



Australian  
Library and  
Information  
Association

# ALIA NAC Regional Reports 2009

**Rural & Regional teleconference  
Tuesday 15 September 2009**

## **1. Attendance:**

Graham Black (chair), Narelle Nolan, Jo Beazley, Melissa Raymond, Fiona Blackburn, Margaret Lamb, Angela Shanks, Lorraine Lowcock, Chelsea Harper, Nella Pickup, Richard Pickup, Sally Murdoch (notes) and Katie Hannan (last part of meeting).

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

Name: Katie Hannan.

ALIA membership no. #052139

## **3. Review of the outcomes from the 2008 NAC topic '*Staying smart in a complicated world - professional development*'**

Several people expressed their appreciation of PD postings.

## **4. Discussion topic: *Lobbying and Advocacy: working together to make a difference***

### **General discussion, including how ALIA is performing:**

- Not sure whether we see much of ALIA's lobbying and advocacy in Tasmania.
- I'm a member of ALIA and other professional associations and my manager can't see value in being involved.
- The public don't know what a modern library is about, the image still is dated, libraries should be a fundamental service to public.
- Lobbying specific issues – as soon as library & information week is over, libraries disappear from the radar.
- Not quite clear on distinctions, advocacy is not just doing your job.
- Don't see how NSS is lobbying or advocacy.
- Lobbying needs to be about issues like internet filtering, parallel importation. Also advocating for a fairer share for public libraries.
- Suggestions for what ALIA could focus on:
  - Literacy. Research from the University of New England on literacy and numeracy – libraries make a difference. As soon as someone says literacy, they think schools, not libraries.
  - Industrial Relations. Lobbying and advocacy is for users of libraries and around issues in broader community, but ALIA is a member association and would be seen to do more in the area of industrial relations and the industry as a whole. Phil Teece was very prominent in establishing library profession. My organisation

(corporate sector) used LIW in conjunction with the Records department to promote the library and we were struggling to find information from ALIA to promote libraries this year. Want more than just a press release, more like economic benefits of libraries to organisations. Industrial relations is not just for members, it should be lobbying the government as well - female profession and poorly paid.

- Economic benefits of libraries.
- Promoting the profession. We need to promote ourselves to school students (rather than to LIS students) and market ourselves to a new generation.
- Social inclusion. Libraries have been doing this for a long time but no-one recognises this.

### **Discussion on tools and resources that would assist in our own lobbying & advocacy:**

- ALIA's Industrial relations service is now only part-time, why? (Due to a drop in demand.)
- Media Kits.
- Information on special libraries.
- Salaries scales exist and are useful, but that is about it for industrial relations.
- Statements of support from ALIA to include with infrastructure submissions.
- Approve of the British Libraries book of libraries, ALIA has released one for public libraries, launched at Public Libraries summit. Available for download at < [www.alia.org.au/publiclibraries](http://www.alia.org.au/publiclibraries) >. This could be useful if it was done for school or special libraries as well.
- Confusion over how to lobby and advocate – do you do it yourself, who to approach at ALIA, is it done in conjunction with ALIA, how to do at the local government level, etc. ALIA may be doing lobbying but we don't hear about it. Would like to see what ALIA is doing in *inCite* and on the main page of ALIA website. Would also like to know of how it goes as an issue progresses.
- Suggestion of a Fact sheet for new graduates - what is lobbying and advocacy, how you can get involved, what you can do at what level.
- It would be good to add a space for members on the ALIA web page to add their stories of what worked and what didn't.

### **What roles do employers and ALIA members have in lobbying and advocacy:**

- Our local federal members are a good way to go, I see that as our individual role. ALIA can't approach my local member, but I can. One issue of being a state service employee is that I can't approach my local state member, this possibly effects people employed in local government libraries as well.
- Your employer has to be happy for you to be involved in lobbying and advocacy, the time spent by employees on this can be an issue.
- Senior people in the library world often aren't ALIA members which can make it difficult.
- Some people in the workforce don't know about ALIA, if you do talk about ALIA, they are genuinely amazed at why you'd want to be involved.

### **Discussion on ALIA and other library associations:**

- In the past there has been a lack of direction of ALIA, it is getting better. ASLA has a diagram on front page of their webpage of what they do and

that is what ALIA needs, something simple that explains what we are and what we support. The message is getting lost.

- There are something like 50 different library associations in Australia.
- A strong special libraries section in ALIA existed but was lost in the 2000 restructure.
- Members of public libraries association are not always also members of ALIA, what are they offering that ALIA isn't?

## **5. Local issues**

- Library technician qualifications have disappeared as a requirement in the Tasmanian State service award. Non-members don't know how ALIA is involved in this action and so have no incentive to join.
- An issue in Northern Territory and Tasmanian schools is librarians being replaced by library technicians.
- Strength of local Red Centre group, strong active committee, good networks with LIS industry.
- Once IFLA was cancelled and the Brisbane conference was scheduled instead, rang ALIA for more information and expected a more professional response. Graham will take this up. Noted that a lot of the detail wasn't available at the time.
- How does ALIA act to include remote members? How can local liaison officers coordinate an area like the NT – unrealistic area to co-ordinate. Graham to follow up.
- Suggestion that if the 'eligible for membership' criteria in job applications could be changed to 'must be a member', this would be a huge incentive for people to join ALIA.

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

None.

## **7. Evaluation**

Only two completed evaluation sheets were received, both were very positive.