PUBLIC LENDING RIGHT COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT 2014–2015
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Access this report online
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Dear Minister

I am pleased to submit this report in accordance with Section 19 of the Public Lending Right Act 1985 (the Act). The report covers the 2014–15 financial year and is the twenty-eighth annual report of the Public Lending Right Committee since the Act came into effect.

From its commencement in 1974 to present, the Public Lending Right (PLR) has supported the enrichment of Australian culture by encouraging creation and publication of Australian books. This has been achieved through payments to eligible Australian creators and publishers to compensate them for their books being available in public lending libraries.

The Committee is also pleased to assist with, and advise on, the Educational Lending Right (ELR) scheme, a complementary administrative program introduced in 2000–01 that provides Australian authors and publishers recompense for works available in educational libraries. In 2007 ELR was provided with ongoing funding.

PLR and ELR continue to provide significant support and benefits to publishers, authors and illustrators and other creators. In this report Patricia Genat, President of the Australian Booksellers Association and Vice President of the Australian Library and Information Service, has generously contributed an article entitled *The power of the book*.

In the 2014–15 financial year the Committee approved PLR payments totalling $9.738 million to 7658 eligible creators and publishers. In addition, ELR payments totalling $11.859 million were made to 9998 eligible creators and publishers. Payments for both schemes were made in June 2015.

I am pleased to note that creators and publishers are increasingly utilising the services provided through Lending Rights Online. In 2014–15 more than 71 per cent of claimants utilised this convenient online service to manage their contact and banking details, submit title claims and/or view their payment history online.

On behalf of the Committee I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the contribution made by the Ministry for the Arts, the libraries that assist in the annual surveys and the many others involved in the operation of the PLR and ELR schemes. I would also like to thank my fellow members of the Committee for their contribution in 2014–15.

Yours sincerely

Christine Mackenzie
Public Lending Right Committee
12 October 2015
PUBLIC LENDING RIGHT SCHEME

Public Lending Right (PLR) is a scheme established by the Australian Government to make payments to eligible creators and publishers on the basis that income is lost from the availability of their books in public lending libraries.

The scheme also aims to enrich Australian culture by encouraging the growth and development of Australian writing and publishing.

The Public Lending Right Act 1985 (the Act) provides that the Minister may ‘approve or modify a scheme for and in relation to the making of payments to persons in respect of books’. For the purposes of the Act, a PLR Committee is appointed by the Minister to administer the PLR scheme.

The current Public Lending Right Scheme was gazetted on 12 June 1997. It was modified on 1 May 2015 (Modification No. 1 of 2015) to reflect payment rates approved by the then Minister for the Arts, Senator the Hon George Brandis QC, for eligible claimants in 2014–15.
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PUBLIC LENDING RIGHT COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP 2014–15

Chair
Ms Evelyn Woodberry (NSW)
  Appointed 19 March 2007 for a three-year term.
  Reappointed 4 March 2010 for a three-year term.
  Reappointed 5 March 2013 for a two-year term.
  Retired March 2015.

Representatives of Australian Authors
Dr Georgia Blain (NSW)
  Appointed 11 March 2013 for a three-year term.

Representative of Australian Libraries
Ms Christine Mackenzie (VIC)
  Appointed 7 December 2008 for a three-year term.
  Reappointed 16 February 2012 for a three-year term.
  Reappointed 14 May 2015 for twelve months.

National Library of Australia Representative
Ms Amelia McKenzie (ACT)
  Appointed 14 May 2015 for twelve months.

Attorney-General’s Department Representatives
Ms Kirsti Haipola (ACT)
  Appointed 14 May 2015 for twelve months.
PUBLIC LENDING RIGHT
COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Evelyn Woodberry (Chair)  Georgia Blain

Christine Mackenzie  Amelia McKenzie

Kirsti Hiapola
ADMINISTRATION OF THE SCHEME

While the PLR Committee administers the scheme, its day-to-day operation is undertaken by staff in the Creative Industries Branch in the Ministry for the Arts, Department of Communications and the Arts (the department), under delegation from the Committee.

