

# ACOFS Fact Sheet

## Australian Council of Film Societies

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**NUMBER 03-C** (Revised 20 Jun 2026)

### Film Society DVD Screening Rights – Overview

At the time of writing formal agreements exist between ACOFS and two of the major DVD distributors regarding the provision of non-theatrical DVD screening rights to member film societies and an appropriate payment for those rights.

The distributors are:

Roadshow (Who also represent many other film and DVD distributors).

Amalgamated Movies (Who also represent other distributors, including Madman)

ACOFS Fact Sheet 3-A covers many hints and tips about how to go about getting permission to screen a DVD owned by the film society. If you have any questions please contact the FVFS secretary on [admin@fvfs.org.au](mailto:admin@fvfs.org.au)

Many other DVD distributors are aware of the ACOFS agreement and are prepared to follow the same procedures without an “official” agreement.

ACOFS Fact Sheet 3-B contains the latest known contacts for all known co-operating distributors.

If a film society needs to approach a DVD company that is not yet aware of the ACOFS DVD rights process (& agreement) they should send them a copy of this document, and then let the secretary know how you got on, at the email address: [secretary@fvfs.org.au](mailto:secretary@fvfs.org.au)

This may be given to distributors as an aid to discussions with them.

#### BACKGROUND

If a film society purchases a DVD or borrows it from a member, they must still seek approval to screen it DVD from the relevant rights owner or their agent. ACOFS (the Australian Council of Film Societies) assisted by the State Federations and the major DVD distributors has developed a mechanism for locating the rights holder of that DVD and paying an agreed and fair price for the non-theatrical screening rights, to the rights owners.

#### THE PROCESS

The process requires that a film society approach the rights holder of a DVD (or their agent), in advance, for permission to screen each and every DVD to be screened non-theatrically by the film society. The film society should not proceed with a screening until approval is given by the rights holder. The rights holder then invoices the film society, payable after the DVD has been screened. This agreements guarantees a discounted fee for non-theatrical screenings and applies only for film societies that are current members of a state federation.

#### PARTICIPATING DISTRIBUTORS

The full list of participating distributors and their agents is given in ACOFS Fact Sheet 3B.

#### WHAT IS A NON-THEATRICAL SCREENING?

A non-theatrical film screening is one is a screening which is conducted for the benefit of members only of a film society (for example) and there is no charge made for individual admission. The minimum period of a film society membership must be at least for 3 consecutive screenings. Any advertising material will promote the society itself, and may make mention of film titles, but should focus on membership. The only exception is where non-members may be admitted on a limited basis to “Come-and-try-it” for free.

## PARTICIPATING FILM SOCIETIES

Any film society that is a current financial member of their State Federation and which is a member of ACOFS, has access to this “ACOFS screening rights agreement” unless they admit a paying audience to their screenings or the screening is organized by a cinema using a DCP (Digital Cinema Package) to deliver the movie

Current member State Federations are:

FVFS - Federation of Victorian Film Societies

TFoFS - Tasmanian Federation of Film Societies

FQFS- Federation of Queensland Film Societies

NSWFFS - New South Wales Federation of Film Societies

WAFFS - West Australian Federation of Film Societies

SAFFS - South Australian Federation of Film Societies

## INCLUSIONS

For the purpose of this “Agreement” the term “DVD” includes BluRay, 4K Ultra HD, legally obtained digital copies of the movie and downloaded (eg MP4) or streamed files (as long as the supplier has agreed), and USB Flash drive (eg MP4),

*Note that if a DVD is not available commercially, some distributors may be able to provide a non-commercial copy of the movie on a DVD, as a downloaded digital file or on a USB flash drive. While they may wish to recover the cost of doing so (and the postage), they are unlikely to charge as much as the cost of a commercial DVD.*

## EXCLUSIONS

- This agreement does not cover the supply of a DVD. Some distributors can make a DVD available to the film society, but that agreement and charge is outside the ACOFS DVD agreement.
- It is not permitted to borrow a DVD from one of the retail DVD/Video outlets to be screened in a non-theatrical situation such as at a film society as the rights they have for their DVDs specifically exclude this.
- It is not permitted to record a movie from broadcast TV to screen in public because the rights they have for their movies specifically exclude this.
- A streamed movies may not be screened to a public audience (such as a film society) without specific agreement of the streaming service. This is not normally available from the larger streaming services.
- It does not include film such as 35mm, 16mm 8mm etc.

## CHARGES FOR SCREENING RIGHTS

Screening rights fees should be dependent to some extent on the number of members attending each screening. As it would be too difficult to track exact attendance numbers at every screening, most distributors have accepted an “average audience” approach to determine prices. To support this approach, each member organisation has been given an annual membership number which reflects their average audience size. It is of the form ...

Xyy-Z-year Where X is the initial of the State of membership (eg, V = Victoria), yy is a sequence number and Z is the attendance category, as explained in this table. “year” is the year of membership.

| Attendance Category (Z) | Average attendance |                                     |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| A                       | up to 20           | Recommend \$55 + GST                |
| B                       | 21 – 40            | Recommend \$75 + GST                |
| C                       | 41 – 75            | Recommend \$100 + GST               |
| D                       | 76 and above       | Seek quote                          |
| F                       | n/a                | DCP or paid admission so seek quote |
| H                       | n/a                | Private home and no rights payable  |

**CONTRA PROMOTION**

We welcome any distributor that has DVD titles that are of interest to film societies to provide information to ACOFS to be distributed to member film societies through Federation or ACOFS newsletters.

For further information please contact: ACOFS at [dvdrights@acofs.org.au](mailto:dvdrights@acofs.org.au) or check out their website at [www.acofs.org.au](http://www.acofs.org.au)

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