



# ABN on the cheap!

Any library, large or small, can now dial-up the ABN database.

That means online inquiry access to three million book, serial and nonbook records and nearly two million holdings statements from Australian libraries, stored on the National Library's computer.

## What you need

Any terminal of the type that can access Ausinet, Midas, etc., a modem, and a telephone

## What you pay

Twenty-five cents a minute, 15 cents a command, and the cost of a local phone call.

To apply, write to the Executive Officer, ABN, National Library, ACT 2600.

Or ring the ABN Help Desk (062) 621531 for a free information kit.

## NATIONAL LIBRARY — CSIRO INFORMATION LINK

AN IMPORTANT step in the further development of Australia's information technology has been achieved with the linking of CSIRO's computing facility (CSIRONET) and the National Library's Australian Bibliographic Network (ABN).

The link was announced on May 24 by the Minister for Science and Technology, Mr Barry Jones, and the Minister for Home Affairs and Environment, Mr Barry Cohen. The new computer micronode developed jointly last year by the CSIRO's Division of Computing Research and the private company, Office Automation Pty Ltd of Canberra, is a significant component in the link. (Nodes allow computers to communicate and allow users to access computers remotely.)

CSIRONET consists of a number of host computers plus communications facilities which interconnect these hosts and provide Australia-wide access to them. CSIRONET provides a range of services to more than 5500 users.

ABN is the National Library's on-line national bibliographic service based on the co-operative participation of Australian libraries in a shared cataloguing system. It also provides an on-line inquiry service, including reference searches, access to bibliographic records and access to alternative locations to facilitate inter-library lending.

A leased line between CSIRO's Division of Computing Research provides a 16-port gateway from CSIRONET into ABN. At present it is available only for inquiry purposes. For cataloguing operations on ABN, different terminals are necessary and testing of the link for these is proceeding.

Initially, the service is available only to the 45 CSIRO libraries, the 35 CSIRO book centres and the CSIRO Central Information Library and Editorial Section. CSIRO has indicated, however, that it is prepared to allow use of the link by any CSIRONET user or any institution eligible to become a CSIRONET user.

A two-way link, which will also allow ABN participants access to CSIRO databases, is the ultimate goal of this gateway. The technical problems in implementing a two-way link are currently being studied.

The 7500 CSIRO staff, including 3000 rural staff, now have immediate access to the ABN database. When the two-way link is established, ABN participants will have access to the massive scientific resources of CSIRO libraries.

## Check your ergonomics

The last few years have seen a dramatic increase in the use of screen-based equipment, such as VDUs and other terminals which utilize a cathode ray tube display.

Incorrect lighting, inappropriate room finishes and furnishings can all contribute to an unsatisfactory visual environment for the use of such equipment. Problems may occur, such as dilution of the image contrast; distracting reflections in the screen; and excessive contrasts in brightness between the screen and the surrounding interior surfaces viewed by the operator.

The Standards Association of Australia has published a new standard (AS2713) which gives recommendations covering the lighting and environmental conditions necessary for the satisfactory performance of screen-based visual tasks.

## ABN passes three million mark

THE THREE MILLIONTH bibliographic record was recently added to the national bibliographic database, which is used as the basis of the Australian Bibliographic Network and of NUCOS (the National Union Catalogue of Serials). The database now contains more than 3,030,000 records representing books, films, maps, sound recordings and other library materials.

More than 100,000 original catalogue records have now been added online to the database by ABN participants, not counting those added through conversion of existing machine-readable files. In addition, the database contains the MARC files of:

- the Library of Congress (Books, from 1968; Serials, from 1973; Films from 1972; Maps, from 1983);
- the Australian National Bibliography (from 1972);
- the British National Bibliography (from 1980);
- Canadiana (from 1980); and
- the United States Government Printing Office (from 1976).

Almost a third of the three million records on the database now have library locations recorded against them. These are available to more than 200 Australian libraries with online access to ABN (either as full participants or as dial-up customers) and to more than 250 Australian libraries which subscribe to the *ABN catalogue* in microfiche form.

## New dates for NWF

There's been a change in the dates for next year's National Word Festival. So that it can be part of the Canberra Festival, it is now to be held from Saturday 9 March-Monday 11 March 1985.

It promises to be a weekend of events to delight anyone interested in books and writing — and the afternoon for Gourmets and Guzzlers should offer some brain food too!

Book launchings, discussions, a literary dinner are also on the preliminary programme. *InCite* will keep you informed, but if you want to know more, contact Sue Salthouse (062) 49 7068 or Colin Steele (062) 49 2003.

## Conservation consciousness

What is a wilderness area? Where are Australia's wilderness areas and what is the importance of preserving them?

The Wilderness Society is attempting to make the Australian community more aware of the urgency of supporting the conservation movement in their fight to halt the destruction of Australian wilderness. Education programmes throughout the public and private sectors of the Australian community are seen as vital.

The Wilderness Society offers a wide range of informative publications supporting the argument for preserving the existing wilderness areas in Australia.

The Information/Research Officer (Sydney branch) is currently handling statewide distribution of resource and reference books to all public libraries within New South Wales. There is also a diverse and colourful range of wilderness posters and pamphlets available for libraries to display and loan.

A book and poster catalogue is underway and will be available on request to the Information Officer, Wilderness Society, 362 Pitt Street, telephone 267 7929.

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