

marketing efforts continues to be a problem. Who do we target? In education libraries we may find ourselves doing our best marketing to the students and academics but not winning finance managers or councils who take the make or break decisions.

Marketing must be about the library and about us. While we are marketing our libraries and their services we have to be promoting our skills as professionals in the information sector. After all we are the group who make it all possible. Without being able to identify our professionalism they can find someone cheaper and more flexible in the multi-skilling arena. Effective marketing of our libraries has to focus on people skills and competencies and to show how important they are to the clever country.

In 1990 ALIA sought support from the Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) to carry out an occupational skills analysis

---

*I don't have the answers. But I do know that this can't be fought by individuals.*

---

to cover people working in libraries. The project was approved by DEET but subsequent policy changes have moved the project to Arts Training, the

National Industry Training Council. ALIA has been given the opportunity to continue working on the project. The level of that involvement will be decided at the ALIA November General Council Meeting in Canberra.

ALIA must not stand by and watch. We are the only ones who through our long association with education and training of library staff can bring together the kind of information that really identifies our skills and competencies. The DEET funded project will form the basis for input to the Occupational Skills Register which is to be developed by the National Training Board. ALIA is the only knowledgeable group which does not undervalue our members.

Please take an interest in this project. Please share your good news in marketing stories with your colleagues through ALIA. Tomorrow it may be just a little too late. □

# Direct Line



Sue Kosse  
Executive Director

Groups. If you would like to find out more about the papers or meeting, please contact either your General Councillor or myself.

## Chinese information professionals visit Australia

During October, the Association worked with the National Library of Australia to host a visiting delegation of Information Professionals from the China Society of Scientific and Technical Information. This delegation reciprocated the delegation of Australian librarians led by Warren Horton, Director-General of the National Library of Australia, to China earlier this year.

The delegation was keenly interested in the application of information technology in Australian libraries and the way in which we worked with industry in delivering information services. Their very busy itinerary took them to Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney, and provided them with the opportunity to see first hand some of the IT innovations at, among other places, RMIT, CAVAL, CSIRO, CIRCIT, AARNet, the National Library of Australia, the Australian Defence Force Academy and the State Library of New South Wales. The delegation also visited ALIA House to view the National Office operations of the Association.

Their program was not all work. The Victorian and New South Wales Branches and individual members, the Asia Pacific Special Interest Group and the National Office and your President John Levert

ensured that our Chinese visitors were also able to sample Australian hospitality.

Many thanks to all those who helped the Association and the National Library to successfully host this delegation to Australia.

## Competency standards

Many members have been keenly reading Tom McKeon's Picket Line and watching with interest the developments with skills audits around the country, and in particular, the Association's efforts to undertake an occupational skills analysis for the library sector. Tom's departure temporarily stopped this project, however it is now back on the agenda.

The Association has not been able to establish a task force to undertake an occupational skills analysis for the library sector, mainly due to the unions not being prepared to become involved with yet another project group. Such task forces, as many will already know, must have tripartite representation: employers, employees and government.

DEET have now ensured that the Association will not establish a project outside of an industry training council to undertake this work. They have taken this decision since some other projects which have been funded and operated outside of an industry training council have not produced the goods expected.

The Association must now work with the Arts Training Australia, the industry training council assigned responsibility for

## General Council's last meeting for 1991

As I write this Direct Line, another set of General Council papers are being produced on the office photocopier. Four hundred and eighty pages of policy and administrative papers and reports. The revision to the strategic plan comes as an attachment to the main agenda papers. Eighty five copies of the papers are provided to General Councillors, Branches, Regional Groups and National Sections, with an agenda to the State Sectional Groups and Special Interest

continued *next page*...

the library sector, to establish this tripartite task force.

I will be meeting with DEET and Arts Training in the near future to discuss the procedure for undertaking a skills audit for this sector.

This work is of critical importance to the establishment of competencies not only in the work place, but also in education for library and information science.

The skills audit will identify core competencies in the work place for those employed in the library sector, and a master set of these will be registered with the National Training Board. The NTB's register will be the point of reference for all future award negotiations in the library sector, and for collective bargaining processes.

Arts Training have been assigned responsibility to provide this master set. A task force established under the banner of Arts Training will have the responsibility for bringing together all of the work done to date on skills audits around the country for the library sector, and to consult with all interested parties at the federal, State, and local levels.

An extension of this work, will be the establishment of a competency standards body for the library sector. The CSB will have the responsibility for updating the workforce competencies.

It will also be involved in establishing competencies for education at the tertiary, vocational and school levels. The Finn Report is the first indicator of this strategy being applied at the vocational level.

This government is determined that lifelong learning is essential to the future productivity, competitiveness etc. of



Australia; and essential to this is the need to ensure the increasing convergence of work and education.

The Association has had a long-standing interest in standards for the work force and education. In the early 1980s the Association developed the *Work Level Guidelines* for librarians and library technicians, and has been actively engaged in course recognition at the institutional level for professional and paraprofessional courses.

In 1991, the Association sought and obtained registration as an industry training agent with the National Training Board. This registration enables it to certify employer training programs for the library sector.

The Association must be seeking to play an even greater role in this federal government strategy if we are to be seen as

a professional association of any relevance to the library sector in the future.

The General Council will be considering my discussion paper on working with Arts Training Australia to undertake a skills audit at its November meeting, but this must only be the start of a significantly different role for the Association in establishing and maintaining workforce and educational standards for the library and information sector.

### **A new Fellow in our midst**

Peter Judge, our *inCite* Editor, has recently been made a Fellow of ANZAAS in recognition of his long-standing contribution to the promotion of the aims and objectives of ANZAAS. Congratulations, Peter!

*Sue Kosse refers to the visit by the Chinese information professionals, who are seen here at two happy interludes in their visit. (above) Warren Horton, Director-General of the NLA, Chen Binggang, Secretary General of CSSTI and Sue Kosse, Executive Director of ALIA. (below) At a reception arranged by the Asia Pacific SIG, (from left) Zhao Xucai, Chinese Embassy, Feng Anming, Chen Rongguang, John Levett President of ALIA, Sue Kosse Executive Director of ALIA, Zhu Mangjie and Chen Binggang, leader of the Chinese delegation.*

