



# ‘Pacific Blue’ filming two episodes in Waikiki

**Hawaii's second TV deal  
this month is also a test for  
moving the series here**

By Tim Ryan  
Star-Bulletin



"Pacific Blue," basic cable's highest-rated drama series, will film a two-part episode on Oahu next month -- primarily in and around Waikiki -- spending as much as \$1.8 million in the production's first-ever filming outside California.

Creator/executive producer Bill Nuss said the 4-year-old USA Network series will film the two-part episode May 17-27, bringing at least four of the show's seven featured cast members. "Pacific Blue" production offices and the Los Angeles cast and crew accommodations will be at the Hilton Hawaiian Village.

The action-drama is based on a group of bike patrol officers in the Santa Monica and Venice beach areas of Southern California.

## **Jobs for 50**

"Pacific Blue" will bring from Los Angeles 10 technicians, as many as five assistant directors and their Teamsters transportation captain but expects to hire as many as 50 local crew and some local actors.

Potential crew members in Hawaii should fax their resumes to Blair Gilbert at 310-827-1332 for the shoot, which is only six weeks away.

"Waikiki is a perfect fit for . . . our franchise of beaches, bikes and bad guys," Nuss said.

The announcement comes just 72 hours after Gov. Ben Cayetano said the syndicated television series "Baywatch" was relocating from California to Hawaii for probably two seasons, bringing with it an annual budget of nearly \$40 million and employment for as many as 150 local residents. "Baywatch Hawaii" will film on Oahu from June to early December, with some episodes slated for the neighbor islands.

The as-yet-unnamed two-parter -- about "Pacific Blue" cops visiting Waikiki and being mistaken for drug dealers -- probably will also have as a guest star a WWF wrestler.

But perhaps more important than the two episodes to be shot here is that the filming is a sort of test on whether it would be economically feasible to bring "Pacific Blue" to Hawaii permanently for its sixth season next year, Nuss said.

"I would love to do either "Pacific Blue" or a new series in Honolulu next year," said Nuss, who was a producer on the Oahu-based "Raven" series in 1991.

Nuss wants to see firsthand if the production can film here without the higher costs normally associated with Hawaii, reportedly 25 percent to 30 percent more than on the mainland. The show costs about \$850,000 to \$900,000 an episode, Nuss said.

Without financial incentives from the state and help from the private sector, including accommodations, airfares and rental cars, Nuss said the two-parter could have cost as much as \$200,000 more.

The series is seen by more than 3 million viewers weekly, in over 60 countries, Nuss said.

He credited Cayetano, Tony Vericella of the Hawaii Visitors & Convention Bureau, and April Masini with bringing the show to Hawaii. In February, Masini got the ball rolling by contacting Nuss, who was vacationing in Kona, and talking him into bringing the show here at least for a couple of episodes, Nuss said.

Leo Reed, head of Teamsters Local 399 (Hollywood), and Al Burns, business agent for the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees in Hawaii, were also instrumental in making the filming possible, agreeing to "an affordable cable deal" for wages and benefits, Nuss said.

Cable wage rates, known in the entertainment industry as "long form," are lower than the basic rate used for network programs or feature films.

Nuss hopes to prove that Hawaii can be economical for a cable or network series.