

The Commissioners,  
Parallel Importation of Books Study  
Productivity Commission  
GPO BOX 1428  
CANBERRA CITY ACT 2601

I am writing to express my disappointment in the Commission's discussion draft. The recommendation that PIRs be in place only for the first twelve months after a book's publication ignores the fact that sales of many titles build slowly, after factors such as word-of-mouth come into play, and that income from backlist sales make up a significant part of many authors' incomes. For authors such as myself, who write series, sales of our early novels have the potential to rise as each successive book is released and find new readers who then search out our other titles. Despite the Commission's belief that protection for the first twelve months is a significant benefit, an Australian publisher faced with the loss of income from a market potentially flooded with cheap imports is still likely to think twice about investing in Australian authors. That the US and UK continue to maintain their own PIRs shows that they believe their market is worth protecting and I do not understand why we are so keen to let them exploit ours.

I do not believe that any saving on the cost of books to retailers will necessarily be passed on to the customer, and it is folly to use this as a reason to justify such change. Any business is in business to make a profit, and if able to source their product at a cheaper price will take this opportunity to make more. Booksellers are not a service industry, supplying reading material out of the goodness of their hearts. If the government is serious about reducing the price of books across the board, why not simply remove the GST?

Sincerely,

Katherine Howell  
Author.