



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs

MEDIA RELEASE

Issued: 10 November 2005

Chairman: Peter Slipper MP

Inquiry: Technological Protection Measures Exceptions

PUBLIC HEARINGS ON COPYRIGHT AND ACCESS PROTECTION

Copyright owners and users are to appear at public hearings examining the circumvention of protection measures controlling access to copyright material under the Australia-USA Free Trade Agreement.

Copyright owners commonly use electronic technological protection measures (TPMs) (regional coding on DVDs, encryption of software etc) to protect their product against copyright infringement. TPMs can be circumvented by a range of means. Under the Free Trade Agreement, Australia is required to implement a new liability scheme to introduce civil and criminal offences to prevent such circumvention.

In particular circumstances, exceptions to this liability scheme permitting TPM circumvention will be created. The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, chaired by Peter Slipper MP, will hold public hearings in Sydney (14 November) and Melbourne (15 November) to examine whether other exceptions should be considered.

“Copyright is all about balancing the rights of copyright owners and users. We will be speaking to a wide range of interested parties to gather information about whether Australia needs to have additional exceptions”, said Mr Slipper.

In **Sydney** the Committee will take evidence from the Australian Copyright Council, the Copyright Agency Ltd, the Australian Record Industry Association, the Australian Visual Software Distributors Association, the Business Software Association, the Australian Federation Against Copyright Theft, the Office of Film and Literature Classification, the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment and Youth Affairs, SBS, Professor Brian Fitzgerald, and Open Source Industry Australia.

In **Melbourne** the Committee will take evidence from Supporters of Interoperable Systems in Australia, the Flexible Learning Advisory Group, Cybersource Pty Ltd, Ms Kimberlee Weatherall, Ms Robin Wright, the Law Council of Australia, Vision Australia, and Electronic Frontiers Australia.

In addition to these hearings a further hearing will be held in Canberra on 21 November.

For interview:

Please contact the Committee Chairman, Peter Slipper MP on (02) 6277 4975 (Canberra) or in his electorate on (07) 5443 3555.

Or Mr Slipper’s media adviser, Richard Bruinsma on 0417 486673.

For background information, including the full terms of reference, a background paper and copies of submissions when they become available, please contact the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 2358 or visit the inquiry website at

www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/laca/index.htm

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