



Australian  
Library and  
Information  
Association

# ALIA NAC Regional Reports 2007

Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> September. Chair: Derek Whitehead

**1. Attendance:**

Derek Whitehead – Chair  
Margie Anderson – LLO, note taker  
Gerard Fahey  
Kim Gosling  
Leeanne Pitman  
Gemma Siemensma  
Paul Pretor  
Rose Counsel  
Carmel Grant  
Deirdre Wilmot  
Darren Holland  
Joann Hall  
Claire Mill

**2. Selected representative to attend the national meeting of the NAC (they must be a member)**

Name: ~~Gemma Siemensma~~\_\_\_\_\_

ALIA membership no. 048132\_\_\_\_\_

**3. Major Issues – Providing leadership in professional education and workforce planning**

- There was a great deal of discussion based around the topic of qualifications for Library Technicians and how they relate to qualifications for Librarianship.
- The introduction of the Advanced Diploma for Library Technicians is seen as an action which will blur the lines even more between the qualification of Librarians and Library Technicians. ALIA needs to be able to articulate clearly to the profession and employers how the qualifications differ and what duties each qualification prepares staff for. This has enormous implications for roles undertaken, availability of positions and remuneration.
- Regional members find it difficult to undertake ongoing professional education and are often forced to enrol in a course because the delivery is off campus rather than because it meets the specific educational goals and career aspirations of the student.
- Career opportunities in regional areas are often limited and salaries can be out of balance with capital cities.
- ALIA needs to work with members to raise the profile of the profession to attract a higher calibre of students to the industry and to increase the community's perception of the value of the work we do. This will increase job security and satisfaction, attract more people to the industry
- There is not enough contact with ALIA and the professional in general whilst students are undertaking their studies in the field. Members would like to see more fieldwork opportunities, more cadetships, more traineeship, more contact with ALIA staff and program and a greater level of recognition of ALIA within the course structure.

#### Role of employers

- In a regional setting employers need to be able to assist with professional development even more than in capital cities.

#### Skills required for the future

- Cataloguing skills will be even more highly valued in the future as the amount of cataloguing being taught in Librarianship courses is diminishing and thus creating a shortage in the industry of people with good cataloguing skills. Conversely, employers are not recognising the high level of cataloguing skills possessed by Library Technicians. The lack of cataloguing skills was seen to be a major problem for our industry as this is one of the key skills that sets us apart from other professions.
- The ability to blend electronic media with traditional library services.
- The ability to manage funds so that adequate resources are available for services.
- Staff at every level in the LIS industry will require a high level of personal and written/electronic communication skills. This is seen as a key skill and must be articulated to those looking at entering the industry as a primary requirement.
- The ability to be self motivated to learn new skills and products and to be able to transfer that knowledge quickly to other services and other situations.

#### Retaining high quality staff

- The LIS industry needs to be paid more money.
- Staff entering the industry need to be made clearly aware of what roles and tasks we undertake. Most people students, their parents or careers advisors have no real idea what a library worker does.

#### Working with other professional bodies

- Not discussed at this meeting

#### **4. ALIA Initiatives for 2008**

##### Boardroom Bound

- This initiative needs to be promoted explicitly to Library Technicians to encourage them to become involved in the Board.

##### Review of advisory committees and representatives

- Not discussed at this meeting

##### Technology: what members want from ALIA

- Greater use of electronic media to facilitate professional development activities.

#### **5. Celebrating Success – ALIA stories of Achievement**

- Not discussed at this meeting except to say that the lack of a local ALIA Group meant that there were no local activities.

#### **6. Local issues**

- Members in Ballarat have not had a local ALIA Group since the restructure of ALIA some years ago. Attendees felt that there had been a decline in the feeling of community within the profession in the local area and that there is a great need to rebuild a local professional network.
- Regional areas have problems seeing the value of ALIA membership as they are able to attend so few face to face events.
- Regional members see that it is critical for ALIA to focus more resources in the future on providing access to PD activities and networking opportunities outside the capital cities. These events need to be both virtual and face to face.

- To counter the lack of face to face interaction members have with ALIA staff and volunteers there needs to be more electronic contact made that targets regional areas specifically.
- Regional NAC meetings are essential.
- Regional members would like to see more visits from Board members and senior ALIA staff.
- ALIA need to facilitate the sharing of experiences between regional Groups so that they can learn from what each other is doing and share ideas and resources.
- A Ballarat area LIS dinner is to be held on November 1, 2007 as a first step towards rebuilding a local ALIA Group.

## **7. Evaluation**

Attendees at the meeting gave positive feedback. We were indebted to the staff at Ballarat University for the use of their facilities and generous support of the meeting. Attendees would like to see a wider spread of LIS people from all sectors of the industry at their local meeting as the greater percentage of attendees came from the University sector. Feedback forms are attached.

## **8. Any other comments from the meeting?**

- Members would like to see more opportunities for regional LIS professionals to have input into ALIA.
- Members feel that ALIA fees are too high and that many LIS workers cannot justify the costs of membership.
- Because of lack of contact with ALIA over recent years many LIS workers have no idea of the services provided by ALIA.

Margie Anderson  
ALIA Local Liaison Officer – Victoria