
APRA AMCOS DISTRIBUTION INFORMATION GUIDE



OUR DISTRIBUTION INFORMATION GUIDES: A SUMMARY

Our distribution information guides explain how the licence fees APRA AMCOS collects are paid out as royalties.

We care about ensuring the licence fees our music customers pay are distributed to our songwriter, composer and publisher members and affiliated overseas societies in the most efficient and accurate way possible. For every dollar we collect, around 86 cents is returned to music creators. At 13.6%, our expense to revenue ratio compares very favourably to affiliated organisations providing the same service overseas.

We take paying the right copyright owner their royalties very seriously. In the broadest sense, APRA AMCOS's distribution policy is to strike a sensible balance between using accurate data to determine who should be paid royalties and the cost of collecting that data. Where it is cost effective to collect direct data we will. Where it is not, we use sample data or music recognition technology, followed by alternative or proxy data sources representing the most comparable music use possible. We are always looking for the best sources of data to distribute licence fees and invest in world's best practice data matching systems. This approach means we are able to distribute licence fees in the most efficient way available to us.

APRA AMCOS DISTRIBUTION PROCESS

apraamcos.com.au

1



**WE LICENSE BUSINESSES
FOR THE MUSIC
THEY USE**

2



**WE COLLECT MUSIC DATA FROM
MULTIPLE SOURCES**

Including radio & TV stations, streaming services, live performances, background music services and more

3



**WE AUTO MATCH DATA TO SONGS AND
COMPOSITIONS IN OUR DATABASE**

Unidentified songs are then matched to their copyright owners by our team of researchers

4



WE CALCULATE ROYALTIES

According to our distribution rules and practices

5



WE PAY ROYALTIES

To our members and overseas affiliated societies



**APRA
AMCOS**

APRA AMCOS DISTRIBUTION INFORMATION GUIDE



DISTRIBUTION PRACTICES AT A GLANCE

We have categorised the different types of music uses that we license into 'like' groups below and then listed a summary of the data sources we use for the payments we make to our members and affiliated overseas societies.

Airlines

Direct reports

- Audio and audio-visual performance data from airlines

Paid quarterly

Background Music, Restaurants & Cafes, Hotels, Clubs, Retail, Dance Schools, Live Adult Entertainment, Places of Interest & Amusement, and Transport

Proxy data

- Radio airplay data from commercial radio stations
- Data from background music suppliers
- Data from music streaming services
- Restaurants & Cafes – an allocation to overseas affiliate societies representing the most commonly used foreign languages in Australia

Paid quarterly

Background Television

Proxy data

- Broadcast data from TV networks and pay-TV music channels

Paid quarterly

Child care, Defence, Funerals, Government (excluding educational)

APRA portion is distributed against proxy data, depending on the licence:

- Music in the Workplace Tariff: Performance Reports data
- Music on Hold: Music on Hold data
- General Business: Proxy data from radio and online (streaming) data sources

AMCOS portion uses sample data supplied by businesses reproducing music

Paid annually

Churches

Proxy & Performance Reports

- Data supplied by Christian Copyright Licensing International in Australia
- Proxy data as per Background Music in New Zealand
- Performance reports submitted by APRA AMCOS members

Paid six-monthly; except Live Performances component paid annually

Cinema & Film Festivals

Direct reports

- box office data from cinema distributors

Paid quarterly

APRA AMCOS DISTRIBUTION INFORMATION GUIDE



Commercial radio

Direct reports & member claims

- Radio airplay data from commercial radio stations
- Music recognition technology for music used in radio commercials
- Jingle reporting forms submitted by members

Paid quarterly

Community Radio and Narrowcasters

Sample data

- Reports from a sample of community radio stations including four weeks of radio airplay data

Paid quarterly

Digital Downloads

Direct reports

- Detailed data reports from digital service providers

Paid quarterly

Dramatic Context

Direct reports

- Songs and compositions licensed for use in a theatrical production

Paid quarterly

Education

Direct reports and sample data

- Reports received from Screenrights
- Sample data used received from 180 schools

Paid annually

Events & Festivals

Direct reports (per event)

- Setlists of main and support artists, submitted by event promoters
- Music recognition technology

Paid quarterly

Fitness

Sample data and proxy data

- Data from fitness classes
- Radio airplay data from commercial radio stations
- Data from music streaming services

