Playing Films, Television and Radio in Schools

### Playing films, television or radio for educational purposes

Schools can play films, television and radio programs in the classroom (or another teaching venue) as part of a course of instruction under s 28 of the Copyright Act. This includes playing a film to students via distance education software or a reticulation system, ie playing the film from a central point into a number of classrooms.

Also, under the Part VA Statutory Broadcast Licence, teachers can copy off-air television programs and podcasts of previously broadcast free-to-air programs available on the broadcaster’s website to play to students as part of a course of instruction.

For further information, see information sheet “Performance and Communication of Works and Audio Visual in Class: What am I allowed to do?”

### Playing films for non-educational purposes

There is no exception or licence in the Copyright Act which allows a school to play a film to its students for non-educational purposes, such as on bus excursions, during camps and for rainy day activities at lunchtime.

The Australian school sector has negotiated a voluntary blanket licence, called the Co-Curricular Licence, with Roadshow Public Performance Licensing (‘Roadshow’) for the playing of films by schools for non-educational purposes. This includes:

- At school for entertainment purposes (e.g. at lunchtime on a rainy day)
- On bus excursions, where the school provides the DVD (not the bus company)
- At school camps and excursions, including outdoor screenings at camp, where the school provides the DVD (not the camp)
- At after-school care and holiday programs conducted at and by the school

Not all schools in Australia are covered by the Co-Curricular Licence. Schools that are not covered by this Licence must seek permission from the non-theatrical distributor of the film to play the film for non-educational purposes.

To find out whether your school is covered by the Co-Curricular Licence, contact your local copyright advisor.

For further information on the Co-Curricular Licence, see information sheet “Playing Films for Non-Educational Purposes”.

National Copyright Unit on behalf of the Copyright Advisory Groups (Schools and TAFEs)
Always Obtain DVD’s from Reputable Sources

It is essential that films played in schools are obtained from legitimate sources. Film DVDs, for example, may be purchased or hired from non theatrical film distributors, licensed lending libraries or educational sources for playing on school premises. See Film Sources (below).

Playing pirated DVDs puts you, your school, your principal and your educational body at risk of serious civil penalties which include payment of compensation to the copyright owner as well as criminal penalties. For this reason schools should not accept donations or loans of DVDs or videos from students or parents. Schools should source their own films to ensure that they are not pirated copies.

For further information, see information sheet “Screening Pirated DVDs in Schools”.

Film Sources for Schools

Government Organisations

The National Film and Video Lending Service (NFVLS), based at the National Film and Sound Archive in Canberra, has an extensive international collection of 16mm films, DVDs and VHS videos including feature films, shorts, animations and experimental films from early silent films to recent releases. Schools can make online bookings up to a year in advance and titles are shipped anywhere in Australia for very reasonable rates ($10 per DVD, $27.50 per 16mm film). Find out more about how schools can join the NFVLS and borrow films on www.nfsa.afc.gov.au/nfvls. The NFVLS can be contacted on Freecall 1800 012 175 or email: nfvls@nfsa.afc.gov.au.

The Australian Film Commission (AFC) has a program called School Screen which presents free school screenings in cinemas in regional Australia. School Screen also assists schools that do not have cinemas in their area to access Australian made films. The AFC’s Education Programs Coordinator, Bob Percival, can be contacted on (02) 9321 6497 or email: Robert.percival@afc.gov.au.

“Non Theatrical” Film Distributors

The non-theatrical division of Roadshow Films represents many major film companies such as Warner Bros., 20th Century Fox and Buena Vista (Disney). Roadshow Films provides films for school events, fund raisers and so on. Prices depend upon the type of use and expected audience numbers. Roadshow Films can be contacted on (02) 9552 8065 or email: publicperformance@roadshow.com.au.
Amalgamated Movies is a non-theatrical distributor which provides films for many organizations including schools. They distribute films by Sony, Columbia, Tristar Icon and Madman films including latest releases. To contact Amalgamated Movies see their website: www.amalgamatedmovies.com

For further information see the SmartCopying website at www.smartcopying.edu.au or contact your local copyright manager. You can also contact the National Copyright Unit on (02) 9561 1204 or at email delia.browne@det.nsw.edu.au.