

Professional development

Copyright Workshops



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During July I combined holidays in Queensland with the presentation of workshops on copyright in Queensland, Sydney and Canberra. Despite very short notice for some of these, attendances were high.

The workshops were presented in conjunction with CAVAL, who had identified a need for practical training in copyright aimed at practitioners rather than managers. Cost was seen to be a factor and was kept as low as possible because there were few travel expenses; I had attended the Australian Festival of Chamber music in Townsville and then made my way slowly south. I have been heartened to meet so many enthusiastic librarians with a genuine desire to 'do the right thing' about copyright — if only they knew what 'the right thing' was!

The workshops are titled 'Managing Copyright Compliance in Libraries and Information Services' and the emphasis

is on the practical steps necessary to comply with the Copyright Act, e.g. the use of prescribed notices, what records must be kept and for how long. To put these measures in context however, some time is devoted to explaining the development of copyright law, including ownership and duration of copyright, copyright infringement and the exceptions which permit copying under certain circumstances.

Library copyright law is complicated by the fact that each sector has different requirements. Educational institutions operate under statutory licences, which are different from the statutory licences available to government departments. Public libraries and special libraries also have their own specific problems. The difficulty in workshops such as these is to cover these areas in the time available. In the Brisbane workshop, participants came from seven distinct types of libraries and one attendee wasn't a librarian and didn't work in a library. By contrast, in Canberra everyone was either from government or tertiary libraries.

Even when librarians try to comply with copyright law, there are situations where it is inevitable that they or their patrons will infringe copyright, either inadvertently or deliberately. The workshops identify some of these situations: for example, in public libraries when patrons borrow CDs with the intention of copying them, and suggests measures that may be taken to minimise risk.

In the workshops conducted so far, some examples of issues that have been raised and discussed are

- copying from websites
- linking to websites
- use of images and photographs
- conflict between copyright and licences for digital material.

I will be running a further five of these workshops in September and October. If you are interested, further details can be found at the CAVAL website at <<http://www.caval.edu.au>>.

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