

Copyright Review,
Room 517, Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Dear Sir,

Consultation on the Review of the Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000

The Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society Limited ('ALCS') is the UK collecting society for writers. Established in 1977 and wholly owned and governed by the writers it represents (of whom there are currently over 83,000), ALCS is a not-for-profit, non-union organisation. ALCS exists to ensure that writers receive a fair level of return when their works are used in situations in which it would be impossible or impractical to issue licences on an individual basis. Since its foundation, ALCS has paid writers over £250 million in fees and today it continues to identify and develop new sources of income for writers.

For over twenty years ALCS has been involved in a consortium of rightsholders licensing the retransmission of UK TV channels into the Republic of Ireland. Since the introduction of the registration requirements under section 175 of the Act we have filed annual reports with the Controller's Office and paid the required fee.

ALCS has a network of agreements with author societies that stretches across Europe and extends throughout the world. No other territory requires licensing bodies to register with a local government agency; to our knowledge such registrations are not prescribed or required under the terms of the Cable and Satellite Directive, or any other European or international copyright licensing regulations.

We are particularly concerned that the Register of Copyright Licensing Bodies can be freely accessed by anyone on the internet. In conjunction with IMRO we queried the appropriateness of this and as a result our registration does not now refer to the licence fees charged but rather the percentage apportionments of those fees amongst the various rightsholders. This represents a compromise position but is one which, we feel, is still unsatisfactory.

Pursuant to the compulsory collective licensing provisions of the Cable and Satellite Directive collective rights management organisations all over Europe are constantly engaged in negotiations to determine the revenue share to be apportioned between different rightsholders. The availability, on a freely accessible website, of information on the terms applicable to the arrangements for UK channels could have a direct impact on these

negotiations – an unintended and potentially damaging consequence of the current rules in respect of registration with the Controller.

For the above reasons we submit that a review of the terms and application of the registration requirements set out in section 175 should be included within the present investigation into the operation of the Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Owen Atkinson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Owen Atkinson,
Chief Executive