The Committee wishes to record its appreciation for the support provided by the department.

HOW THE SCHEME OPERATES

Australian creators and publishers are invited to submit claims for their books to the department. PLR payments to eligible creators and publishers are determined by the number of copies of their books estimated to be held in public lending libraries in Australia.

This information is extrapolated from an annual survey of the books held in a sample of public lending libraries. If the survey results indicate that 50 or more copies of an eligible book are held in public libraries across Australia, a payment may be made.

Books are surveyed annually for two consecutive financial years following the year of publication. If, following the second year, a book is still held in sufficient numbers in public lending libraries, it will be re-surveyed every three years. Books scoring less than 50 copies in the second or subsequent surveys are dropped from the survey cycle.

The following eligibility criteria apply to the PLR scheme.

- Eligible creators must be citizens or permanent residents of Australia.
- Eligible creators [maximum of five per book] may include authors, editors, illustrators, translators or compilers.
- Eligible publishers may include publishers whose business consists wholly or substantially of the publication of books and who regularly publish in Australia (i.e. at least one new book or revised edition in the preceding three-year period); self-publishing creators; and non-profit organisations that publish to further their aims and objectives.

NEW CLAIMANTS

During 2014–15, 666 new claimants registered for the program.

Table 1 illustrates the number of new claimants registered by program year since 1985, when PLR was first automated.

Table 1: Number of New Claimants Registered by Program Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of New Claimants</th>
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<td>5437</td>
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<td>13–14</td>
<td>605</td>
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<tr>
<td>14–15</td>
<td>666</td>
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NEW CLAIMS REGISTERED

The number of new claims registered for the 2014–15 program was 11,468.

Table 2 illustrates the number of new claims registered by program year since 1985, when PLR was first automated.

**TABLE 2 NUMBER OF NEW CLAIMS REGISTERED BY PROGRAM YEAR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>CREATORS</th>
<th>PUBLISHERS</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<td>84–85</td>
<td>16,472</td>
<td>14,408</td>
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<td>2525</td>
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<td>2729</td>
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<td>1508</td>
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<tr>
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<td>6330</td>
<td>5138</td>
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</table>
NEW BOOKS REGISTERED

The number of new books registered for the 2014–15 program was 3223.

Table 3 illustrates the number of new books registered by program year since 1985 when PLR was first automated.

**TABLE 3 NUMBER OF NEW BOOKS REGISTERED BY PROGRAM YEAR**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>NUMBER OF BOOKS</th>
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<td>3169</td>
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<tr>
<td>14–15</td>
<td>3223</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIBRARY SURVEY

A statistical consultant engaged by the department has designed sampling and survey procedures for the collection of data on public library book stocks and the subsequent estimation of copies held for payment purposes.

The total book stock of eligible Australian public libraries registered in the PLR database for 2014–15 was 33 047 956. Individual public libraries with a book stock of less than 15 000 are not selected for survey.

For the 2014–15 PLR survey 25 libraries were selected to participate. These libraries held 42.22 per cent of the total book stock of all Australian public libraries. They included catalogues of public libraries administered by four state governments and 21 regional library networks with book stock figures ranging from 48 642 to 3 211 357.

The PLR library survey is conducted using an automated matching process in 25 participating libraries.

Appendix 1: lists the 100 highest scoring books: 2012-13 survey to 2014–15 survey.

PAYMENTS

On 1 May 2015 the then Minister for the Arts, Senator the Hon George Brandis QC, approved an increase in the PLR payment rates for 2014–15.

The rate per copy of each eligible book was $2.02 for creators and 50.5 cents for publishers compared with $2.00 and 50 cents in 2013–14.

The PLR Committee approved annual payments of $9.738 million for 2014–15, to be distributed to 7658 claimants of which 7409 were creators (3861 females and 3548 males) and 249 were publishers. Payments were made in June 2015.

