

Code Conciliator's Annual Report

1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026

Conciliator

I was appointed as Code Conciliator in 2017.

The Film Exhibition and Distribution Code has been preventing and resolving disputes between Australian distributors and exhibitors since 1998.

Improving Understanding

I was very happy to be able to attend the AIMC at the Gold Coast in October 2025. This was an inspiring event and added to my understanding of industry issues and innovation.

In May 2026 I responded to an enquiry from a Distributor about the operation of the dispute resolution process in the Code. The Distributor had an ongoing issue with an Exhibitor. I had conversations with the Distributor and the issue was resolved without the need for further intervention. I am always happy to speak to Exhibitors or Distributors to assist them to avoid problems escalating to formal disputes.

Training on the Code

Clause 18 of the Code states that distributors and exhibitors must provide training on the Code for relevant staff, and new staff within 20 business days of commencement. **Small independent distributors and exhibitors can instead provide relevant staff with a short document outlining their key rights and obligations under the Code.**

In 2025-2026 the FEDCAC Training sub-committee continued developing a training material for Code signatories. The sub-committee finalised and delivered the following training material to the FEDCAC:

A short video – Introduction to the Film Code

A short free downloadable Code information sheet for new members

Piracy Guidance Information Sheet for Cinemas
Code Training Quiz Questions
Code Training Quiz Answers

The sub-committee met several times in this period to discuss training material. The training material will be made available to Code Signatories at no cost. The training material should be regularly update. I wish to thank the sub-committee (Lori Flekser, Chris Jones and Veronica Whitmee) for their input and expertise.

Secretariat Enquiries

The Code Secretariat has historically taken enquiries from exhibitors and distributors about issues that might escalate into disputes, and assisted to resolve complaints at an early stage. The vast majority of enquiries have, over the years been resolved at the Secretariat level, avoiding the need for conciliation. The role of the Secretariat has been vacant for some time. Katherine Sainty, has continued to provide the administrative portion of that role. The 1300 phone line for the Secretariat has been forwarded to my office.

In May 2026 I received an enquiry from a Distributor and provided information about the Code's informal and formal dispute resolution processes.

Number of Disputes

No disputes were received by the Conciliator in the past 12months.

Operation of the Code

The Code, which was created in 1998 at the instigation of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, provides a framework for fair and equitable dealings between exhibitors and distributors.

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