



MEDIA RELEASE

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Regulatory regime for books to remain unchanged

The Government has decided not to change the Australian regulatory regime for books introduced by the previous Labor government.

Australian book printing and publishing is under strong competitive pressure from international online booksellers such as Amazon and The Book Depository and the Government has formed the view that that this pressure is likely to intensify.

In addition, the technology of electronic books (e-books) like Kindle Books will continue to improve with further innovations and price reductions expected.

The Government has not accepted the Productivity Commission's recommendation to remove the parallel importation restrictions on books.

The Productivity Commission report acknowledged that removing these restrictions would adversely affect Australian authors, publishers and culture. The Commission recommended extra budgetary funding of authors and publishers to compensate them for this loss.

The Government has decided not to commit to a new spending program for Australian authors and publishers.

Compromise proposals were considered, involving reductions in the length of the 30-day publication rule and the 90-day resupply rule.

In the circumstances of intense competition from online books and e-books, the Government judged that changing the regulations governing book imports is unlikely to have any material effect on the availability of books in Australia.

If books cannot be made available in a timely fashion and at a competitive price, customers will opt for online sales and e-books.

Introducing a price cap along the lines of the Canadian system would increase regulation with questionable effects on book prices.

The Australian book printing and publishing industries will need to respond to the increasing competition from imports without relying on additional government assistance.

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