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Senator the Hon Don Farrell
Minister for Trade and Tourism
Parliament House
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By email: trade.minister@dfat.gov.au

Cc: Prime Minister's Office: Ellen.Broad@pm.gov.au
The Hon Michelle Rowland MP, Attorney-General: attorney@ag.gov.au
Fergus Hanson, Head of the Office of AI: fergus.hanson@pmc.gov.au

12th October 2026

Dear Senator Farrell,

Re: Australia's AI copyright proposals and international authors

We are writing on behalf of the Society of Authors representing over 12, 500 writers, illustrators and literary translators. We work to protect authors' rights and interests, promote fair pay and treatment, ensure equitable and sustainable opportunities and reward.

Publishing is a global trade, with authors income dependent on rights sales in key territories. The UK export market grew by 4% to £4.7billion in 2025 with Australia being one of the largest markets for UK books.

That's why we are incredibly concerned to read about the Australian government considering introducing an opt-out scheme and statutory licence or ECL for AI training for material that is 'unprotected' on the internet.

We seek clarification about the effects of this proposal upon our members, the work they make available online, and their capacity to earn a living.

Will the burden be shifted to authors to opt out of your scheme to ensure their work is not scraped for AI training?

The Society of Authors is a company registered in England and Wales number 00019993 and an independent trade union. VAT registration number 239542840.

How does the Australian government intend to inform international creators about their rights to opt out?

We note the proposal includes transparency and piracy 'options'. Is it the government's view that the proposal is workable without mandated transparency and piracy prohibitions?

As you will know, multinational AI companies have already scraped the internet and pirate websites to train large language models without licence, payment or permission.

The SoA actively campaigns against the unregulated practices of tech companies worldwide that have trained AI models on copyright-protected material without compensation. We call on government's worldwide to address transparency and fair renumeration for creators.

We would appreciate clarification on the issues outlined above, as well as information about how this proposal will interact with Australia's international trade and copyright treaty obligations.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,



Anna Ganley, Chief Executive



Vanessa Fox O'Loughlin
(Sam Blake)