

Copyright Cleared Services

In April 1991 the British Library Document Supply Centre (BLDSC) introduced a new service, the Copyright Cleared Service, alongside its existing loan/photocopy operations. The development of this new service was made possible by an agreement concluded between BLDSC and the Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA) in November 1990. For a small fee for each copy, the agreement allows BLDSC to provide copies of serial articles, or extracts from books, which could not normally be legally made under the present British copyright legislation. Some categories of material, for example, grey literature are excluded. The agreement not only provides complete protection for BLDSC's customers but also allows the Centre to offer a wide range of copying options.

The underlying principle of the Copyright Cleared Service is that it should be easy to operate and involve no bureaucratic complexities for BLDSC, its customers or the CLA. To this end, all requests satisfied through the service are charged a flat-rate fee regardless of the length of an article, type or origin of the publication or the kind of organisation making the request. The same fee is payable for the copyright cleared option on all BLDSC copying services: standard postal and automated photocopying, Urgent Action, LEXICON and Journal Contents Pages subscriptions. All fees collected are passed to the CLA, which uses BLDSC serial use data, to distribute the money to publishers.

Apart from legal protection, what additional benefits does the Copyright Cleared Service offer to BLDSC's customers? They can now:

- request more than one copy of a journal, article or chapter from a book, with no limit on the number of copies;

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- request copies of more than a single article from a journal issue or chapter from a book, provided that BLDSC are satisfied that the customer is not using the service as a substitute for purchase;
- add copies to their own stock or circulate copies within their organisation as part of, for example, an information or current awareness service;
- request copies without needing to obtain and keep signed declarations from their own readers.

The only major restriction that remains is that further copying, other than that allowed by the copyright law, is not permitted without the permission of the copyright owner or an authorised body. (Recopying of faxed copies made on thermal paper is permitted for preservation purposes.)

It is clear that the agreement with CLA has been of benefit to all concerned: the BLDSC which can now enlarge the range of services offered; BLDSC's customers who, for a reasonable charge, can by-pass some of the legal restrictions on requesting photocopies, and publishers who get recompensed for a growing proportion of the copying carried out at BLDSC. The agreement has brought to an end the weary relationship which previously existed between BLDSC and publishers. It heralds a new era of mutual understanding and potential co-operation which can only be of further benefit to both them and the academic, research and industrial communities which they serve.