

Your Association at work

ALIA Government Publications Advisory Committee: we need your input

The ALIA Government Publications Advisory Committee has reformed and we are delighted to continue to work on this issue. The Committee has a long history – beginning its life as an AACOBs in 1972. Over many years it has tackled issues of access to and preservation of the output of government and parliaments across the nation.

You will have seen in the December issue of *inCite* a call for additional members – when this article was written the membership comprised Sue Little, Monash University; Elizabeth Drynan, Enterprise Information Management; Cheryl Grant, State Library of New South Wales; Kym Holden, DEEWR (representing Australian Government Libraries Information Network); and Roxanne Missingham, Australian Parliamentary Librarian (Convenor). Sue Hutley, Executive Director ALIA, is a member ex-officio. Do think about nominating!

Over the past year Sue Little has done a wonderful job keeping the committee alive and focusing on key issues. Two important issues for the committee remain:

- a) Review of the Extension of Legal Deposit – A submission was presented for the review last year and the subsequent Inter-Departmental Committee will be contacted to encourage progress.
- b) Joint Committee on Publications Inquiry into the Distribution of the Parliamentary Papers Series (the report is available at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/publ/pps/report.htm>, the government response is at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/publ/pps/govtresponse/govtresponse.pdf>) – the committee anticipates following up on the recommendations.

Additional issues identified include:

- a) Australian government online publishing – representations have been made to the Australian Government Information Management Office in the past about government publications and access issues. With the announcement in early 2008 that publications.gov.au would be incorporated into <http://www.australia.gov.au> there should be an opportunity to provide input;
- b) Revised accessibility guidelines planned by AGIMO which will be of interest to the library community;
- c) The Gershon report identifies major changes in IT – the government has accepted all recommendations (see http://www.financeminister.gov.au/media/2008/mr_372008.html) and there may be implications for government publishing online and in print in terms of IT infrastructure etc;
- d) New ParllInfo – noted that a new integrated search (and repository) system was launched to provide access to Australian Parliamentary resources, and that Votes and Proceedings back to 1901 would be available shortly; and
- e) Specific issues yet to be identified.

Libraries play a critical role in providing access to government publications – we need your input to make sure that we can encourage improvements that will benefit Australians and libraries. How can you contribute?

Participate in the discussion – sign up to Oz-govpubs-L@its.monash.edu.au (information on how to join can be found at <http://alianet.alia.org.au/alianet/e-lists/other.lists.html> and <http://www.alia.org.au/governance/committees/government.publications/>).

Tell us what bugs you – and of your thoughts for improvements in commonwealth, state and local publishing! Email the convenor at Roxanne.Missingham@aph.gov.au.

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Cybersafety

Safer Internet Day on 10 February 2009



ACMA is coordinating Safer Internet Day on 10 February 2009 which provides an opportunity to promote responsible use of the internet by children and young people.

<http://www.cybersmartkids.com.au/saferinternetday2009.htm>

Cool links for public libraries

In 2008, the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) produced a cybersafety program for use by library staff that included web-based and printed materials on internet safety.

In ALIA's recent survey on internet access in public libraries, 56% of public libraries that responded to the survey have websites for children and young adults that link to material especially recommended for them compared with 52% in 2005 and 47% in 2002. The trend has been for an increasing number of public libraries to provide guidance and links for young library users. ALIA's survey report will be available soon.

The ACMA cool sites list on the cybersmart kids online website <http://www.cybersmartkids.com.au/cool-sites.htm> provides a useful starting point for libraries that may be interested in benefiting from a list already maintained by a government authority. ACMA has selected the cool sites in accordance with the following criteria:

- it is primarily made for children or young people under the age of 18, and is appropriate to the various stages of a child's development;
- it is well produced, with content of a high quality;
- it is entertaining or has educational merit;
- it is relevant to Australian children;
- it contains no more than a low level of commercial content.

The cool sites webpage includes: Littlies (with a special section labelled Fun), Kids (with sections on Fun, Help for Kids and Handy Homework Sites), Young People (with sections on Fun & Entertainment, Health & Wellbeing and Study), and Grown Ups which provides guidance for parents on creating a rewarding and safe internet experience for children. There is also a non English speaking helpline service.

The Canada Bay Council NSW website is an example of how the ACMA material can be used effectively by a public library service: http://www.canadabay.nsw.gov.au/your_local_library/for_children/internet_safety_library_08.html