
Cyber White Paper – Public Discussion Paper

Comment by the Australian Digital Alliance and Australian Libraries Copyright Committee

How can we get the right balance between Australia's social, economic and security needs when developing an Australian vision for the online environment?

The Australian Digital Alliance (ADA) and Australian Libraries Copyright Committee (ALCC) submit that any policy outlining Australia's digital future should consider the relationship between copyright laws and optimizing online engagement and innovation.

Copyright laws govern the ways in which content can be created and distributed in the digital environment. For Australia to achieve its vision of becoming a leading digital economy by 2020, it must be supported by a flexible copyright framework that strikes a balance between protecting the interests of creators and allowing access to and use of works for the wider public interest in the advancement of learning, innovation, research and knowledge.

Balance between securing intellectual property and promoting engagement

The ADA and ALCC caution against measures to secure Australia's intellectual property online that stifle access to and use of knowledge and cultural products by the broader community. Protection of copyright material should still enable users to create their own mash-ups, parodies and other innovative interpretations of works.

The National Broadband Network (NBN) will increase the reach of critical services and information to remote and otherwise marginalised communities. It's essential that our copyright framework support the opportunities enabled by the NBN for equality of access to information and knowledge for all citizens.

The ADA and ALCC believe that, in order to maximise innovation and online engagement, Australia's vision for the digital economy must include flexible copyright exceptions, as well as protections, that would allow the market, new technologies and community collaboration to evolve.

We look forward to the release of the government's Cyber White Paper in the first half of 2012. If you would like to discuss this comment further please contact Ellen Broad, copyright law and policy adviser for the ADA and ALCC on (02) 6262 1273 or by email at ebroad@nla.gov.au.



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About the Australian Digital Alliance (ADA)

The ADA is a non-profit coalition of public and private sector interests formed to promote balanced copyright law and provide an effective voice for a public interest perspective in the copyright debate. ADA members include universities, schools, consumer groups, galleries, museums, IT companies, scientific and other research organisations, libraries and individuals.

Whilst the breadth of ADA membership spans various sectors, all members are united in their support of copyright law that balances the interests of rights holders with the interests of users of copyright material.

About the Australian Libraries Copyright Committee (ALCC)

The ALCC is the main consultative body and policy forum for the discussion of copyright issues affecting Australian libraries and archives. It is a cross-sectoral committee which represents the following organisations:

- Australian Library and Information Association
- Australian Government Libraries Information Network
- Council of Australasian Archives and Records Authorities
- The Australian Society of Archivists
- Council of Australian University Librarians
- National Library of Australia
- National and State Libraries Australasia