

IFLA appoints skilled negotiator

New secretary general announced

The IFLA executive recently announced the appointment of Ross Shimmon to the position of secretary general of IFLA, commencing in April 1999.

Ross will leave the position of chief executive of The Library Association (United Kingdom), a position he has held since 1992. Among his achievements while chief executive of the Library Association were a streamlining of the committee process, the revitalisation of income-generating activities, and greater emphasis on public relations and lobbying activities, resulting in a much higher profile for the Association and the profession.

On his appointment, Mr Shimmon said: 'I am excited at the prospect of working with IFLA at a time when the profession has a stunning opportunity. Our time has come. We must take advantage of the growing recognition worldwide of the importance of information and knowledge and the skills necessary for their creative exploitation.'

Throughout his career Ross has worked at a variety of levels in professional associations. After a career of several years in the United Kingdom in public and academic libraries and in library education, he was employed in Papua New Guinea from 1979 until 1983 at the Administrative College of Papua New Guinea, where he was responsible for the development and management of training courses for librarians. While in Papua New Guinea he was founder member of the Book Development Council of PNG, founder member of the College Management Team, and chair of the National Library Council of PNG. He received a Life Membership from the Papua New Guinea Library Association in 1983, just before returning to the United Kingdom and joining the staff of the Library Association.

His posts included director of professional practice (1988-1992) and divisional secretary for manpower and education (1984-1988) for which he was responsible to the Chief Executive for salaries and conditions of service for LIS staff; funding of library and informa-



Ross Shimmon, incoming IFLA secretary general

tion services; information technology; legislation affecting libraries; guidelines on best practice; research and development; accreditation of programs at universities; and the continuing education program.

His other professional activities include: member, British Library Advisory Council (1993 to date); member, National Book Committee (1992 to date); founder/president, European Bureau of Library, Information and Documentation Associations (EBLIDA) (1991-1995); and facilitator, Constituent Conference, Pretoria, South Africa (1997). Since 1996 Mr Shimmon has taken a leading role in the negotiations with the Institute of Information Scientists (IIS) with a view to unification of the LA and IIS to form a new professional body.

Mr Shimmon is already well-known to IFLA, having attended most IFLA Conferences since 1987; as a member of the IFLA Copyright Committee (1991-1993); as a member of the IFLA FAIFE Committee (1997 to date); and as a member of the IFLA Round Table on the Management of Library Associations (1988 to date).

Christine Deschamps, president of IFLA, commenting on Mr Shimmon's appointment said: 'I am confident that as IFLA enters the new millennium, the qualifications possessed by Ross Shimmon are exactly those needed by the Federation: skilled negotiator and manager; resourcefulness; commitment to high professional standards; broad experience in a membership organisation; and ability to work in the international environment'.

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