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18 Jun 2018, by Anna Caldwell

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Capital City Daily - circulation 232,067 (MTWTFSS-)

ID 970505998

BRIEF COPYRIGHT INDEX 1

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# Gladys told do the write thing

**EXCLUSIVE**

**ANNA CALDWELL  
STATE POLITICAL EDITOR**

HIGH-profile authors are lining up to demand the NSW government pay them millions of dollars in owed copyright fees as the state holds out on paying thousands of writers, photographers and illustrators their dues.

The Daily Telegraph can reveal that one day after the government hands down a cash-splashing Budget, it will go into mediation hearings after holding out for seven years over a measly \$7 million owed in the fees.

Best-selling author Tara Moss today fronts a push by authors calling for the government to pay the going rate for using their material — a rate paid consistently by every other government in the country.

Moss told The Daily Telegraph the situation was “frankly outrageous”. She said the NSW government was “refusing to recognise the value in tens of millions of pages of author, researcher, photographer, cartoonist, journalist and publisher content”.

“If we want to be able to benefit from the knowledge of Australians, or read and watch Australian stories instead of solely imports, we must value the contributions



**Adam Suckling.**

of Australians and offer them fair pay,” Moss said.

For seven years now, the NSW government has refused to pay the market rate to copy, use and share authors’ work.

Copyright Agency chief Adam Suckling last week told members the group wanted to charge the state government the same rate as every other state in the country. He said the agency had four times tried to settle the matter on reasonable terms with the Justice Department but had not been successful.

“Many of the NSW government’s 200,000 employees use and distribute copyright material such as newspaper and magazine articles; science, technology, health

and engineering journal articles; photos and illustrations, in the course of their work every day,”

Mr Suckling said.

“This refusal to pay a fair rate hurts Australian writers, journalists, cartoonists, photographers, publishers and visual artists.”

A state government survey of its own employees shows public servants have copied and shared up to 200 million pages of copyright material in the past five years.

Authors Anna Funder and Malcolm Knox have also spoken out alongside Moss.

“I never imagined the NSW government would take a product or use a service and underpay for it. But here it is, doing just that: taking our product and not paying a fair price,” said Funder, the author of hit novel *Stasiland*.

A spokesman last night said the

Department of Justice “is hopeful the mediation will deliver an outcome that is reasonable for both authors and taxpayers”.

**Tara Moss is leading the authors’ charge for payment.**



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