

Your voice

CCT in Victoria

CCT for council services was introduced in Victoria as part of radical local government reorganisation and amalgamation. Similar reorganisation will inevitably spread to other states, and library services, traditionally provided by local councils, cannot expect to escape the changes that are coming.

There are other ways to monitor, evaluate and improve library services than CCT. Benchmarking, best practice, goal and objective management are all methods being used by librarians, and have been proved to produce most successful results without the major upheaval of CCT.

One area that particularly concerns me is the problem of 'in-house' bids versus those of outside tenderers. It is the stated policy of both ALIA and the Australian Services Union to win as many in-house bids as possible without loss of conditions. However, if consortia of

professionals combine to present 'outside' tenders, and more libraries bid for neighbouring systems, ALIA may find itself supporting one group of librarians against the legitimate aspirations of another group.

Victoria is the only place in the world where whole-scale CCT of library services is taking place, and therefore provides a perfect opportunity to examine its true impact. The eyes of the library world are on Australia, and I believe that it is ALIA who should be closely examining the claims and realities of compulsorily tendering whole-of-library services.

My plea is that ALIA immediately undertake a comprehensive evaluation of the situation in Victoria and present Australian librarians with a factual analysis upon which they can rely when faced with decisions to be made in a competitive environment. Then all public librarians will benefit from lessons learned in Victoria,

rather than be dragged along as Victorian librarians were, by a management ideology which apparently does not bring the benefits it promises.

Judith Field, Lismore

A question of image...

Normally I feel pleased to read *inCite* and appreciate the up-to-date information and the news items that give a human face to the Association. However, I was angry to read the item referring to an article in *Cleo*. It's great to have the ancient stereotype of the female librarian perpetuated in my Association's news magazine — I don't think!

The female librarians I know are intelligent, lively, strong-minded — maybe the men surveyed would find these real people a threat.

It seems very strange that when ALIA is trying to promote an image of librarians and the library world as a force in the Australian community that you

as editors would let the side down with this sort of item. It certainly undercuts the force of the Australian Library Week poster.

If you think you have to have an image of the female librarian as sexy, then let it be because we are at the cutting edge of the exciting world of the Internet and other information technology. Let us be sexy in our own right!

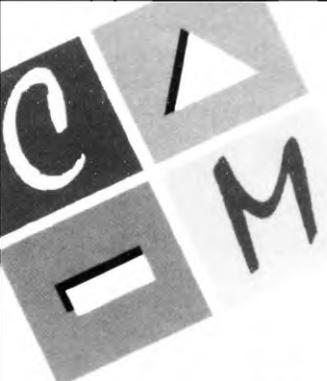
If I want to read *Cleo* I can pay \$4.50, not the \$189 I have paid to join ALIA and to receive *inCite*.

Anne Marie Lynch, Underdale

Your voice

Your letters on any issue of relevance to the library and information sector are welcomed.

All letters should be addressed to the *inCite* editor and may be e-mailed to incite@alia.org.au, or faxed to 02 6282 2249, or posted to: Your voice, ALIA, PO Box E441, Kingston ACT 2604. Please include your name and postal address with your letter or e-mail.



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