINGS LEVELS (ALL WORK AREAS)

	<i>Lowest-Paid 25% of the working members earned less than</i>		<i>Half of the working membership earned less than</i>		<i>Highest-Paid 25% of the working members earned more than</i>		<i>Highest-Paid 5% of the working writers earned more than</i>	
	25TH PERCENTILE	PERCENT CHANGE	MEDIAN	PERCENT CHANGE	75TH PERCENTILE	PERCENT CHANGE	95TH PERCENTILE	PERCENT CHANGE
1999	\$30,000	---	\$86,784	---	\$201,490	---	\$525,000	---
2000	\$31,200	+4.0%	\$88,202	+1.6%	\$208,348	+3.4%	\$562,500	+7.1%
2001	\$27,989	-10.3%	\$88,500	+0.3%	\$216,860	+4.1%	\$567,000	+0.8%
2002	\$30,688	+9.6%	\$90,000	+1.7%	\$225,326	+3.9%	\$636,464	+12.3%
2003	\$34,625	+12.8%	\$97,500	+8.3%	\$228,853	+1.6%	\$647,500	+1.7%
2004	\$35,000	+1.1%	\$98,049	+0.6%	\$237,371	+3.7%	\$685,000	+5.8%

Source: WGAw Records. Note: Prior year amounts are updated to include late-reported information.