

International ISRC Agency Bulletin 2010/03

Assigning ISRC to Music Mixed by DJs

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The International ISRC Agency provides the following advice on the use of ISRC with genres of music where live remixing by a DJ is normal. This includes various forms of electronic dance music such as chillout, dubstep, electronic, garage, house, industrial, mashup and techno. These genres are termed “dance music” in this Bulletin.

The ISRC system and its documentation are based upon a model where sound recordings are fixed in content and length, and normally exploited in their entirety. In dance music this may not reflect actual practice. This bulletin gives guidance on how ISRC should be used in these circumstances.

The ISRC Handbook states:

A separate ISRC must be assigned to every different track of a recording where there has been new creative or artistic input but not to an unchanged track when it is reused on a new album of recordings.

Accordingly, an ISRC should be assigned to each dance music track when its recording is complete.

Where a DJ mixes several original recordings to create a new recording which is then issued, a new ISRC should be assigned to the composite recording.

Additionally it is common practice for compilations of these tracks to be issued with cross-fades between them. This means that elements of one track are superimposed over another. Additionally it becomes rather difficult to determine when one track ends and another begins, and the length of the track becomes uncertain.

For these reasons it is important that the ISRC of the original track is not used to identify the track in the context of a cross-faded compilation. A new ISRC should be assigned to the new track and its metadata should note the ISRC of the original.

Similarly, single tracks mixed from multiple sources (whether as samplers or medleys) should be assigned a new ISRC.

The producer of a composite recording and the creator of a compilation should note that even if they are not the owner of the recordings used, they may be able to assign a new ISRC to the new track because the International ISRC Agency allows parties that do not own the recording to assign ISRCs in limited circumstances. These circumstances are normally that a licensee of a track cannot obtain an ISRC from the owner but the International ISRC Agency will be happy to deal similarly with those issuing dance music under the circumstances described here. Those concerned should refer to *ISRC International Agency Bulletin 2007/02* (available at www.ifpi.org/isrc).

This information will be added to the ISRC Handbook in due course.

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