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## **Book import recommendations “unworkable and destructive”**

**Australian book publishers said today that the Productivity Commission’s recommendations on book imports, issued yesterday, are unworkable and destructive.**

Maree McCaskill, CEO of the Australian Publishers Association, said the central recommendation – limiting Australian territorial copyright to 12 months - was one of the strangest policy recommendations she had ever seen.

“This is a Clayton’s recommendation,” she said.

“It pretends to retain territorial copyright while setting up conditions that would destroy it, and do great harm to all involved in the Australian book industry.

“It insults Australian authors, devalues their creative works and diminishes their royalties.”

“It is a recommendation against Australia’s culture and national interest and the rights of Australian authors, and damages every sector of the publishing industry “

“It would never be countenanced in our competing markets of the USA, UK and Canada – they value their national book industries.

“It would export Australian jobs, increase Australia’s carbon footprint and torpedo one of the prime drivers of the Rudd Government’s Education Revolution – high-quality education materials meeting Australia’s needs.

“If the Government was to implement this, it would be perhaps the first time in history that an Australian government has taken steps to discourage exports”

Ms McCaskill said the Australian book industry was united in its determination to fight the Commission’s recommendations as strongly as it could.

“It is astounding that the Commission can make these recommendations while admitting it does not have up-to-date and comprehensive price information or reliable data,” Ms McCaskill said.

“There’s a simple analogy – you don’t invest in a property you are renting, completely renovate it and landscape it in the knowledge that you will never own it. The Commission is proposing that publishers and authors rent copyright thereby removing completely the ability to invest in the Australian industry”.

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