This information sheet is for songwriters and composers. People who use other people’s music may also find it helpful. If you are interested in performer’s rights, see our information sheet Performers Rights. If you want information about playing music in public (including CDs, MP3s, radio or TV), see our information sheets Music - Playing Music: APRA & PPCA, Music: Bands & Music: DJs. The purpose of this information sheet is to give general introductory information about copyright. If you need to know about how the law applies in a particular situation, please get advice from a lawyer. Key points • Copyright protection is free and applies automatically when material is created. • A song normally comprises both a musical work and a literary work, each of which may have different copyright owners. • Sound recordings are also protected by copyright. This copyright is separate from and additional to any copyrights in the music and lyrics. • Creators of musical or literary works also have moral rights in relation to their work. Copyright protection generally There is no registration procedure for copyright protection in Australia. For a work to be protected by copyright it must fall into one of the categories of material set out in the Copyright Act. The categories include musical works, literary works and sound recordings. An original work which falls into one of the relevant categories is automatically protected as soon as it is recorded in some form (for example, written down, recorded onto disk (like CD or DVD), or saved in a digital file (like MP3 or WAV). For the purposes of copyright law, a work is “original” if it has not merely been copied from another work, and it is the result of skill or labor on the part of its author. Things that Don’t make you a copyright owner There are many myths around about how you can prove you own copyright. Some of these are: Sending a copy of the work to yourself by registered mail This is a widely held belief among musicians. Sending copies to yourself, whether by ordinary or registered post, has no legal effect whatever. At most, doing this may prove that the material