

Response to the Productivity Commission's Draft Report into Parallel Importation of Books

April 14 2009

From Mark Carthew – Australian Children's Author
www.markcarthew.com.au

Dear Commissioners.

I write to voice my **strong** opposition to the recommendations in the Draft Report.

The report simply does not reflect the weight of opposition clearly evident in the initial submissions.

Put quite simply there seem to be three major issues.

- The issue of the cost & supply of cheaper books to consumers.
- The support for local industry ie publishing companies & their employees, authors, illustrators, booksellers and retailers.
- Support for Australian creative culture.

I ask the commission: Why are so many major Australian publishers with sound understanding of economics against the proposal? This is echoed by the ASA, APA and ABA - all peak industry bodies.

One of my own publishers, Random House, with sister companies around the world has clearly outlined the negative implications for Australian operations in its submission - and they are not good for anybody in Australia.

It seems to me that without reiterating the arguments already stated, the commission has ignored the need to sustain our local industry and the creative commons its supports.

In the context of a global economic downturn we need to nurture our industries, not destroy them by pandering to a weak argument of providing consumers cheaper choice. That is a falsehood, as it will **diminish choice** as less books with Australian content and authors will be published and that is clearly stated by the very publishers who commission them. The many submissions to the Commission highlight the significant negative impact of the proposals on both our creative culture and publishing industry. Please take note.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Carthew
Writer- Editor-Educator