



ARTS

Craig McLachlan accusations: no evidence of misconduct Dr Blake set



Craig McLachlan. Picture: Tim Hunter.

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The set of popular TV series *The Doctor Blake Mysteries* may have been the scene of bawdy jokes and crude behaviour but an investigation into misconduct allegations against the show's star, Craig McLachlan, has found no evidence of wrongdoing.

Production company December Media commissioned an independent inquiry from workplace consultant Pax People.

“Throughout the course of the investigation, there were no findings of sexual harassment, sexual misconduct or workplace bullying by Craig McLachlan or any other person on *Doctor Blake*,” said the report cited by the *Herald Sun*.

Among the claims made against him, the actor was accused of dry humping a camera assistant on the *Doctor Blake* set. December Media suspended pre-production plans for new episodes pending the investigation.

McLachlan also has been accused of misconduct during a 2014 season of *The Rocky Horror Show*, including that he groped one of his female co-stars during a sex scene that is part of the musical. The complaints were made by actresses Christie Whelan Browne, Angela Scundi and Erika Heynatz.

McLachlan has strenuously denied all allegations and his lawyer said he intends to launch defamation proceedings against Fairfax Media and the ABC, which published them last month.

Rocky Horror producer the Gordon Frost Organisation is also conducting an investigation into the claims. A spokesman said the independent investigation was ongoing and the company was assisting police inquiries.

McLachlan stepped aside from the current revival of *Rocky Horror*, in which he played the central role of Dr Frank N Furter.

The report conducted for December Media by Pax People’s Fiona Bigelli found that some of the jokes and behaviour on the set of *Doctor Blake* could be perceived as offensive. “People highlighted the fact that *Doctor Blake*’s workplace culture has consisted of, among other things, a workplace humour which has been described by many as sexual, lewd, bawdy, ‘Benny Hill-esque’ and crude, and that some of the behaviour relating to this humour may be offensive to people regardless of the fact no formal complaints have been received,” the report said.

McLachlan, a Gold Logie winner, has said in an interview that he was shocked and bewildered by the allegations of sexual misconduct, which had “annihilated” his career.

