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US porn filming halted over latest HIV scare

LOS ANGELES: US porn movie makers have suspended filming after an actor reportedly tested HIV positive, re-igniting a dispute over the use of condoms on screen in the latest AIDS scare to hit the industry.

The multi-million dollar US adult film industry is complying with a call for a moratorium, even though the new HIV case — which comes after that of another actor last year triggered a movie set shut-down — has not been confirmed.

The Free Speech Coalition (FSC) said on Wednesday it learned of a possible HIV exposure at the weekend, and called for an industrywide moratorium “to err on the side of caution and to eliminate any possible risk to performers.”

“We have no authorised information confirming

that a performer or any performers have tested HIV positive. However, there was enough of a concern for us to call a moratorium,” Coalition spokeswoman Joanne Cachapero told AFP.

The trade body noted that the latest reported incident occurred outside of California, where the majority of US porn films are made in the San Fernando Valley north of Los Angeles.

“However, the Los Angeles production community has voluntarily submitted to the moratorium as an appropriate response to the current situation,” it said in a blog update on Wednesday.

Porn film producers including industry leaders like Vivid Entertainment referred media queries about the suspension to the LA-based Free Speech Coalition, which counts them as members.

The trade body would not forecast how long the filming suspension would last, saying the moratorium “should remain in place until primary reports of any exposure are confirmed.

“In the event of the

necessity for first and second generational testing, a list of any individuals that may have been exposed will be compiled and the moratorium will then be evaluated by our medical and legal advisors,” it said.

Last year at least four major film producers suspended filming for several weeks from October after a porn actor, 24-year-old Derrick Burts, tested positive for the HIV virus which causes AIDS.

In December, a clinic for actors in the lucrative industry was ordered closed after Burts blasted it for failing to help him properly.

After reopening it finally closed for good in May, the Adult Industry Medical Healthcare Foundation (AIM) finally closed for good in May, facing mounting legal and financial woes. — AFP

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Joanne Cachapero, Free Speech Coalition's spokeswoman