Paid quarterly

Karaoke

Proxy data

- Radio airplay data from commercial radio stations
- Performance reports submitted by APRA AMCOS members
- an allocation to overseas affiliate societies representing the most commonly used foreign languages in Australia

Paid quarterly

Live Music, Halls & Functions, Community Groups, Cruise ships, Eisteddfodau, Music in the Workplace

Performance Reports

- Performance reports submitted by APRA AMCOS members
- For Eisteddfodau – AMCOS portion uses sample data supplied by businesses reproducing music

Paid annually; AMCOS portion paid quarterly

National Radio (ABC, SBS)

Direct reports & member claims

- Radio airplay data from ABC and SBS radio
- Jingle reporting forms submitted by members

Paid quarterly

Physical Product sales

Pay per use

- Direct distribution based on Pay Per Use reports

Paid quarterly

Production Music Libraries

Pay per use

- Song/composition selected by licensee and listed with application

Paid quarterly

APRA AMCOS DISTRIBUTION INFORMATION GUIDE



Recorded Featured Music & Recorded Music for Dancing (eg: nightclubs)

Sample and proxy data

- Music recognition technology (in some venues)
- ARIA Dance chart
- Radio airplay data from relevant selected commercial radio stations

Paid quarterly

Sporting events

Direct reports & proxy data

- Performance reports from sporting events
- Radio airplay data from commercial and community radio stations
- Broadcast data from TV networks

Paid quarterly

Streaming Services

Direct reports & proxy

- Detailed data reports from streaming service providers

Paid quarterly

Sync

Direct reports

- Songs and compositions licensed for audio-visual use

Paid quarterly

Telephone Hold Music

Proxy data and direct claims

- Radio airplay data from commercial radio stations
- Classical music airplay reports from ABC Classic FM
- Radio jingles
- Member claims

Paid quarterly

Television – Free-to-air, National Broadcasters (ABC, SBS), Pay-TV

Direct reports & member claims

- Broadcast data (music use in TV shows and films) from TV networks
- Music recognition technology for music used in TV commercials
- Jingle reporting forms submitted by members

Paid quarterly

Video on demand

Direct reports

- Data (music used in programs and films) from streaming video on demand providers

Paid quarterly

Websites and other Online (including podcasts)

Direct reports & proxy

- Reports detailing music use on websites and in podcasts from licensees

Paid quarterly

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

[Contact us](#)

Refer to our full [Distribution Rules and Practices](#) for more information.

APRA AMCOS (the Australasian Performing Right Association and the Australasian Mechanical Copyright Owners Society) is a collective management organisation which licenses performing, communication and reproduction rights in music on behalf of more than 100,000 members and 145,000 licensees with 170 affiliated organisations worldwide.

GOVERNANCE

The APRA and AMCOS Distribution rules and practices are set by the Boards.

APRA AMCOS DISTRIBUTION INFORMATION GUIDE



UNIDENTIFIED SONGS AND DISPUTES

This information guide explains how APRA AMCOS deals with undistributed funds, which are held when songs and compositions cannot be identified or are the subject of a dispute.

WHY DOES APRA AMCOS HAVE UNDISTRIBUTED FUNDS?

We take paying the right copyright owners their royalties very seriously. Along with licence fees, we collect music usage data from multiple sources such as radio and TV stations, streaming services, live music performances and background music suppliers, to help us determine who should be paid royalties. Our data collection efforts amount to approximately 6 billion records per year and this number continues to grow.

APRA AMCOS employs sophisticated data matching technology to link music usage data received from licensees to our vast database of songs and compositions and corresponding ownership details. If our data matching processes fail to automatically match music usage data to the songs in our database, we have a team of researchers who work to identify songs and compositions and locate their copyright owners so they can be paid.

When a song or composition cannot be identified or the copyright owners cannot be found, we hold onto these funds. In some cases, songs or compositions can be identified, but the copyright owner is not represented by APRA or AMCOS or an affiliated society overseas. In this case we hold onto the funds until the copyright owner becomes a member of a collecting society.

For songs or compositions that are the subject of a dispute, for example when two songwriters are disputing their share of a song they have written together, we flag that song in our system. Any royalties that are earned for that song are held until the dispute is settled.

