



Australian
Library and
Information
Association

ALIA NAC Regional Reports 2009

**ALIA NAC (Lib Techs)
14 Sep 2009
RAH/IMVS
Adelaide**

1. Attendance:

Kate Sinclair, Ian McLean, Trish D'Arcy, Louise Gillis, Robyn Lather, Rebecca Evans, Karen Mills, Mary Michalas, Benita Wheeler, Theresia Dugis, Jennifer Dyer, Jean Broomhall, Robyn Nagel

Thanks to the Royal Adelaide Hospital, Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science staff for hosting this meeting

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

Name: _____ Trish D'Arcy _____

ALIA membership no. _____ 043226 _____

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

Kate Sinclair reported on outcomes of the 2008 NAC.

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

The discussions on the topic of Lobbying and Advocacy were wide-ranging and reflected the diversity of those present who represented a number of states and library sectors. The following points reflect the key concerns that emerged from the meeting:

What is lobbying and advocacy? How is it different to marketing?

Why is lobbying and advocacy important to our profession and how can we do it better?

What issues should we be lobbying government about?

- Impact on professional working life
- Different to promotional campaigns for the public
- Lobbying to management that we are professionals, generate value of the qualifications, our professional basis and pay scales.
- Maintaining (or lobby to enacting in NT case) Library Act for protection of institutions
- Build relationships with State Libraries and smaller libraries

- Support to profession e.g. Tasmanians current pay/qualification issue
- Managers, schools have situation of employing under qualified technicians in charge of school libraries
- ALIA should react strongly to bigger institutional employers, esp. those who are members of the association, enforce that qualifications match the role.
- General acknowledgement by group that Librarians and Library Techs are separate vital roles, both need to work together to run a library.
- ALIA should take more of a leadership role on the above issue.
- Message, support of library management level to generate higher organizational membership
- Promote to higher management that lower level Lib Techs should get equal opportunities for PD
- Raise ALIA profile with employers, government, in job market.
- Having job spec require candidate be eligible for ALIA professional membership is positive reinforcement, raises awareness of ALIA and qualifications.
- ALIA gives us a professional voice instead of Unions
- ALIA can present the image of, and worth of Libraries in society
- We don't hear enough about work of Industrial Relations Adviser.
- Some question the value of the marketing campaigns, their impact, use of resources. What's in it for members? Too much focus on public libraries, others miss out?
- The more support ALIA provided for members as professional status, the more staff would join and retain membership
- ALIA play more a Union role than marketing role
- Any marketing should be outside library arena e.g. TV campaign not bookmarks.
- Market the profession, career
- Show the passion that library workers possess
- Putting qualified staff into roles they are passionate about will generate best result.
- Careers Expo presence
- Encourage Lib Tech role, especially in government schools (NSW)
- School libraries are a concern, can ALIA have influence over those decision makers?
- ALIA encourage career path from library technician to librarian
- Take career expo on the road, liaise with educational providers
- TAFE should be promoting their lib tech courses more
- Build on work with qualification accreditation
- Raise respect for info professionals, value research skills equal to teachers
- Teacher-Librarians: chicken and egg scenario – need to train new generation of staff, the employers need to employ the qualified staff
- Recognised that can't have educated workforce without libraries supporting the education

What tools and resources do you need for advocacy?

ALIA National office to provide support with:

- Showbag
- Professional brochure
- TAFE open days
- Letter templates for members to apply for PD, toolkit
- Provide lobbying, advocacy tools we can use ourselves
- Strategy planning assistance
- Be an advocate to our employers

- Provide a rep at career expo days, career success stories, images that break stereotypes
- Seek government funding for advertising

*How can we be more engaged with lobbying and advocacy?
What roles do employers and ALIA members have?*

- Start agreement with large employers, government, raise value of qualified lib techs in employers eyes
- Focus on the decision makers
- Encourage employees to visit other sector libraries, more inter-library staff discussion
- Closer relationship with State Libraries and smaller libraries. E.g. NSW State Lib relationship developed with public and school libraries.
- Behind the scenes tours – promotes value of library skills as opposed to clerical skills
- Remind politicians who gained their education with support of libraries to return that support and education of next generations
- Market to public and employers what our roles/skills are
- Lobby for National Library Act. Follow up the literacy messages with resources, staff, collections.
- Send messages re Literacy role of every Library, and information literacy. We teach research skills and enable lifelong learning
- Physical or electronic mediums are irrelevant, the skill set is the same
- Put Librarians in pop culture. Mixed feelings on "The Librarians" TV show, but mostly positive.
- Lobby the skills we can support, not the 'library benefits' to government. E.g. Libraries improve literacy, numeracy, health, community engagement.
- Make members realize what they can do for their own lobbying, encourage members to contact ALIA when need arises.
- Make the link between our unions, our issues, our Association

5. Local issues

- Library Act needed in Northern Territory
- Reminder that we should be talking to overseas associations

6. Any other comments from the meeting?

What are the best communication methods for ALIA to reach members?

- Incite – mostly positive, some read columns from President etc, some only read articles, lighter items. Some don't read at all if not interested in the month's cover issue.
- Website – have ALIA headlines on front page
- Members happy to have advertising/sponsorship of site as income generating stream
- Email – no more or less effective than Incite

7. Evaluation

Eleven members attended (not including the presiding Board member or minute taker) and of those, six provided feedback on the outcomes of the meeting.

- 100% of those that provided feedback rated the opportunity to participate in, and contribute to, discussions as good or excellent (mean score 4.6/5)
- 100% of members rated the program and content as good or excellent (Mean score 4.3/5)
- 100% of members rated the organisational aspects of the meeting as good or excellent (Mean score 4.6/5)

Members appreciated the opportunity to meet Library Technicians members from other states, listen to their views and appreciate that there are similar issues being experienced and what is being done to address them.