**Submission to the Copyright Review.**

I’ve recently become aware of the Australian Law Reform Commission’s review of Copyright and in particular a move to repeal the Statutory Licence legislation.

As an author of school textbooks now for over 30 years and a schoolteacher across a range of education jurisdictions, I’m frightfully aware of the place printed material has in the provision of a vibrant and varied education environment. I’ve also been a member of CAL for many years and value greatly the contribution it makes to the distribution of benefit to authors from institutions that use copied material.

In an ideal world teachers and schools would buy sufficient new books for each child, however, the reality is they don’t. Most buy a single book and pick and choose from it, photocopying pages as needed for students in their class. If it weren’t for the provision of Statutory Licence, teachers would not pay anything for the provision of authored material, which in many cases took years to prepare and in fact constitutes the intellectual property of the author.

At least with a Statutory Licence the user pays something to the manufacturer (author) of the product. Imagine if builders ransacked a hardware shop and simply took (stole) huge quantities of product… simply because it had been in the shop for a while and didn’t appear to be needed anymore. Likewise, if doctors, who develop surgical procedures, which attract a patent/royalty, were told that this benefit was being legislated away, very little extra research would occur. In the same way, authors would think twice and twice again before producing any new text material.

Once a textbook is sold to or purchased by a school, its use is generally beyond any influence of the text’s author. He or she cannot look over teacher’s shoulders and say. ‘You must use this book as intended and only photocopy a certain amount of pages etc.’. I used to be a teacher as well as an author and I know how it works on the ground. I’d get away with what ever I could and to heck with the author and any rights his copyright sign might suggest.

When Statutory Licencing came into operation a decade or so ago, authors were in a position to at least benefit from the wholesale copying of pages in lieu of purchasing actual textbooks. It was a great leap forward and recognised the intellectual property of authors providing resources to schools.

Consequently, Statutory License, administered through CAL, provides me with a bonus to my published works. Now, in my retirement, it is a much-appreciated small addition to my quality of life. Without it I’d not be nearly so well off.

I know that digital media is surrounding us from every angle, and might even sideline the printed book in time. However, at the present both mediums should be harnessed side by site to provide a well-rounded product and service.

Consequently, in the consideration of the proposed abolition of the Statutory Licence for author’s works my plea to you is that now is not the time to make changes. Making all sections, both printed and digital, of the remuneration system work well for authors ought to be our number one priority.

Kind regards

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Author