637. D Cheshire

To: Australian Law Reform Commission

Re: Copyright and the Digital Economy Discussion Paper

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Copyright and the Digital Economy Discussion Paper. As a screen composer and a creator of content with more than 30 years experience, I appreciate the opportunity to contribute my thoughts to this discussion.

My father Mr F W Cheshire had a long history in bookselling and publishing in Australia particularly in educational books. Without proper copyright protection in place many talented authors would not have had the opportunity to have successful careers and the general public would not have benefitted from having access to true Australian factual and fictional publications that have formed such a strong part of our Australian culture. I am sure if my father were alive today he would be particularly vocal in standing up for the rights of creators.

Forgive me quoting from a supplied letter from the Australian Guild of Screen Composers but I believe that it states my responses to the proposed changes very clearly.

I believe the current system should be retained as it is works well for both the user and the creator. It is both fair, effective and simple.

The Statutory Licence system works particularly well, ensuring there is no misunderstanding or illegal use within the education sector. As a creator, I believe it is only fair that I have same rights as any other group whose intellectual property is used by educational institutions.

I am concerned that the proposed changes will reduce the opportunities for creators, such as myself, to license and receive a fair return for my work. It will also reduce my ability to retain artistic control over my works; and put the burden on me to take expensive legal action to protect my rights. The current system is fair to both the creator and the user, and should be retained.

It should also be recognised that copyright is essential for creation and innovation. Copyright encourages creativity as it is fundamental to being able to have a sustainable career as a creative. Being a creator is a difficult profession and one that is hard to pursue and commit to at the best of times. We rely on whatever small returns we can earn from our copyright works to survive. I feel we should be supporting our creatives not undermining those rights that we have fought long and hard to gain in the first place. This support is necessary to continue to foster our cultural heritage for future generations of creatives and consumers.

I know I am just one small voice in a vast creative field of profit and loss. Thank you for allowing me to be part of this very important discussion.

Signed

David Cheshire

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Cat Music