

# Basic guide to cue sheets



## Introduction

Cue sheets are crucial for the accurate – and timely – distribution of royalties to our members. This basic guide explains what cue sheets are and how we use them.

## Cue sheets

When music is used in an audio visual presentation, the broadcaster or production company pays *PRS for Music* a licence fee for the rights associated with that musical work. We license a wide variety of audio visual productions, including those broadcast on TV, in cinemas and over the internet. The licence fees we collect for these are distributed to the songwriters, composers and publishers whose music has been used.

Cue sheets are a crucial part of this process. We use cue sheets to see which music has been used and how the royalties should be split.

Cue sheets list the music used in an audio visual production, with information on how pieces of music are used, for example whether the music is featured or in the background, and the duration. Each individual piece of music used in a cue-sheet is called 'cue'. Hence the term 'cue sheet'.

The majority of cue sheets we receive come from TV stations. Under the terms of their licence they are responsible for supplying cue sheets so we can distribute royalties to our members.

When we have not received the cue sheet from the licensee, cue sheets can also come from other sources, such as members and other collection societies from around the world.

We store the information from cue sheets in an AV database, which links each production with its cue sheet, and matches each 'cue' with a work stored on our copyright database, ICE. Other collection societies around the world use different AV and copyright databases.

When 'usage' information is received it is linked, or 'matched', to the productions stored in our AV database, and any related royalties flow through to rights holders.

Today, audio visual productions are used in many new and different media. Because of this, it is increasingly important that cue sheets are reported accurately, in full and on time. Only then can rights holders be paid fairly and completely for the use of their music in audio visual productions.

## Example cue sheet



<b>Title</b>	<b>Cunning Plan</b>
<b>Series Title</b>	<b>Blue Adder V</b>
<b>Episode Number</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Production Number</b>	<b>5679298467</b>
<b>Production Company</b>	<b>BBC</b>
<b>Year of Production</b>	<b>2011</b>



Seq	Title	Composer	Publisher	Performer	Catalogue no.	Usage	Duration	ISRC/Tunecode
1	Blue Adder theme tune	Roger Writer	Roger Music Co Ltd	N/A	BAC 123	Signature tune	00:32	4203301P / T-020.528.172-2
2	Blue Adder cues	Roger Writer	Roger Music Co Ltd	N/A	BAC 123	Background	00:05	3253601P / T-010.428.172-2
3	Blue Adder cues	Roger Writer	Roger Music Co Ltd	N/A	BAC 123	Background	00:04	3203301P / T-010.428.172-2
4	Dance the Year Away	Barry Dickens	Silly Songs Music	Barry Blues Band	UNI 123456	Featured	03:00	T-070.233.471-1
		Jack Lodger	College Music Inc					
		Bruce Holiday	Universe Music					
5	January Song	Maxwell Hammer	Party Foundation	The Rainbows	XBM 123456	Background	03:00	T-070.134.721-8
		Kurt Oliver	X B Music Corp					

## Cue sheet FAQs

### **What is a cue sheet?**

A cue sheet is a list of all the music contained in a particular audio visual production, like a film or TV programme. It is the primary source of how the usage in a production should be allocated to the different music used.

### **What information is required when submitting a cue sheet to us?**

- film or episode and series title
- title of each piece of music used
- writers - including arrangers - and publishers
- performer (mandatory for commercial tracks if no composer supplied)
- music use code – i.e. background or featured
- music cue duration

Cue sheet will often also include

- type of music – for example library, pre-existing, commissioned
- catalogue number

### **Who do we receive cue sheets from?**

We receive cue sheets from a number of sources, with most coming from broadcasters, who supply electronic version of production cue sheets, and from societies over the AV Index.

### **What is the AV Index?**

The Audio Visual Index (AVI) is a CISAC endorsed and owned index of audio visual productions. The AVI shows which society holds the cue sheet for a specific production. The AVI does not contain any cue sheet information, it's just an index of where to go to get hold of a cue sheet.

Collection societies use the AVI to search for and request cue sheets from other societies. These societies, in turn, retrieve the cue sheet from their AV database and send back to the requesting society.-

### **Can members submit cue sheets?**

Members may also submit cue sheets but we would encourage them only to do so for productions that have generated royalties and where the cue sheet has not been provided by other sources as stated above. This avoids the cost and complexity of having to de-duplicate multiple submissions.

### **How do members search/submit missing cue sheets?**

Members can do this by accessing the 'Search cue sheets' function on our website. Here, members can review all productions without cue sheets, using the [downloads](#) tab. Cue sheets should then be sent to [searchcuesheets@prsformusic.com](mailto:searchcuesheets@prsformusic.com). The email should include:

- The cue sheet
- Production ID number: please note that in the absence of this number being provided any cue sheets submitted may need to be de-prioritised, particularly if there is no current usage of the production in question, and may not be processed in time for distribution

- Production title: film title or, if it is a series, the series title and episode title or number

**Do members still need to register their works if a cue sheet has been registered?**

Yes works must always be registered regardless of whether they appear on a cue sheet or not. (will include link to registration guidance including information on cue registration)

**When are cue sheets processed?**

Cue sheets are processed according to our distribution deadlines. For example: cue sheets for productions broadcast in the first quarter are processed in time for the July distribution. In other words, four to six months after the programme has aired. Cue sheets need to be received at least two months before the royalty distribution date. If a cue sheet is received late it will be processed in time for the next distribution.

Do members need to submit cue sheets for re-runs/repeats?

No. Once we have processed a cue sheet once, it is available for all future re-runs/repeats.

**When do members receive royalties for broadcasts of their music?**

If the production has been broadcast and is covered by our distribution policies, refer to the table below for information about when royalties will be paid:

Broadcast Date	Distribution
January - March	July
April - June	October
July - August	December
September - December	April (following year)

**What should members do if they don't get paid?**

There are four main reasons why payment may not have been made.

1. Cue sheet was received late
  2. Cue sheet not received at all
  3. Work is missing from the cue sheet
  4. For TV, the production was broadcast on a non-sampled day
- Scenario 1. There is nothing for you to do. The cue sheet will be processed in the next distribution and distributed accordingly.
  - Scenario 2. If the cue sheet was not received at all go to the *PRS for Music* website, and follow the process outlined above '**How do members submit cue sheets?**'
  - Scenario 3. If you believe there is a work missing from the cue sheet please contact our Member Services who will be able to assist you.

- Scenario 4. A number of smaller broadcast stations are sampled. See the following link for details of supplier sample dates. [Check for sample dates.](#)

**When can members expect any MCPS royalties?**

The programme may not be covered by the broadcaster's mechanical licence, for example if it's an acquired production. [Find out more information about mechanical broadcast distribution policy.](#)

**Do infomercials, adverts and similar require cue sheets as well?**

Infomercials, adverts, and any other audio/visual productions that contain multiple pieces of music usually require cue sheets. In the case of adverts, we receive most of our cue-sheets directly from Clearcast who in turn receive them directly from the agencies as part of the clearing process.