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From an outsiders point of view, conflict of interest plays a big part in Aus music today. Universal and Warner/Chappell, being the biggest record companies in the world, should not have any influence over our commercial media if we want to retain the money collected on behalf of our musicians by APRA. However, as the licence money collected from Australian businesses over the last 30 years or so has been growing, our presence and income has been diminishing, specially for new Aussie material. Lesser Aus record companies cannot get airplay on most Aus commercial radio. If they did they would receive royalties, therefore an income. We need this support. Distribution of royalties favours the most played music on commercial radio, which is mostly from the 2 record companies, and mostly OS songwriters. Pop/rock music is mostly 10-15% Aussie content, and the tracks can be 40 years old.

APRA have not in that time gone out on a limb for independent Australian musicians. They have gone with the flow as the industry moved from onshore to offshore. The last kick in the guts was a couple of years ago when they took the licence money paid by community TV and put it into the commercial TV pool. This was the death knoll for music videos on C31, as any outlay indie musicians had spent on their product suddenly became totally unredeemable unless they were lucky enough to get a play on commercial TV.

APRA may not have broken any laws, but they have never been seen to be supportive of Aus talent. And if you ring for information, nobody ever seems to have answers.

Anita Monk
Producer
Wrokdwn TV and radio.