

Response To Productivity Commission

Section 4

I come from a family background that encouraged creativity. My sister is a musician, my mum a potter and quilter, my dad was a leadlighter and I am a graphic artist. All of us have created original works at many stages of our working lives as artists. I have been raised to value arts and culture and the artists that create the work.

My partner is a musician and songwriter – Doug Ford from Australian bands The Missing Links, Running Jumping Standing Still and the well-loved Masters Apprentices.

Doug didn't really make any money from music while any of the bands were together. He didn't really start making any money from his music until about 20 years ago, 24 years after The Masters Apprentices split.

Undoubtedly the most beloved Masters Apprentices song is "Because I Love You". You'll all know it – even maybe the US residents reading this. It has appeared in many ads, TV shows and movies over the last few years, (including a QuickBooks ad shown throughout the US recently). The licenses and royalties from this song make up most of our family income.

Lets put one of the biggest changes to the test - the change copyright term to 15 - 25 years after CREATION (It is currently 70 years after death).

If this change existed now (or even in the near future) it means our family would have zero income. At present our income comes from the licenses and royalties due to Doug for the use of his songs, licenses and royalties that we would not receive if the copyright term was 25 years. Because I Love You was written in 1971, meaning it would now be out of copyright and Doug would have missed out of the chance of making any decent money from his songs.

Our family – we would probably be living on welfare and handouts from charity groups. I'm not working at the moment; ironically because I am busy creating a copyright course that will help artists protect their work.

Artists of all kinds rarely receive superannuation, as they are often self-employed and on low incomes. Doug has no super, so the ability to earn from Royalties and Licenses takes the place of that super now he is semi retired.

The copyright in works is often the only thing that artists can leave children in their will. Doug does not, and has not had the ability to purchase significant assets. The only asset he has is the copyrights in his songs.

There are many people who earn income from the copyright industry including employees of collection societies, publishing companies and the like. By reducing

the copyright term, the income will not flow through to these businesses and we would have many more on unemployment benefits.

The digital world has made it more difficult, not easier for artists to create. The battle with illegal downloading of music, movies and TV shows, the counterfeit and selling online (on platforms such as Amazon) of photography, illustrations and other design work, means it is harder for artists to earn significant income – not easier.