

# Report on Music Ethics Ad-Hoc Committee Meeting

(held at the 2011 CALLERLAB Convention, in Las Vegas)

Although we are a small committee, several of our members were at Las Vegas and several were able to attend the meeting (some were required in other meetings and so could not attend). We also had a very large number of non-members in attendance; the hall was full, with standing room only (for some), this indicated the interest and support for what we are doing and led to a very active and productive meeting.

A year of investigation into the nature of the problem has revealed the following:

## **The problem itself**

The problem, in simple terms, is that many Callers believe that music piracy (sharing of music, without due recognition of copyright laws) is happening and that many are involved. However, the view is also held that the vast majority of Callers are not in the habit of “stealing” but are ignorant of the Laws of Copyright.

## **The Problem with the Law**

Although an extensive range of copyright laws exist which are – for the most part – extremely similar in all the Countries of the World, these are of little use to us in resolving the problem of music piracy. Essentially, there are two reasons why this is so:

- 1) To prosecute anybody who is alleged to have broken copyright laws is an extremely costly process that could never be worthwhile for any Square Dance Music Producer; especially if the proceedings were to take place in a different Country.
- 2) Many Callers have an incorrect understanding of the Law, which is another form of “ignorance” of the Law. Some people believe that many loopholes exist allowing them to hold copies of music that they have not paid for, for “evaluation” purposes; this not an acceptable situation, it is a form of constructive ignorance. Ignorance of the Law is no excuse – this is a universal precept and must be upheld.

In view of the above, it was felt that the Law does not hold the answer to the problem.

## **A question of ethics**

We do not need to rely upon the Law. The 2010 meeting, in Niagara Falls, established two points:

- 1) Square Dance Callers are good people who would never intentionally “steal”.
- 2) Until Callers better understand what “stealing of music” comprises, they should not be held responsible.

The fact is that we need to heighten people’s awareness of what is “right and wrong” and then rely upon their personal integrity to give a definite message of the standards that we need to maintain. Put differently, we need to “raise the bar” for the ethical status that we need to encourage Callers to acquire.

## **The “Paid-In-Full” initiative**

To achieve this higher ethical profile a special ethical status will be offered to Callers, this will be the chance to be a member of the “Paid-In-Full” register – a list of names of the Callers who have taken the steps required to ensure that they are 100% compliant with the CALLERLAB Code Of Ethics (item 9), have read and understood the explanatory documents that we will produce and have taken the time to ensure that EVERY piece of music, in a digital format, that they have available for use as a Caller has been paid for.

This will require that every “Paid-In-Full” registrant should check through their library of music and ensure that they can prove ownership of every piece of music that exists on their Computer (or other Digital Device). NO EXCEPTIONS – this will include non Square Dance music that may have been “shared” with others; too many of us have been given a tune to “try as a patter” and then just continued to use it, thinking of it as a gift, we now need to buy a copy of that music (something which is now very easy to do, through iTunes or Amazon etc.).

Also, Callers seeking this level of ethical accreditation will need to understand that you cannot make a copy of a piece of music so as to “evaluate” it and decide whether-or-not you like it – that is unethical and MUST stop.

## Music Ethics Ad-Hoc Open Committee Meeting – Nashville (2)

The hope is that – as soon as we are ready to launch the Paid-In-Full initiative – Callers will be quick to join and put their names to this highest of ethical standards. We will trust every applicant to be honest and accept their word – as a measure of their personal integrity. Once a Caller has had their name added to the register, it will be published (hopefully on the CALLERLAB web-site). The Caller will receive the right to use a special “Paid-In-Full” logo; hopefully these will be made available in the form of decals, swingers etc.

In the event that an Ethics Complaint is raised against a member of the “Paid-In-Full” register, it will be dealt with by the CALLERLAB Ethics Committee, on the basis of compliance with the new standards. There has to exist the possibility that – should anyone who, has joined the “Paid-In-Full” register, fail to maintain the ethical standard – they will be “named and shamed”; hopefully on the CALLERLAB web-site.

This is a very powerful recommendation. The hope is that we can encourage Callers to “wear the badge with pride”, so that all concerned will know of the higher moral/ethical standard that they have volunteered to keep and promote. To make this work we (the ad-hoc committee) will have to produce detailed explanations of what is “right and wrong”, based on examples and answers to the most commonly asked questions.

We are to commence work on this immediately and – subject to approval by the BOG (and if necessary the membership) – we hope to be able to implement the “Paid-In-Full” initiative as soon as possible.

**Paul Bristow (Chairman) & Wade Driver (Vice Chairman) CALLERLAB Music Ethics Ad-Hoc Committee**

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### CHAIRMAN’S REPORT

#### Action taken since 2011:

It was determined that there were five distinct areas upon which work needs to be done, these are:

- 1) Introduction of the Paid-In-Full Initiative as the solution to the Music Piracy Problem; how to “sell” the Paid-In-Full Register as a viable idea – along the lines of a “Professional Guild”.
- 2) Process of registration (the requirements of membership).
- 3) List of Dos and Don’ts (see Discussion Document for examples)
- 4) Scenarios to consider (see Discussion Document for examples)
- 5) Procedure for defaulters (actions that can be taken to “name and shame”)

(I have written a brief description for each of these tasks, this is attached (“Task Descriptions”))

We established five Working Groups, each comprising a few members of our committee: one group for each task. Each Working Group was appointed a Team Leader who was responsible for initiating and coordinating the work of the group.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** Our two Round Dance liaisons (Chuck and Roy) were included on the teams that are looking at specific situations which should be considered, these gentlemen are not required to play an active role – but may do so, if they wish; if there is anyway that the “Paid In Full” initiative could be suited for Round Dance leaders, this would add a great deal to the external appreciation that we are trying to build.

These Working Groups have been involved in these Task Assignments and have carried out as much work as they could, in the time that was available. Although target dates were set for these Tasks, these have – for the most part – not been achieved as a direct consequence of the complexity of the issues involved; however this work is progressing and I expect that it will be completed in the foreseeable future – if we can find people with right skills to assist us in this endeavour.

### THE SCOPE OF “PAID IN FULL”

On a personal note, I feel that I should state that the **“Paid-In-Full Register of Professional Callers”** concept will only be successful if it is available to all Callers on an unrestricted, universal basis - i.e. you do not have to be a member of CALLERLAB to be a member. CALLERLAB can initiate it, endorse it, administer it and operate it (subject to a set of rules) - BUT whilst it may be a CALLERLAB initiative and must have the name of CALLERLAB as a supporting body, it should not be perceived as a CALLERLAB “owned” project.

Put differently, we must all “own the problem” and we must all “share ownership of the solution with as many Callers as we can”.