366. R Yaxley

**From:** Richard Yaxley

**Subject:** Possible legislative changes to copyright law: an author's viewpoint

To whom it may concern,

I write to you in my capacity as an author, in order to share the significance of payments received from the Copyright Agency with respect to my work.

I have been an author for around twenty years, working in both the trade and educational sectors. In terms of the latter, I have created or part-created twenty-seven different texts for schools. These have contributed significantly to the education of young Australians, and continue to be used in classrooms today. I have continued this focus on improving young people’s literacy and reading engagement through my production of creative texts such as novels, poetry and short stories.

Creating texts such as these implies a considerable investment of time, skill and dedication. It is a process that involves conception, consideration, research, drafting, consultation, reworking, redefining – and is a process that can and does repeat, over and over again. A series of educational texts can take anywhere between 2 – 4 years depending on the size and scope of the text. A young adult novel asks for an investment of 1 – 2 years, from conception to publication.

It seems only fair and reasonable that the copying of these texts by educational and other institutions be appropriately recognised through the provision of payments. My own experience is that actual royalties for the sale of the texts usually become minimal or redundant after 3 – 5 years, however the texts are still in use and still being copied. This is where the CAL payments are crucial in providing a significant and ongoing portion of my income as an author. Without these payments, I would have difficulty in continuing my work because my reduced income would simply not justify that continuance.

Over the years, the income provided by CAL has afforded me the opportunity to take release time from the regular employment in order to focus on creative work. It has allowed me to undertake courses in creative writing, travel, research, outfit an appropriate office space – in short, actively take on the role of an author. I feel that the proposed changes to the copyright laws would infringe greatly upon my capacity to continue the kind of work outlined above, and would thus be potentially detrimental to the improved literacy of many young Australians.

Yours sincerely,