Appendix 3: lists the range of payments by number of claimants.
Appendix 4: lists the range of payments by amount of payment.
Appendix 5: lists the largest payments to creators.
Appendix 6: lists the largest payments to publishers.
PROGRAM EXPENSES

Administrative/operational costs incurred in the annual operation of the PLR scheme included:
- advertising and promotion
- committee expenses and allowances
- computer costs (licence fees and supplies)
- payments to libraries and library system vendors for participation in the annual survey
- specialist accessioning services
- statistical advice on the annual survey, and
- production and distribution of claimant advice letters.

Other operational costs, including salaries of departmental officers, were met from departmental funds.

**TABLE 4** PLR EXPENDITURE FOR THE 2014–15 PROGRAM*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>AMOUNT ($)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual payments approved</td>
<td>$9 738 575.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusting/deferred payments made for previous programs</td>
<td>$9 194.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration/operational costs</td>
<td>$236 082.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous program commitments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$9 983 852.67</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This information has not been audited.* Audit details concerning the financial and staffing matters relating to the administration of the PLR scheme are published in the consolidated financial statements in the annual report of the department.
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

During the 2014-15 financial year no requests were received pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 1982.

EDUCATIONAL LENDING RIGHT

Educational Lending Right (ELR) is an Australian Government cultural program administered by the Ministry for the Arts. Introduced in 2000–01, Australia remains the only country with a comprehensive ELR scheme. The eligibility criteria applying to the PLR scheme also apply to the ELR scheme. Full details on ELR are in the Educational Lending Right Policies and Procedures 2011, available at the Lending Rights website: www.arts.gov.au/literature/lending_rights

In the 2014-15 financial year the ELR scheme made payments totalling $11.859 million to 9998 claimants of whom 9641 were creators (5037 females and 4604 males) and 357 were publishers whose books are held in educational libraries, including school, Technical and Further Education (TAFE) and university libraries. ELR payments were made in June 2015.

Appendix 7- lists the 100 highest scoring books: 2014–15 ELR survey.

LENDING RIGHTS ONLINE

The Lending Rights Online (LRO) service provides claimants with convenient access at any time to:

- register as creators or publishers
- submit title claims for books
- update their contact and banking details, and
- view their payment history.

The number of claimants managing business transactions via LRO continues to increase. Between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2015, 71 per cent of claims were lodged via the service.
THE POWER OF THE BOOK.

Patricia Genat

On September 3rd, I was privileged to be involved in the Indigenous Literacy Day Event at the Sydney Opera House. It was a joyous occasion with singing, talking, reading, lots of children and lots of books.

It got me thinking about the power of the book within communities. The Indigenous Literacy Foundation, of which I am a Board Member, was founded by a bookseller specifically to provide that power to children and families in remote areas of Australia.

I am lucky enough to be part of many urban communities which value the book – my workplace, my local library, my local church, the various Boards on which I hold positions and of course, my friends and my home.

The values which all these communities hold dear – open access to information, inclusive access to writers and thinkers, the assumption that reading for leisure and information is an acceptable daily activity all contribute to making me and the communities I belong to, better, smarter, more open places. Any community that encourages reading of opinion and fact as well as sharing the joy of the story has to have a better grasp on the world than one which relies solely on the short soundbites of television news and reality programs.

Because I live in Adelaide, I receive a special additional gift as a reader, as we have had 55 continuous years of Adelaide Writers’ Week. This is Australia’s largest free literary festival, offering both writers and readers a unique opportunity to spend time sharing ideas and literary explorations in a garden setting in Adelaide’s city centre. In 2015, the cost of the program [traditionally $10] was sponsored, and delighted enthusiasts, arrived in even larger numbers and delighted booksellers, authors and publishers by spending more than ever before.

Across Australia, communities build ideas around books and daily life. Technology often adds a layer of interactivity, complexity or even access which broadens the appeal and the impact of the written word. At the Brisbane Writers Festival this year they are promoting the new program of Street Reads - see www.streetreads.com. Street Reads makes you the hero of your own story, giving you the chance to take part in your own adventure in locations across Brisbane.