WHAT STEPS DOES APRA AMCOS TAKE TO IDENTIFY THE COPYRIGHT OWNERS?

When a song or composition does not automatically match to our database, our research team steps in to identify songs and compositions and locate their copyright owners. The research process is manual and time consuming so in some cases it is not cost effective to research every unmatched song or composition. Our distribution rules and practices therefore include 'research thresholds', to indicate when research should be carried out. For example, when a song is downloaded by a music user and that song cannot be matched to our database, our staff will only undertake research if that song is due to be paid more than \$100 in royalties from APRA and AMCOS. Where the research threshold is not met, the royalties are added back into the distribution pool, to be distributed against a proxy data source representing the most comparable music use possible.

In the cases of some blanket distributions, lists of unidentified songs are circulated to publishers before the distribution is made, to allow ownership to be fully identified before the distribution is run. In these cases, the full amount is distributed, and no funds are held aside for unidentified works.

APRA AMCOS DISTRIBUTION INFORMATION GUIDE



HOW LONG DOES APRA AMCOS HOLD ON TO THE FUNDS?

APRA

Royalties for Unidentified or Disputed songs and compositions which have been used under blanket licences like TV and radio broadcasts are not held in cash terms - the distribution “points” value of the unidentified song or composition is carried forward to future distributions. Once we have identified the song and its copyright owner/s, the distribution “points” value is included and paid in the next distribution.

Unidentified songs and compositions with earnings from transactional licences like digital downloads, streaming services and live concerts are held in the APRA Suspense Account for as long as it takes to identify the copyright owner/s. Once identified, the held royalties are paid in the next distribution.

If a song has been identified as being written by a writer who is not a member of APRA, then cash is held in an APRA Royalty Adjustment Account. Our writer representatives then contact the writer, and the value that was held is paid out in full in the distribution after the writer becomes an APRA member.

The undistributed funds from songs or compositions that are the subject of a dispute are held until the dispute is resolved. Once resolved, the royalties are paid to the appropriate copyright owner in the following month.

AMCOS

Unidentified songs and compositions from physical product sales are held in the AMCOS Unidentified Control Account. Once we have identified the song and its copyright owner/s, the funds are paid in the next distribution. If the copyright owner cannot be identified within a period of 2 ½ years, the funds are refunded back to the client who paid the licence fees.

Unidentified songs and compositions from revenue sources other than physical product sales are held in the AMCOS General Control Account. The funds are held for as long as it takes to identify the copyright owner, at which point they are paid in the next distribution.

The undistributed funds from songs or compositions that are the subject of a dispute are held until the dispute is resolved. Once resolved, the royalties are paid to the appropriate copyright owner in the next distribution.

HOW DOES APRA AMCOS DISTRIBUTE THE FUNDS IF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER CANNOT BE IDENTIFIED?

In many cases the funds are held for as long as it takes to identify the song and its copyright owner/s. However from time to time, the APRA and AMCOS Boards may decide to perform an extraordinary distribution of unclaimed funds which have been held for extended periods of time. These funds are distributed against a proxy data source, representing the most comparable music use possible, with a small portion of this distribution transferred to a contingency account, just in case claims are later made by members.

This process is in line with the constitutions of both APRA and AMCOS and ensures that unidentified funds do not continually grow without review and intervention. Importantly, this process does not apply to works that are unpayable due to a dispute between copyright owners.

APRA AMCOS DISTRIBUTION INFORMATION GUIDE



KEY TERMS USED IN OUR DISTRIBUTION RULES AND PRACTICES DOCUMENTS

Musical and literary works: The Copyright Act refers to a musical work as written musical scores in the form of sheet music, broadsheets or other notation. Lyrics or words to a song are considered literary works. When we refer to songs and/or compositions, we are referring to all the elements of a musical/literary work protected by copyright.

Dispute: In terms of copyright ownership, disputes can arise between songwriters/composers in relation to the percentage of their respective copyright ownership for a particular song or composition.

Points: Where a blanket licence has been granted allowing the licensee to use any songs or compositions they wish, APRA AMCOS' distribution policy uses a 'points' system to help determine the dollar value of a song or composition and the share of royalties.

View our [distribution summary guide](#) for information about other distribution pools.

This fact sheet is a guide only. Refer to our full [Distribution Rules and Practices](#) for more information or [contact us](#).