

Ron Brooks
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Productivity Commission

Re: Parallel Importation of Books Study

I find it incomprehensible that the Australian Government seems to have directed the Productivity Commission to consider changes to the copyright laws...that they would even begin to consider scrapping the 30/90-day rule—introduced in the 1991 reforms, confirming Australian territorial copyright—the single most important factor which has so directly led to the strong and growing publishing industry we now have in Australia.

Hard to believe—especially in the current (and still developing, unravelling) economic climate—that they would seriously consider dropping the one provision which is at the very heart of maintaining the ongoing health and viability of the entire industry, and everybody involved in it.

Impossible—that they could be seriously considering a return to the ‘good old days’ when Australian publishers were not much more than dump bins for their head offices in London, or wherever...where, if the 1991 reforms are not maintained:

1. We’d inevitably see a retraction in the amount of original publishing within and from our own country
2. A contraction in the printing and bookselling industries, and
3. Without any doubt at all—a lessening of any Australian voice.

For those of us who have been around long enough to remember...and involved—whether as writers, designers and illustrators, as publishers and editors, as printers and booksellers, or simply as book-lovers, readers, people who buy books and read them, for whatever reason—for all of us interested in and committed to the development, health and vitality of Australia’s culture...scrapping the 30/90-day rule would be an act of both cultural and economic vandalism.

For all of us—the maintenance of Australia’s own copyright territory is integral to the maintenance of our culture, to our very viability. Retaining the 30/90-day rule is absolutely central to this.

I urge the Productivity Commission to seriously consider their role of guardianship over that which is so vital, to all of us.

Yours sincerely,

Ron Brooks
(Author/Illustrator/Designer)