



**Freedom Publishers Union  
Authorized by GC Media Publishing Management**

*Subject: Productivity Commission publication of Intellectual Property Arrangements Draft Report*

*May 12, 2016*

Freedom Publishers Union would like to make a formal Submission in response to the Intellectual Property Arrangements Draft Report.

We commend the report and its greater detail, as it provides the best source of information related to recommendations for reform to intellectual property and copyright in Australia.

Freedom Publishers Union has always advocated and supported calls which demonstrate the need for a sensible and realistic approach to assist the reform of the aforementioned laws and legislation in Australia, whilst upholding current outstanding international obligations.

We commend the following key recommendations as presented in the Intellectual Property Arrangements Draft Report:

- **Support for geoblocking circumvention techniques and to not criminalize those who implement such techniques,**
- **Support for copyright reform,**
- **Implementation of fair-use policy.**

***Geoblocking***

We support a free and open internet across the entire world which provides unrestricted flow of information and adheres to proper net neutrality principles. Geoblocking is a major hurdle which puts restrictions on internet users rights and permissions to access specific content. Companies and persons who carry out technical operations which go towards implementing geoblocking mechanisms are failing to uphold the very basic principles of net neutrality and Freedom Publishers Union condemns this behavior of restricting specific internet users to specific content and deem it unacceptable.

Internet users who aim to and successfully circumvent geoblocking in an effort to simply access legal content which should be available to them without having to resort to the use of such circumvention techniques, should not be presented as criminals and should not be punished, in cases where they are accessing and paying for legal content and of which has no financial burden or effect on the content producers and/or distributors.

Essentially, we would support any recommendations made by the Productivity Commission which would support and legally allow for use of geoblocking circumvention techniques.

***Copyright reform***

In its current form, we believe that Australia's (and the entire world's) copyright laws are much too restrictive, are far out-dated and are a major contributor to high levels of piracy. Consumers have demonstrated their frustrations with out-dated copyright laws which do not reflect current content and media use in a digitally connected world. When copyright laws were devised, digital media and the way it is used by consumers today (legally and illegally) was not considered, for obvious reasons.

Therefore, we would support the Productivity Commission's recommendations to have copyright law reformed and the duration of copyright reduced to a more reasonable time frame. Currently, copyright is having a negative effect to what it is supposed to control – fair-use of material, content and media covered under copyright law.

***Fair-use***

Emphasis must be made on fair-use of copyrighted material, content and media. Currently, we can see no fair-use provisions or clauses which accommodate the behavior and methods of how material, content and media is sourced, used and shared in the 'modern age'. It's a trait of our very human nature to want to use, try, test and share everything that we access, at a personal level. Copyright laws put heavy restrictions and burdens on consumers and do not allow

for any type of defined fair-use of such content.

Freedom Publishers Union urges the Productivity Commission to place emphasis on recommendations that promote implementation of fair-use provisions and clauses to be amended into copyright reform. With legally allowable fair-use, we believe that this will ease the burden off content and media producers who feel that their content usage that is copyrighted is being abused or the copyright being ignored. In many cases it is not and in-fact, the content and media is being used or shared in a very fair, acceptable and what we consider 'reasonable' manner which has absolute minimal or no financial impact on producers of copyrighted content.

With all of the above taken into consideration, Freedom Publishers Union believes that the Productivity Commission's key recommendations which primarily promote reform of intellectual property rights in Australia, whilst maintaining our international obligations under current (and future) international trade agreements is a great start to achieving overdue reform of the IP sector and to assist in promoting a positive approach to legislative reform that could potentially be fair for all parties.

***Amit Gautam – Spokesperson, Freedom Publishers Union***