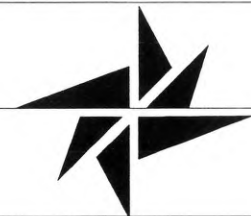


ALIA

Alert



THE AUSTRALIAN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION ASSOCIATION

The appearance of *ALIA Alert* is a significant step for the Association in the new direction we have set ourselves. As part of our increased lobbying effort this newsletter is being published to inform all members of the activities of Federal Parliament which are of particular concern to libraries and information services. It will deal with reports of institutions, of Parliamentary and Government Committees and will provide comment on legislation being debated in the Parliament.

Much of the work undertaken by Parliament is of concern to ALIA and its members. Issues of copyright, telecommunications, education, freedom of information, import and export of cultural property, information industry policy, science and technology policy, all directly or indirectly affect our operations.

ALIA Alert will keep tabs on these activities, drawing attention to those areas where the legislators need to have our views, comments, our advice, and, in some cases our congratulations, encouragement and support. If we do not offer such advice, we may find ourselves saddled with unhelpful or even damaging legislation.

The Editor, Michael Evans, Science Librarian at the ANU, is based in Canberra. He would welcome comment on political issues affecting libraries which might be appropriate for inclusion in *ALIA Alert* and he would like to be 'ALERTED' to forthcoming issues which need watching. Please keep him in touch with your views. This association and its members need to be informed about issues before our Parliament so we can take the necessary steps locally and federally to forcefully present our views on these matters — and make no mistake, the size and geographic spread of our membership makes us a formidable lobbying force.

The publication of *ALIA Alert* is another important step taken in 1989 for our new Association—Welcome *ALIA Alert*!

Averill M. B. Edwards



LIBRARY PROVISION

A review of library provision in higher education is being planned by the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET), Although the final terms of reference and way in which the review is to operate is still a matter of discussion within the Department.

It appears that the review will be within the context of current resourcing levels and will exclude the TAFE sector i.e. it will review library provision within the unified national system of higher education in order to see how these libraries meet the needs of teaching and research. The terms of reference may cover such topics as:

- library cooperation.
- performance measures.
- library space.
- the application of new technology.
- the way in which libraries educate their users.
- the services that libraries provide to others.
- overseas developments which may be applicable to Australia.

Given the importance of higher education libraries in our national system such a review is likely to be of major interest both to the libraries themselves and to ALIA. If this review proceeds, the Association should be prepared to make an input to the review.



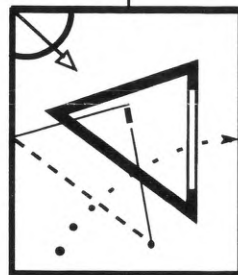
THE MUSEUMS' REVIEW

This review, carried out by the Department of Finance and issued recently under the title *What Price Heritage?* as a discussion paper, is very topical given the proposed review of higher education libraries, the increasing adoption of performance measures in the public sector, and the attempt to put some quantitative measures on institutions which have some similarity to libraries. This discussion paper drew on the work of the Museums Review, a ministerial review of which no full report was ever finalised, although, material from the review was included in confidential Cabinet submissions. This discussion paper dealt with a number of key issues:

- The definition of a museum.
- What public benefits are derived from museums which justify taxpayer support?
- What is the Commonwealth role?
- How can museum efficiency and effectiveness be measured?

The question of efficiency and effectiveness led to a number of graphs and tables detailing such comparisons as recurrent expenditure, floor area, staff, cost per visit by users, exhibition space as a per cent of total space and cost, user subsidy, primary activity as a per cent of recurrent expenditure, emphasis on public programs as a percent of primary activity expenditure, and income from non government sources.

The work of this Depart-



ment is seen as important in stressing performance measures, querying the resources of the Australian National Gallery, and influencing the decision to defer funding for the construction of the National Museum of Australia for 5 years.

This Association is not listed as having made a submission to the Museums Review.

ASIA IN AUSTRALIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

The report of this inquiry into the teaching of Asian Studies and languages in higher education is commonly known as the *Ingleson report* and was submitted to the Asian Studies Council in January.

The report has a 21- page section on library and information matters and almost half-a-page in the executive summary.

The latter starts off with the splendid statement 'Tertiary education and research are inconceivable without library support'. Obvious to us perhaps, but not always stated as a basis for action.

Within the report are 6 recommendations:

- that the Asian Studies Council appoint a committee to examine the most effective way to establish a national bibliographic network for Asian studies.
- that DEET initiate an investigation of the higher education library

system; with special attention to improving document delivery services, and cooperation in collecting and cataloguing.

- that universities provide special funds to their libraries to speed up the processing of uncatalogued material.
- that a short-term project be funded to devise a system for automated cataloguing of Asian material in non roman scripts.
- that a system of reciprocal personal borrowing rights be introduced between all tertiary institutions in the same State.
- that State networks of tertiary libraries be established in order to achieve better access to resources on Asia for staff and students in institutions where libraries have only minimal collections.

Such an approach has applicability to a wider sphere than just Asian studies, with an emphasis on networks and cooperative development, but it would need adequate funding and here the report is less positive.

One page is specifically devoted to the costing of the recommendations and suggests areas where additional funding from the Commonwealth Government is essential for the implementation of some of the recommendations. None of the library recommendations are deemed to come into this category and so funding of these must come under the advice 'Many of the above recommendations can be funded by higher education institutions adjusting their internal allocations to reflect a higher priority for Asian Studies and Asian languages. Other recommendations can be funded by individual institutions within the

