

Your comments invited...

ALIA Policy Statement on library and information services to people with a disability

ALIA is inviting members to comment on its draft revised *Statement on Library and Information Services for People with a Disability*.

ALIA revised the statement in preparation for the National Library of Australia's Forum on Library Services for People with a Disability, held on 8 March this year. Forum participants' comments are incorporated in the draft revision which was prepared by a small expert group in consultation with key individuals with responsibility for the provision of library and information services for people with a disability.

Please forward any comment you may have by **14 June 2002** to: Dante Sell, ALIA, PO Box E441, Kingston 2604, dante.sell@alia.org.au

Draft revision of *ALIA Statement on library and information services for people with a disability*

Short title

Statement on people with a disability.

ALIA object

To promote and improve the services provided by all kinds of library and in-

formation agencies.

Principle

The Australian Library and Information Association adopts in principle the right of people with a disability to equitable access to information through all library and information services, and promotes the observation of current commonwealth, state and territory disability discrimination legislation.

Statement

1. The Association recommends that all library and information providers, as part of their core services, put in place services, collections, equipment and facilities, which will assist individual users with a disability to access and use resources that meet their particular needs for information.

2. The Association encourages library and information service providers to consult individuals with a disability, and groups representing them, in the planning, development and ongoing delivery of services.

3. The Association acknowledges that the best services are provided by professionals who are aware of the needs of, and service options for, people with a disability. Therefore the Association:

- encourages all library and information services to ensure that staff are adequately trained and available to work with users with a disability; and

- supports career-long professional development and formal library and information studies programs, which will facilitate the strengthening of equitable library and information services to people with a disability.

4. The Association supports efforts to ensure the best level of access to existing and emerging resources by people with a disability through service agreements, referrals and sharing of resources between library and information services; and between these and other organisations specialising in services targeted for people with a disability, whether government, corporate or voluntary.

5. In addition to meeting legislative requirements, the Association encourages the observation of universal design principles, guidelines and standards to ensure that library and information services, collections, equipment and facilities meet the

identified needs of users with a disability.

These apply to :

- the production of collection material and equipment for people with a disability – whether produced by commercial, government or voluntary agencies;
- the design of catalogues, databases and guides to resources;
- the development and application of hardware and software;
- the construction of buildings and signage; and
- the building safety and emergency procedure.

6. The Association supports efforts to ensure that copyright legislation does not hinder the equal access by people with a disability to information from all libraries and information providers, including to copies of materials in alternative formats.

7. To promote the efforts outlined in this statement, the Association encourages

- library and information services to develop organisation-wide disability action plans for the continued development of their services to people with a disability; and
- all funding bodies to adequately resource library and information services for people with a disability.

Related documents

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth) as amended, available at <http://scaleplus.law.gov.au/> and relevant current *Disability services acts* for the states and territories.

Australian Standard 1428 [set], as amended, other relevant Australian Standards, and the *Building Code of Australia* provisions for people with a disability.

Commonwealth-State Government Disability Agreement, available from ACROD National Office <http://www.acrod.org.au>.

Connell, B., Jones, M., Mace, R. et al (1997) *Principles of universal design*, The Center for Universal Design http://www.design.ncsu.edu:8120/cud/univ_design/principles/udprinciples.htm.

Copyright Act 1968 (Cwlth) as amended, available at <http://scaleplus.law.gov.au/>.

U.S. Section 508 Standards for Electronic and Information Technology, as amended, available at <http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/guide/index.htm>.

WC3 Web Content Accessibility Guidelines as amended, available at <http://www.w3.org/TR/WAI-WEBCONTENT/>

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