

New Screenrights policy slammed as opaque and unreasonable

The Australian royalty collection agency Screenrights has been slammed as “opaque and unreasonable” in releasing a new policy that critics say will have the effect of robbing Australian screenwriters of money they are legally owed.

The Australian Writers’ Guild (AWG) has criticised the Express Dispute Resolution Procedure (EDRP) released this week (1 September 2015) by Screenrights, a multi-million dollar organisation established to collect and distribute statutory royalty payments for film and television makers.

The AWG, which represents stage, screen and radio writers across Australia, says the new procedure represents an extraordinary change to Screenrights practices and means that Australian screenwriters risk losing hundreds of thousands of dollars in the royalty payments that Screenrights is entrusted by the federal government to fairly distribute.

The Guild has been in protracted negotiations with Screenrights for years over the approach Screenrights takes to their dealings with writers.

The AWG says that for decades, Screenrights has favoured producers, distributors and broadcasters, distributing to them royalties that were owed to writers.

“Screenrights is entrusted with millions of dollars on behalf of audio visual creators. They should hold themselves accountable to the highest possible standards” says AWG Executive Director, Jacqueline Elaine. “Unfortunately this new procedure is a stark example of an inconsistent, inequitable and non-transparent approach.”

Screenrights announcement stated that their approach was based on ‘common sense’ and ‘standard industry practice’.

“It is far from common sense to introduce a policy where those most affected by the policy have raised grave concerns that have not been addressed”. She says writers are not represented on the Board of Screenrights and “The policy and procedures might look very different if they were.”

Media contact: Olya Booyar

Director, Communications, AWG

Phone: (02) 8036 6010

Mob: 0408347409

© 2015 Australian Writers Guild

[TERMS OF USE \(http://www.awg.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=232\)](http://www.awg.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=232)

[DISCLAIMER \(http://www.awg.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=233\)](http://www.awg.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=233)

[BECOME A MEMBER \(/membership-29/join-us.html\)](/membership-29/join-us.html)

[SITEMAP \(/component/xmap/?Itemid=585\)](/component/xmap/?Itemid=585)

[PRIVACY POLICY \(http://www.awg.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=271\)](http://www.awg.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=271)