

Dear Commissioners,

I work for InkWell Management a literary agency based in New York. The link to our website is below. I represent both American and Australian authors in the U.S. market. Australian authors are referred to me either by their publisher or their local agent.

In my experience the likelihood of an Australian author achieving a sale of their work in the U.S. market is heavily dependent of their success in the Australian market. American editors have many submissions to choose from and lean towards local authors with known credentials, established audiences and the ability to promote their work in the U.S. without significant cost to the publisher. Two things help sway an editor to consider a foreign title: the reputation of the American literary agent or Australian publisher submitting the work and the track record of the author in Australia. When submitting a work I include details of the Australian publisher, publishing history, sales figures for all of the author's work and reviews. All these elements persuade an otherwise reluctant editor to pay attention. It is vital that there continues to be an incentive for Australian publishers to buy and establish a local market for Australian authors because without that track record we'll have trouble even getting the manuscripts read.

Overseas publishers expect an author to have a strong audience in their local market and a team of internationally connected advocates helps. I am concerned that the removal of the 30 day rule will cause Australian publishers to hesitate in selling foreign rights to Australian titles if they are faced with foreign editions flooding the market. Without a determined foreign rights push from Australian publishers, local authors have very little chance of being published overseas no matter what genre of book they write. The foreign rights managers establish vital links with overseas agents and publishers without which a local author is simply another voice in the wilderness. The material that I select for representation in the U.S. has to be of the highest standard and I fear that without well-funded editorial input from Australian publishers many projects with promise would simply be rejected as not being of sufficiently high standard. Often it takes three or four books before the author writes a work that has a chance of finding an overseas publisher.

In summary, many agents, editors, rights managers have worked hard to establish channels for the sale of authors books in overseas markets and to make sure that the work being presented is of the highest standard. Anything that jeopardizes the industry's ability to invest in local authors and enthusiastically sell them overseas will have profound economic consequences for Australian authors.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Drayton