

Library takes a proactive role

Jeremy Hodes, library manager, ATSIC

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) is the peak national body charged with representing Indigenous Australians, protecting their rights and promoting their economic, social and cultural development. The ATSIC library, located in Woden, Canberra, provides a corporate library service to meet the needs of the Commission's 1400 staff in the national office as well as twenty-nine state and regional offices around Australia.

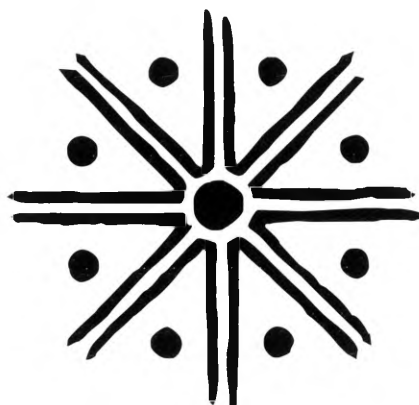
The ATSIC library has defined its corporate mission as providing reference and research services in support of the current policy directions of the Commission. Consequently, a large amount of valuable historical material has been transferred to AIATSIS and the National Library of Australia during the past year.

With the majority of the Commission staff residing outside Canberra, the library is actively using the Commission's computer networks to ensure that a quality library service is provided to all staff, no matter where they are lo-

cated. The library catalogue, using the Horizon platform, is available to all staff through the ATSIC intranet, and plans are underway to start digitising resources and make them available across the network once licensing arrangements are finalised.

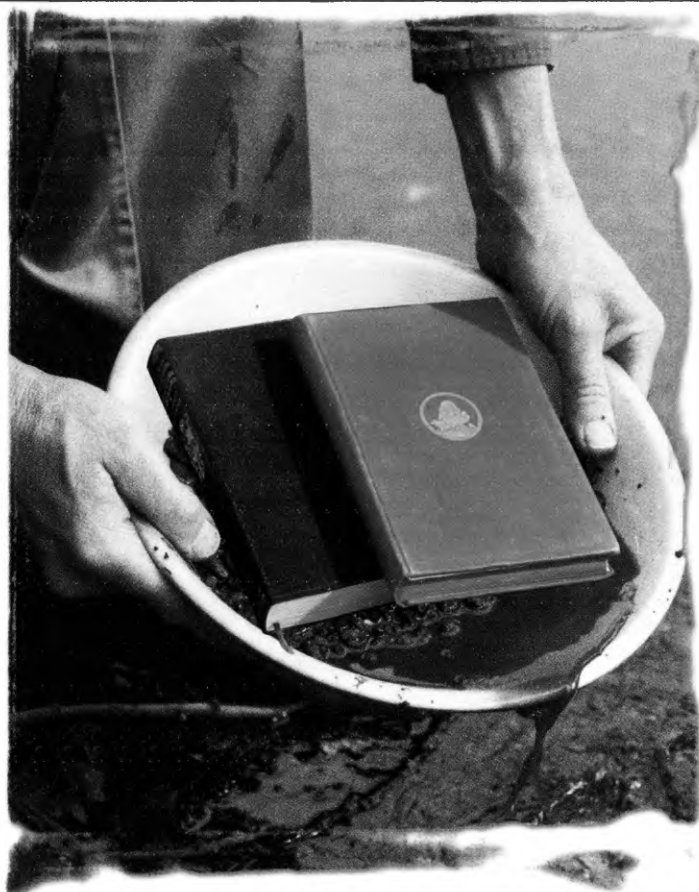
The library has been taking a proactive role by assigning librarians to work with the Commission's national policy and project teams; attending meetings; becoming integral team members; and supplying information as needed, rather than waiting to be asked. In keeping with ATSIC's commitment to employing Indigenous staff, the staffing complement includes two qualified Indigenous librarians and a qualified Indigenous library technician.

ATSIC maintains the *Indigenous Australia* database on ATSIROM, a comprehensive index of more than 30 000 items on Indigenous issues. The library has also initiated a project to collect all the material published by ATSIC and those organisations funded by it. This 'keeping place' will ensure that the Commission's cul-



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tural heritage is preserved and that its corporate memory, as recorded in its publications, is retained and made accessible. The library also has responsibility for maintaining and updating the Indigenous links section of the ATSIC intranet site (<http://www.atsic.gov.au>). ■



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