

# Briefing papers

**How big is your cultural footprint?**

**Early day motion re PLR**

21 February 2008

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The All Party Parliamentary Writers Group

All Party



*Writers Group*

Protecting and promoting  
authors' rights

# How big is your cultural footprint?



The All Party Parliamentary Writers Group, 21 February, 2008



A recent national survey of consumer behaviour commissioned by the Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society shows that our cultural footprint extends well beyond private copying and has contributed towards *large economic losses*.



*“The copyright system is one intended to provide balance. It is important in changing technical circumstances that the balance between rightsholders and users be maintained.”*

Lord Triesman, Former Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Intellectual Property and Quality.



Over 80% of people of *all ages* own a PC and a mobile phone\*.



Over 50% of people of *all ages* own an mp3 player\*.



In 2006 there were 46% more illegal downloads than in 2005.



18% of the respondents to the independent research, commissioned by ALCS, frequently (weekly or more) viewed/listened to downloads that have NOT been paid for; compared to 17% who had paid for content\*.



In 2006 £152m, including tax, was lost from the UK Economy as a result of digital piracy.



Median earnings for writers in 2000 were £6,300 and in 2004/5 had dropped to £4,000 per annum.



Only 15% of authors have received payment for the online uses of their works.



55% of respondents to a national survey supported compensating creators\*.



70% of people would like to see the companies who sell the recording equipment compensate the creators for the unpaid use of their works, as is the case in most of Europe\*.

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What can be done to...

## **Address the imbalance?**

Introduce compensatory scheme(s) that the market can sustain:

E.g. By adding a statutory 'cultural support' fee on commercial hardware and services, set at a 'fair' rate.

E.g. By providing real support for a "voluntary compensatory framework" acknowledging the carriage of copyright works on devices and networks.

## **Can you support the Early Day Motion?**

"That this House notes with dismay the decision of the government to reduce the funding to the Public Lending Right by over £2M in real terms over the next 3 years;

that the House further notes the adverse effect that this will have on over 30,000 writers in what has been sanctioned a National Year for Reading; and calls upon the Government to reconsider this decision and ensure that writers receive fair payment for fair use."



## Public Lending Right

The Public Lending Right (PLR) is the right for authors to receive payment under PLR legislation for the loans of their books by public libraries. To qualify for payment, applicants must apply to register their books with PLR. Payments are made annually on the basis of loans data collected from a sample of public libraries in the UK.

Over 23,000 writers, illustrators, photographers, translators and editors who have contributed to books lent out by public libraries receive PLR payments each year.

The Public Lending Right office is based in Stockton on Tees. Overall responsibility for PLR lies with the Registrar who is supported by 16 members of staff.

PLR is funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and in 2007-08 received £7.63 million pounds in grant-in-aid, of which £6.66 million was distributed to authors.

This will decrease by £0.25M in 2008-09.

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