

DA Information Services Pty Ltd has been established in Australia since 1951 as a library supplier of books, journals and electronic products, as well as an online bookseller and direct marketer of scholarly and professional books, and (through our associate Central Book Services Pty Ltd) as the only local books wholesaler. We partner with major retailers and publishers in supply chain solutions.

Not only are we the most experienced reseller of books, but we are also the largest local employer in the library supply/wholesale sector. The diversity of our business does not place us squarely on any side of the debate regarding the parallel importation of books, because the current restrictions do not impede our book importation. This is because we purchase from local stockholdings in the first instance or from overseas sources. In all cases, our customer is either a library or a reseller who is ordering on the basis of a customer order, or we are the contracted local distributor ourselves.

However, we feel compelled to bring to government attention that the current practice of allowing overseas booksellers and websites to send parcels of books to Australian customers without the imposition of Australian Goods & Services Tax on their invoices or credit card bills, or at the point of entry, is harming our business as well as the interests of Australian taxpayers. We find it inequitable that the Australian taxpayer is subsidising reputable companies such as amazon.com and worse, companies that use GST avoidance as their main business model. In the US, certain States have insisted that local taxes are charged to the customer. We believe the Australian Government should also insist on this, even though these companies may be outside its jurisdiction, on the basis of overall trading value rather than the relatively low value of individual parcels at time of importation. An excellent precedent is the reputable US wholesaler, Baker & Taylor Inc, which invoices its Australian customers from the US but has an ABN so that it can charge GST and remit it to the Australian Government. We believe that this presents a much greater opportunity for Australian Government reform than any adjustments to the legislation regarding the parallel importation of books.

We would ask the Productivity Commission to not only refer this matter to any appropriate authority, but to also take it into account in its own findings, because this matter is doing much harm to the publishing and bookselling industry in Australia.

Yours faithfully

Richard Siegrerma

Executive Chairman
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