

PRESS RELEASE

CEATL and Amazon discussed AmazonCrossing's translation license agreement at the Frankfurt Book Fair

Brussels, 12 November 2014

In response to the points raised by CEATL and its members regarding AmazonCrossing's approach to European literary translators and the translation license agreements it originally proposed, AmazonCrossing, recognizing the need to engage in an open dialogue with our associations, asked to meet the representatives of CEATL during the Frankfurt Book Fair. A session was therefore organized between delegations led by Sarah Jane Gunter, director of Amazon Publishing International, and Holger Fock, Vice-President of CEATL. Amazon's team included Galen Maynard, AmazonCrossing leader in Seattle; Sarah Tomashek, director of the new Amazon German-language publishing program based in Munich; and Dominic Myers, head of AmazonCrossing in Europe, who will be CEATL's main referent for the discussion of European translation licensing contracts. CEATL's representatives besides Holger Fock (who is also member of the German association VdÜ) have been Cécile Deniard, vice-présidente of ATLF (Association des traducteurs littéraires de France), and Elisa Comito, coordinator of the contractual team of STRADE (Sindacato Traduttori Editoriali, Italy).

The subjects under discussion were as follows:

- the protection of the moral rights of the translator;
- the law governing contracts and the court of jurisdiction (AmazonCrossing's EU contracts being currently governed by Luxembourg law, while CEATL would prefer local governing law and jurisdiction);
- the extension and length of the granting of rights (CEATL recommending a 5-year term) and other contractual terms concerning the rights and the duties of both publishers and translators;
- the remuneration of the translator (level of the basic fee and basis for the calculation of royalties);
- the working conditions of the translator (editorial relationship and CEATL's request that translators should have native speakers as interlocutors and editors);
- AmazonCrossing's non-disclosure policy.

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In the course of the discussion, AmazonCrossing informed CEATL that it had taken first steps in the direction advocated by CEATL (removal of the moral rights waiver from its standard form agreement, as well as the removal of the non-disclosure agreement), commented on its stand regarding CEATL's Code of good practice or Hexalogue, and provided a reviewed version of the license agreement to discuss and work on with CEATL.

CEATL will continue to discuss the conditions of the AmazonCrossing translation license agreement and give more feedback as soon as possible, confident that it is in AmazonCrossing's as much as in the translators' best interest that AmazonCrossing offer conditions which respect European copyright. It is also necessary that, for each country in which AmazonCrossing plans to operate, the licensing agreement does not contain any provision below the working standards and uses of that country. To that effect, discussions are also under way or scheduled with national literary translators' associations (for example STRADE in Italy and ATLF in France, whose representatives were present at the Frankfurt meeting).