



I am writing to express my concern at the Productivity Commission's proposed changes to parallel importation rules and 'fair use' laws for the publishing industry as outlined in its recent interim report.

I am a children's writer and illustrator who has been working in publishing for thirty years, with over thirty books published, alongside bringing up two children as a single parent. I am extremely grateful that I have managed to make a living from this work, although far from a lavish one. Australian published authors earn an average of just \$12,900 per year from their writing, while for visual artists the average is \$10,000. While it is not possible to support myself solely from my books, all my work is in associated areas, for example running writing and illustrating workshops in schools.

Writing and illustrating books is often done as an act of faith. I will spend months working on a project, often with no idea of how much money, if any, I will make back from it. It's only once a book sells that royalties are earned. The return may come over many years. I still earn small amounts for books that were first published more than 15 years ago, as well as collecting copyright payments from some of my non-fiction titles. Although these amounts are small, they add up over the years to make some reimbursement for the initial time spent, as well as making my creative career as a whole viable. I'm not complaining, it was my choice to work in this field, and clearly I am motivated by more than financial return.

Removing parallel importation will, I believe, deliver unproven, or at best short-term, benefits to readers and proven examples of harm to local publishing and its ancillary industries (Canada and New Zealand are often cited as examples.)



In addition, and quite apart from my own work, as a consumer and parent, I want Australian stories, by Australian creators for both my children and myself, and this is under threat by these changes.

The proposed changes to parallel importation rules, reducing the length of copyright, along with the proposed implementation of 'Fair Use', will impact directly on my income and that of many of my colleagues and the overall economic viability of the book publishing industry in Australia.

Sally Heinrich