

Government 2.0 Taskforce Request for Project Proposal

Project Four: Copyright Law and Intellectual Property

Scope:

Look at the broad policy rationale of copyright and outline a 'first best' response at the same time as anatomising the plethora of micro-problems. The ultimate objective would be to develop a set of recommendations - both at a high level and at a more detailed level designed to free up some of the obstacles as well as producing the evidence and arguments to support such recommendations.

You should investigate:

- existing whole of government open licensing and data sharing initiatives including the National Government Information Sharing Strategy, the National Government Information Licensing Framework and the Government Information Licensing Framework;
- existing examples of agencies such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics that have licensed information under creative commons; and
- existing examples of agencies that have been unable or unwilling to publish data stating copyright or intellectual property as a barrier.

Context:

Government agencies currently make a large amount of information available on their websites, and much more could be made available freely on the internet. However, technological, copyright and licensing issues tend to restrict the way that this information can be made available and used by the public.

Making government information accessible online, particularly in standard formats such as XML, CSV, ODF etc allows those outside government, whether they are citizens, firms or third sector organisations, to combine, present and analyse this information in different ways, creating both public and private benefits.

It is hoped that, through strategic management of copyright and new Web 2.0 licensing tools like Creative Commons¹, government can more easily provide the necessary permission to promote better access to and reuse of public sector information. In the short term this means using current copyright law and practice to do a better job and in the longer term assessing the appropriateness of existing copyright law for a digital environment and any changes that should be made to address problems.

Objectives:

- An understanding of the copyright and intellectual property barriers to open data sharing.
- Inform the Government 2.0 Taskforce in its consideration of recommendations that will encourage the adoption of Web 2.0 by Government and make government information more accessible and usable.

Deliverables:

¹ Creative Commons seeks to support the building of a richer public domain by providing an alternative to the automatic "all rights reserved" copyright, dubbed "some rights reserved, i.e. reasonable, flexible copyright (from Wikipedia)

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A report provided to the Gov 2.0 Taskforce Secretariat via email (gov2secretariat@finance.gov.au) by the 19 October 2009. The report will be in Microsoft Word DOC format, Rich Text Format RTF or OpenDocument Text ODT. It will contain at minimum: executive summary; findings; discussion of issues; and recommendations.

Cost Estimate:

Estimated budget for this research is \$40 000 GST inclusive.

Additional Work:

The successful contractor may be asked to provide additional expert services to further inform the Taskforce or assist with researching/authoring/editing sections of the Taskforce report.