

Your voice

CCT — the pros and cons

In the June issue of *inCite* Judith Field (June, p5) suggests a comprehensive evaluation by ALIA of the impact of CCT on Victorian public libraries. ALIA should examine seriously Judith's proposal. Coincidentally, June also saw the publication of the first library journal article reviewing CCT in Victoria.

This article, by library consultant Geoff Carson, is 'Compulsory competitive tendering in Victoria's public libraries: beatific vision or blunder' [*Australasian Public Libraries and Information Services* 11 (2) June (1998 pp90–95)]. I would be pleased to supply a copy of the article to interested *inCite* readers (e-mail alan.bundy@unisa.edu.au, fax 08 8302 6756, or PO Box 622, Blackwood SA 5051).

What are Geoff's conclusions from his considerable involvement with CCT?

1. CCT in Victorian public libraries has been beneficial in driving change;
2. Management processes and staff skills have been transformed, and a greater focus on mission, customer service, accountability and innovation achieved;
3. Cost benefits have been negligible and no viable market is in prospect;
4. Change has occurred much less effectively and with more collateral and unpredictable damage than would have been the case with good performance management; and

5. While at the outset of CCT it appeared that the strong spirit of co-operation within the library networks would be threatened, this has not evenuated.

Alan Bundy, Underdale

Editors note: Judith Field also welcomes comments via fax 02 6625 1479 or e-mail jfield@scu.edu.au

Breaking stereotypes

I am at a loss to understand how the ALIA(WA) 'Librarians in focus' calendar could be interpreted as smutty or 'titillating' (July, p5).

Where is your sense of humour? The whole point of the calendar was to break the stereotype; to emphasise that librarians are a diverse group of people, that there are some of us under the age of 40, and that we can be attractive and intelligent at the same time. I for one do not wish to belong to a professional group that censures its members' individuality — we should be celebrating our talents, not repressing ourselves to fit dull clichés like 'professionals at the cutting edge of the information age'. Ms Saviane's letter takes librarianship — and feminism — back to the dark ages.

Julie Blyth, 'Ms January', Perth

Calendar a great success

In response to 'A question of image' from *inCite* July 1998, I would like to point out that the West Australian Branch of ALIA is delighted with the response to our 1999 calendar. It has received more publicity and thus promoted librarians more than any other single venture I can remember! We have had orders from around Australia and the USA. We believe that the images of librarians in non-traditional scenarios has

been a pleasant surprise to many non-librarians. Here in the West we don't try to take ourselves too seriously!

If anyone would like to order a copy (a bargain at only \$8 including postage) please contact Jane Robinson at our local office by phone or fax on 08 9458 4045, or by mail PO Box 258, Cannington WA 6107.

Alison Sutherland, Perth

Clear thinking?

I am amazed at the way the internet is being sold by ALIA 'I was reminded just how the internet has changed the way librarians operate and how marvellous it is' (July, p4). This enthusiasm for the net is sometimes qualified in a moral way, but nowhere do the library leaders in Australia address the issue of critical thinking. Many years ago we called it 'clear thinking', but the principles are the same. Critical thinking is the response to the 'Crisis in the believability of information on the internet' headlined in an Australian newspaper five years ago! Yet now in 1998, ALIA is still trying to sell the net without even looking at the issue of critical thinking. Please, would you begin to find the wealth of information available showing how to test the information value (if any) of the contents of the net?

I Denovan, Warragul

Free to good home

These publications are available to anyone who wants them, provided they pay for transportation. The publications will be held until the end of September.

Oldng, RK, ed. *Readings in library cataloguing*, Cheshire, 1966. LAA, Education for librarianship

Section.

1. *The library workforce: proceedings of a national conference*, Melbourne, November 1982.

2. *The information professional: proceedings of a conference*, Melbourne, November 1984 (published Riverina-Murray Institute)

VALA, *Information management: proceedings of 2nd National conference*, 1983. 2 volumes.

Library Association of Australia (various conference proceedings): *Changing concepts in librarianship*, 14th biennial. Brisbane 1967. 2 volumes; 18th Biennial, Melbourne 1975; 20th Biennial. *Alternative futures*. Canberra 1979; Proceedings of first combined conference of LAA and NZLA, 1981; 22nd Biennial, *Challenge and response*, Adelaide, August 1982; and *Libraries alone: rural and isolated libraries conference*, July 1987. Wagga Wagga. Pre-conference papers, sessions 1–17 in three unbound volumes.

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**Elizabeth Carvosso,
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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.

Letters will be accepted for publication until the 18th of the month.

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