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Australian Library and Information Association

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Entries should be sent to ALIA National Office,
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WORLD 1...

An open letter to the library profession

The Director-General of the National Library of Australia, Warren Horton, recently announced that the National Document and Information Service (NDIS) project, WORLD 1, is to be terminated. Details are sketchy at this stage, but we will keep you informed of developments. Following is an open letter to the library profession from Warren Horton in which he announces the library's decision:

'I am writing to the Australian library community to let you know of the latest decisions regarding the National Document and Information Service (NDIS) Project, being jointly developed by the National Library of Australia and

the National Library of New Zealand. CSC Australia is the prime contractor for this Project, which has been marketed in Australia as WORLD 1.

'The two libraries and CSC Australia have earlier this week agreed to explore avenues for a mutually-acceptable NDIS Agreement termination and disengagement. We regret that for legal and other reasons the National Library of Australia is unable to comment on these negotiations until they are completed.

'This announcement will come as a shock and a disappointment and has been a very hard business decision to make. We are already exploring alternative strategies to meet the broad aims and vision of

the NDIS Project in Australia. The National Library remains committed to full support of the Australian Bibliographic Network (ABN) and other computer-based services while we do so.

'I am working throughout the summer and my key priority will be resolving the way forward as quickly as possible. Please contact me at whorton@nla.gov.au or on 06 262 1262 if you would like further clarification of this message.

'We appreciate your understanding that the library is unable at this time to comment on legal or business matters.

'I will communicate with you as early as possible in 1997.' ■

Industrial placement at ALIA

Yanoula Fouras

Preparing for graduation from a Graduate Diploma in Information Management, all that stood between me and a career in librarianship was a three-week period of industrial placement. One of the places offered was at ALIA National Office, to undertake a project relating to ALIANet, ALIA's web site. As I had a great deal of interest in the Internet and I thought that working at ALIA would be an excellent opportunity, I applied for the placement through my lecturer, Wendy Johnstone.

After a meeting with Jennefer Nicholson (ALIA deputy executive director) in which I explained what I would like to learn from the experience, arrangements were made for my placement at ALIA. The day after I finished my last assignment I set off for Canberra.

After a tour of ALIA National Office I sat down with my project supervisor, Ivan Trundle (ALIA Manager, systems and publishing), to finalise the aims of the project. I had to identify the aims of the site and then decide whether it fulfilled these aims. To do so I waded through the

log files of the site for October. Log files are an automatic record kept on the computer of visits to the site, showing an address for who visits the site, what pages and images they look at, and what time this takes place. The log files for October included 42 114 records, so it was an interesting experience trying to figure out how to analyse the information without losing my eyesight or my sanity!

During my placement I was given the opportunity to observe how ALIA worked. I spent time in some of the sections within the organisation, and attended meetings such as the steering committee for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment and career development strategy, and General Council. One of the highlights of my placement was the Redmond Barry Award presentation, when I got to be in the same room as Gough Whitlam and others I had only read about at university. Overall, I know that I learned much more than I had imagined I would, and gained a valuable understanding of the library and information sector. ■