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## 2001 National Policy Congress

The second Annual National Policy Congress took place in Canberra on 7 and 8 December 2001. Representatives of sixty-seven ALIA groups, the Board of Directors, and key ALIA National Office staff attended.

The National Policy Congress is the Board of Directors' annual opportunity to consult on issues of relevance to those in the library and information sector and to seek the input of members in relation to policies, issues and other ALIA matters. Congress delegates took full advantage of the opportunity to provide feedback to and seek clarification from the Board of Directors and the ALIA National Office, and to identify the major issues to be addressed by ALIA in 2002. They also valued the opportunity to catch up and network face-to-face with colleagues from all over the country.

Whilst many issues were discussed and opinions heard, this report provides only the key outcomes. A full report is available on the ALIA website at <http://www.alia.org.au/npc/2001/reports/> with links to all the documents referred to below.

The ALIA 2001 National Policy Congress confirmed overwhelmingly ALIA's policy direction and priorities, as set by the Board of Directors in October 2001 and reported in the November issue of *inCite*. It suggested that the ALIA strategic and operational plan for 2002 be developed into a full business plan, including membership promotions plan, which could be used for communication with members.

The Congress identified career-long education for the knowledge age as the foremost priority in both policy and member services developments. Delegates heard how the Board of Directors are addressing the issue through the Library and Information Science Education in the Knowledge Age project, established to develop a national approach to career-long education of library and information workers. Dr Naida Tattersall outlined and received comments on the issues identified at the Ideas Forum held in November 2001 for a representative groups of information services providers and educators. A number of models will be now prepared to which responses will be sought from ALIA groups and others. More detail on this project can be found at <http://www.alia.org.au/education/liseka/>.

The Congress identified lobbying and advocacy as another high priority for ALIA. Delegates heard ALIA executive director Jennefer Nicholson outline ALIA's lobbying strategy 'Connecting Australians' and the activities undertaken prior to the 2001 fed-

eral election and still to be undertaken up to the 2002 Federal Budget. The advocacy statement was provided in the November 2001 issue of *inCite*.

The ALIA president, Dr Alan Bundy introduced a draft *core values statement* and encouraged delegates to consult their group members on it by 18 January 2002. The aim of the statement, which can be found at <http://www.alia.org.au/governance/core.values.html>, is to clearly and succinctly express the profession's societal aspirations and commitment.

The Congress heard about ALIA's new awards framework which has five categories — premier awards, excellence awards, research grant program, merit awards and student awards. This is the first time all ALIA awards and grants have been brought together, including those awarded by groups.

The Congress agreed that the Association has implemented all major recommendations from the 2000 NPC and undergone major structural and administrative changes. While there are still a few administrative wrinkles, the Association has much to be proud of.

Areas causing concern amongst delegates were:

- the new conference model — its reasons, implications and communication;
- the administrative and accountability requirements of groups — office bearers seeking guidance and assistance to carry out their roles; and
- communication from and to the Board, the ALIA National Office, office bearers and more generally — requires particular attention.

The Congress made three recommendations to the Board in relation to these matters. They are provided in the full report.

The Congress advised the Board of Directors that ALIA members should be the primary beneficiaries of ALIA services and intellectual assets, and that services such as those provided through the website, including ALIA discussion lists, should be provided to members only. The Congress also encouraged the Association to facilitate further commercial and professional member benefits.

The full report on the 2001 National Policy Congress is available at <http://www.alia.org.au/npc/2001/reports/> or from the ALIA National Office. ■

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