

# Nuclear info system

An IAEA-sponsored project for the Asia-Pacific region

The Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) is the national centre for distributing information on international developments in nuclear science and for informing the international community of nuclear science developments in Australia. ANSTO's information specialists were closely involved in the setting up of the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) International Nuclear Information System (INIS) and contributed input to the INIS database since January 1970. Over the years the ANSTO library has built an effective Library system, and kept pace with technological change involving the acquisition and dissemination of information for a national nuclear organisation. Its information specialists were called upon to provide technical assistance and expert advice to the IAEA on INIS-related matters. Under the auspices of the IAEA, Australia, through ANSTO, has actively supported various programs for research, development and training related to nuclear science and technology in the Asia-Pacific region.

A new project has been launched aimed at establishing a regional system of nuclear information resources within the region. At the end of April 1994, an Expert Advisory Group met in New Delhi to discuss the nature and objectives of the proposed 'nuclear information system' project and the means of implementing it. Delegates included information specialists from Australia, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam and the IAEA. Australia was represented by its INIS liaison officer, a member of the ANSTO library team.

As a result of the two-day meeting, a working plan was drawn up in response to the expressed needs of the delegates. It was agreed that each participating country would contribute to the effective implementation of the project, and as a

first step, a mapping of the existing nuclear information resources of each nation would be carried out. This will assist in the process of accessing each other's information sources and promote the more efficient utilisation of resources. Related activities envisaged included: training in various aspects of information services; facilitating access to full-text documents and translations; exchange of the libraries

journal title lists as well as guidance for the establishment of an e-mail network. It was also agreed that in order to be effective, such a program must have a long-term rationale and develop a long-term strategy based on improved consultation with possible recipients so as to gain a better appreciation of their needs, capabilities and objectives.

*Mary Huxlin, INIS liaison officer*

## FOLA national launch

Friends of Libraries Australia (FOLA) was officially launched by Justice Kirby at a function in the Queen's Hall, State Library of Victoria, on Friday 9 December 1994.

Michael Kirby, the official Patron of FOLA, has a long-standing concern for libraries, and a strong belief in their importance in a democratic society. He did not hesitate to give his time to FOLA, despite his extensive commitments in many areas of law and human rights, both nationally and internationally.

When launching FOLA, he emphasised the important role that libraries play in a free society — by empowering the community with knowledge, and housing material that gives the community an ongoing sense of identity and history.

FOLA was formed in February 1994 to:

- encourage and assist the formation of Friends of Library groups in Australia.
- promote the development of excellent library services for all Australians.
- provide a representative voice for Friends of Library groups.
- promote public awareness of the existence of Friends of Libraries groups and the services and support they provide.

Friends of Library (FOL) groups are a relatively recent phe-

nomenon on the Australian library scene. In 1984, a mere 20 FOL groups were operating in Australia. By 1994 140 groups exist with more appearing all the time. FOLA has been created to act as an umbrella organisation, giving a united national voice to these smaller organisations.

FOL groups encourage communication between the community and the library; promote use of the library; enhance the social, cultural and educational role of the library; protect and encourage sources of funding; and assist in the development and maintenance of library services for the entire community.

FOLA is very grateful for the donations given by the following foundation sponsors: Ulverscroft Large Print; Australian Large Print Audio & Video; Southern Scene; Baker & Taylor International; Mason's Book Centre; B H Walsh & Son; James Bennett; Auslib Press; and Isis Publishing.

FOLA is happy to welcome new members. If you would like to help Friends help libraries by becoming a member or a sponsor, write to Friends of Libraries Australia Inc, PO Box 436, Tullamarine Vic 3043. All members receive a quarterly newsletter and invitations to all official functions.

*Jeanette O'Connor*