

---

# Kluwer Copyright Blog

## Copyright in Ireland's national anthem due to expire in 2012

Guido Westkamp (Centre for Commercial Law Studies at Queen Mary, University of London) · Thursday, May 5th, 2011

[By Luke McDonagh) The Irish Times has today reported that the copyright in the Irish national anthem is due to expire next year. When the copyright in "A Soldier's Song", or as it is known in its Irish language version, "Amhrán na bhFiann", expires at the end of 2012, the debate is expected to reopen in Ireland about whether the anthem ought to be replaced.

As reported by the Irish Times, the Minister for Finance, Michael Noonan, has stated that the primary reason that the state holds the copyright in the national anthem, which was purchased in 1933, is to ensure that the anthem is freely accessible and available to all and particularly to ensure that performance fees are not charged for its use. However, it must be noted that this will remain the case when the anthem falls into the public domain - the anthem will be free to use.

Mr Noonan also stated that the state sought to ensure that the piece was not used "in an inappropriate context and without due deference, such as to render it an object of scorn or derision". To some extent this might appear to be a legitimate concern, but it must be noted that the anthem of the US, 'The Star Spangled Banner', is long out of copyright. Furthermore, in the US 'The Star Spangled Banner' has been performed in a variety of unusual settings, most famously perhaps by Jimi Hendrix at the Woodstock festival in 1969. Whether the use of the US anthem in this way could be described as being 'inappropriate' or not, its status as a national anthem has apparently not been affected by such 'reinterpretations'. Therefore, concerns about the 'integrity' of the work may be overstated.

The full story can be found here:

<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/frontpage/2011/0505/1224296148087.html>

To make sure you do not miss out on regular updates from the Kluwer Copyright Blog, please subscribe [here](#).



Want to improve your IP strategy?

- Manual of Industrial Property
- IP Analytics
- Visser – Annotated European Patent Convention

230+ jurisdictions  
36,000+ cases  
100+ books  
600+ IP law professionals as authors

Request a free demo now  
KluwerIPLaw.com

 Wolters Kluwer

This entry was posted on Thursday, May 5th, 2011 at 8:00 pm and is filed under [Authorship](#), [Duration](#), [Legislative process](#), [United Kingdom](#)

You can follow any responses to this entry through the [Comments \(RSS\)](#) feed. You can skip to the end and leave a response. Pinging is currently not allowed.