



Australian
Library and
Information
Association

ALIA NAC Regional Reports 2009

Canberra
Thursday, 24 September 2009

1. Attendance:

Sue Hutley (chair), Judy Brooker, Beth Clary, Kathy Stapleton, Stuart Ferguson, Carol Murray, Cathy Brady, Ian McCallum, Jane Hardy, Robyn Ellard (notes).

Apologies: Roxanne Missingham, Vanessa Little, Sherrey Quinn, Karna O'Dea

2. Selected representative to attend the national meeting of the NAC

Name: Carol Murray

ALIA membership no.: 005018

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

Sue reported on some of the outcomes of the 2008 NAC. These were well received by the group.

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

Our discussions on Lobbying and Advocacy were wide-ranging and reflected the diversity of those present. The following points encapsulate the key concerns that emerged:

- Our profession is tired and it's being undermined with reduced access to decision makers (in parent bodies, government etc) which makes it more difficult to be heard and listened to.
- Funding. It was noted that libraries across the world (eg United States) are closing due to funding cuts. Once you're at this stage, it's already too late. We need to be promoting the value of libraries, and the real costs of losing them, before it becomes a problem.
- We need to broaden horizons and talk and engage with more organisations / bodies
- ALIA needs to make sure it's submissions are well written to stand out from all the submissions government / funding bodies etc receive.
- Improve communication about advocacy and lobbying to members eg ALA weekly newsletter about lobbying. We need information in a format that can be re-used for other times.

- ALIA needs to lobbying about:
 - Our profession and our qualifications. Improve the general understanding of what libraries and library workers do, particularly special and corporate libraries, are seen as an overhead, rather than contributors to the value of the organisation.
 - The aged
 - Early literacy and reading programs
 - Digital literacy
 - Censorship
 - Access to broadband throughout nation

- What tools and resources can ALIA provide:
 - An 'every member an advocate' program was suggested. ALIA to provide training to members so that members can do a lot of the advocating. With training, we can achieve a coordinated program of advocacy – different area, same message
 - Advocacy advice service (similar to industrial relations advice service and copyright advice service)
 - An advocacy kit for members – including statistics, quotes, facts sheets that can be used to promote the profession
 - Up to date standards and policies for each sector / area
 - Analysis of statistics for example, museums vs library visits etc that can be used to promote the profession
 - Members need to communicate issues to ALIA so we can act

5. Local issues

The meeting ran out of time to discuss local issues.

6. Evaluation

The following is a brief summary of evaluations and comments.

Only 3 evaluations were received and they all scored highly.

- *Opportunity to participate in, and contribute to, discussions* –scored highly (all 5s)
- *Program and content* - scored highly (4s and 5s)
- *Organisational aspects* scored highly (all 5s)

Comments:

What was the most valuable aspect of the regional meeting?

- Discussion of issues, sharing of ideas, networking.
- Good reminder of issues.
- Hearing that other people have different perspectives.

What could we do to improve the regional meeting?

- Increase participation, need more people to attend.
- Better preparation (didn't know there was a consultation paper)

What other comments or suggestions do you have about the ALIA National Advisory Congress?

- Good opportunity for ALIA members to make some contributions