Brisbane City Council hosts these real-life choose-your-own-adventure style stories around the Brisbane CBD and suburbs using the Story City App. “Have you ever read a story and wished you could be in it, why be a tourist when you can be a secret agent? Or run through the streets of a new city to escape a zombie apocalypse?” asks the blurb. Why indeed.
I can’t be there to enjoy the experience, but I love the idea of capturing this personal technology adventure within the often slightly sanctified air of a literary festival.

Each year, the ALIA National Simultaneous Storytime creates a colourful, vibrant, fun event that aims to promote the value of reading and literacy using an Australian children’s book that explores age appropriate themes, and addresses key learning areas of the National Curriculum for Grades 1 to 6 and the pre-school Early Learning Years Framework. This mix of literacy and literature works well and in 2015, over 400,000 children in around 3,000 venues shared the reading of the Brothers Quibble by Aaron Blabey.

The book opens with the following words

“Spalding Quibble ruled the roost, he shared it with no other But then his parents introduced, a brand new baby brother....”

Oh dear, we all know where this can go and Blabey’s delightful words and illustrations take us for a wonderful ride. Wouldn’t it be lovely if next year, there’s a million children sharing a story? That’s almost 20% of our population.

If you are reading this, you are privileged to be a reader or a writer in a place which values that art and skill. In the year ahead, I challenge you all to be an active and positive influence in your own community and, even more, in communities that need you to show them the amazing power of the book.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX 1:
PLR—100 HIGHEST SCORING BOOKS
2012–13 TO 2014–15

The table below lists the top 100 books held in public lending libraries for the
last three years.

It is based on the results of the three most recent PLR surveys conducted during

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Zusak, Markus</td>
<td>The book thief</td>
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<td>Simsion, Graeme</td>
<td>The Rosie project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kent, Hannah</td>
<td>Burial rites</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fox, Mem</td>
<td>Possum magic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lester, Alison</td>
<td>Are we there yet? A journey around Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsiolkas, Christos</td>
<td>The slap</td>
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<tr>
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Note: The listing of a title does not necessarily imply that the author has submitted a claim.
APPENDIX 2:  
PLR—100 HIGHEST SCORING BOOKS 
1974–75 TO 2014–15

This table lists in order the 100 books that have achieved the highest single-year PLR scores over the last 40 years. It is based on the results of the annual surveys of public lending libraries conducted since the PLR scheme began in 1974.

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Note: The listing of a title does not necessarily imply that the author has submitted a claim.
## APPENDIX 3: PLR—RANGE OF PAYMENTS BY NUMBER OF CLAIMANTS 2014–15

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Appendix 6: PLR—largest payments to publishers 2014–15 (cont)

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<td>Thames &amp; Hudson (Australia)</td>
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<td>The Five Mile Press P/L</td>
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<td>The GHR Press P/L</td>
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<td>Trekaway P/L - TA Envirobook</td>
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<td>Windy Hollow Books</td>
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<td>Wombat Books</td>
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<td>Woodslane Press</td>
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<td>Word Weavers Press</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working Title Press</td>
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APPENDIX 7: ELR—
100 HIGHEST SCORING BOOKS 2014–15

This table represents the 100 highest scoring books from the results of the survey of books held in educational lending libraries for the 2014-15 ELR program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
<th>TITLE</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Fox, Mem</td>
<td>Possum magic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rodda, Emily</td>
<td>Rowan of Rin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vaughan, Marcia K</td>
<td>Wombat stew</td>
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<td>Rodda, Emily</td>
<td>The forests of silence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baker, Jeannie</td>
<td>Where the forest meets the sea</td>
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<td>Fox, Mem</td>
<td>Hattie and the fox</td>
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<td>Marsden, John</td>
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<tr>
<td>Klein, Robin</td>
<td>Hating Alison Ashley</td>
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<td>Gleitzman, Morris</td>
<td>Boy overboard</td>
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<td>Allen, Pamela</td>
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<tr>
<td>Klein, Robin</td>
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<td>Baker, Jeannie</td>
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<td>Gleitzman, Morris</td>
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<td>Fox, Mem</td>
<td>Shoes from Grandpa</td>
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<td>Dread Mountain</td>
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<td>Rodda, Emily</td>
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<td>Queen of the universe</td>
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