ISRC Seminar

In April 1999, the NCL ISBN Center was placed in charge of affairs pertaining to International Standard Recording Code (ISRC) in Taiwan. In August that year, the center commissioned the IFPI Members Foundation in Taiwan to issue and manage ISRCs. A year later, only a few publishers of audio material had applied for the codes, prompting the ISBN center and Government Information Office (GIO) of the Executive Yuan co-sponsored a seminar on application for ISRCs.

The center originally sent out 717 invitations and planned to hold the seminar at three venues in north, central, and south Taiwan in early October. It later decided to hold only one seminar in Taipei due to low expected turnout and the date was pushed back to Oct. 18. The seminar drew 155 participants from 132 firms in the recording industry.

The seminar opened with speeches from GIO deputy director-general Li Hsueh-chin (李雪津) and NCL deputy director Sung Chien-cheng (宋建成). Other topics included "An Introduction to ISRC and Code" by Li Li-chien (李莉茜) of the ISBN Center; "ISRC Application Procedures," by Li Jui-pin (李瑞斌) of the ISRC Members Foundation in Taiwan; "International Developments in Digital Audio Protection from the Perspective of ISRC," by Sun Wen-ling (孫文玲) and Lee Su-hua (李素華) of the Science and Technology Law Center, Institute for Information Industry; "Copyright Protection of Audio and Visual Recordings ," by Chang Yu-ying (張玉英), of the Intellectual Property Office of the Ministry of Economic Affairs; and "Recording ISRC Data on CD-ROMs," by Hsu Kuo-hsien (徐國賢) of U-Tech.

The questions of greatest concern among the industry participants were:

1) Are one or several ISRCs needed for audio publications consisting of multiple independent segments?

2) Can publishers apply for ISRCs for video game music that has not been published on other media?

3) Can artists, recording technicians, publishers, and distributors apply for ISRCs for each song, and who has ownership rights for the songs?

The ISRC is an internationally accepted standard that aims to promote the dissemination and management of published audio material, protect copyright holders, facilitate the collection of royalties, and help the establishment of a database of audio products and information. In the future, it will be made compatible with consumer electronic products. Though applying for an ISRC dies not confer copyright protection against pirating, it answers the growing need for international standards in the recording industry.

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