

The Productivity Commission

To whom it may concern

The issue of copyright and how it has been policed has always been a bone of contention for me, as well as other authors who write materials that we chose to protect from unauthorised copying.

The only recourse an author has in taking action against anyone found breaching the copyright laws, is for that author to seek retribution through the court system, which is a costly and risky venture.

I write educational resources for school students and list my products with the Copyright Association (CAL). If CAL makes a collection from a school, then I may receive some remuneration as a result of this audit. What I have noticed recently though is that schools are not honest in how they complete their audit sheets. (I have witnessed first-hand a range of strategies teaching staff in schools have used to avoid documenting their unauthorised photocopying practices.)

Concealing the extent of unauthorised photocopying for audit purposes, however, is only a very minor problem compared to the enormous and considerable blatant abuse of unauthorised photocopying of copyrighted materials that exists every day in all schools across the country, as only a few schools are targeted for an audit in any calendar year.

There is a culture in schools that if a product is purchased for use in schools that:

- It has been purchased and so can be photocopied at will – even if the product contains the message that no part of this book may be copied in any format.
- It is an educational resource and so copyright laws do not apply.

One of the frustrations for me, as an author, is the lack of policing of this issue. Schools continue to blatantly photocopy large amounts of my materials because no-one knows they do it! If they do get an audit, they don't declare their use of the resources. I have witnessed first-hand many teachers and support staffs photocopying pages of my products with no regard for any rights of the author in respect to the copyright of the product.

For many years I worked as a specialist educational consultant and school principal and have acquired a plethora of supporting evidence that attests to this abuse of materials. One scenario I will include with this submission: