

Digital Agenda bill available for public comment

The Attorney General Daryl Williams and Senator Richard Alston, Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts jointly released the draft *Copyright Amendment (Digital Agenda) Bill* on 26 February for public comment. The exposure draft implements Australia's international treaty obligations under the World Intellectual Property Organisation's (WIPO) *Copyright Treaty and Performances and Phonograms Treaty*. The *Copyright Amendment (Digital Agenda) Bill* was foreshadowed in the Government's decision in April 1998 to

update Australia's copyright regulatory framework to respond to new communication technology such as the internet. The *Copyright Amendment (Digital Agenda) Bill* has been released as an exposure draft for public comment. The closing date for submissions was 19 March 1999.

Australian Digital Alliance launched

The ADA is a newly-formed coalition of copyright consumers and owners with a common interest in promoting balanced copyright protection. Membership of the ADA includes schools,

universities, internet industry groups, consumer groups, cultural institutions, computer companies, libraries, scientific and research organisations and individuals. Sir Anthony Mason is the ADA's patron and ALIA is a founding member.

The Alliance was launched on 26 February 1999. Key speakers at the launch included Professor Dennis Pearce (former chair of the CLRC), Mara Bun (policy and public affairs manager, Australian Consumer Association), and Stephen Hepstonall (secretary, Supporters of Interoperable Systems Association).

Following the launch, a working meeting for ADA members was held to discuss the coalition's governance and its response to copyright law reform activity including the *Copyright Amendment (Digital Agenda) Bill 1999*. ■

ALCC response

In the next 'Copyright update' (May issue of *inCite*) we will feature a summary of the key provisions of the *Copyright Amendment (Digital Agenda) Bill 1999* and the Australian Libraries Copyright Committee's (ALCC) response to the Bill. The full text of the ALCC's response will also be available on ALIANet.

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