

LETTERS

Wider world of libraries

Dear Editor,

John Thawley, buried in the CSIRO Information Services Unit, is apparently not aware of what is happening in the wider world of libraries [InCite 28 August].

We are, as librarians, doing the things he alleges librarians are not doing: managing a large budget, directing a large staff, establishing priorities through corporate planning and program reviews, undertaking marketing activities and negotiating with senior university management.

In addition, we have restructured our budget, promoted collection development, and emphasised performance throughout the Library. Using statistics is an everyday matter in this organisation.

Sorry John, but we don't need non-librarian managers to tell us how to run the Library or do our jobs.

Lionel Robson
Acquisition Librarian
University of New South Wales

Towards a quality service

Dear Editor,

A number of public librarians have queried the accuracy of the report by Ross Gibbs [InCite 5 June 1989] that 'Towards a quality service' was complete and will be formally adopted by the ALIA General Council later this month after 10 years work.

In 1986, LAA reconstituted the Public Libraries Standards Committee to

begin work on input standards. Because of the cost of bringing the Committee together for regular meetings, a Core Committee consisting of Ron Davis, Marina Garlick and myself was set up to manage the preparation of the standards. Phyllis Papps was engaged as the consulting librarian. All are still practising librarians.

Although the consulting process with public library authorities and librarians in the six States and the Northern Territory resulted in amendments to the first and second drafts, the document remains very much in the form prepared by Phyllis Papps. Phyllis included both input and output measures with seven goal areas, each divided into input objectives (standards), an appropriate planning process, and output objectives (performance measures).

Louise Lansley incorporated the revisions undertaken by a group of Victorian librarians and it is this draft which has been erroneously referred to as the penultimate draft. A preliminary examination of this document by the Core Committee indicates a need for a final revision plus extensive editing.

The final revision is estimated to require 2 days work by the Core Committee. As the balance of the unspent financial allocation to the Committee was not carried forward by ALIA into 1989, a request has been made to General Council to fund such a meeting.

The cost is estimated to be \$1700, if Ron Davis of Western Australia is to participate. The alternative is a meeting of Marina Garlick and myself at a cost of \$600.

It will then be possible to present the penultimate draft to the final meeting of General Council for 1989. The danger of adopting the existing patch job for the sake of expediency will have been avoided, and ALIA's publication of 'Towards a quality service' in 1990 will be a major contribution to the literature on public library standards.

L.H. Ellis
Convener
ALIA Public Libraries Standards
Committee

Response to letter by L.H. Ellis


The General Council in July 1989 endorsed the employment of a consultant by the Public Libraries Section to proceed with finalising the draft standards document. Further work to be undertaken by the consultant includes consulting, the inclusion of additional comments, and editing. The resulting revised document is to be completed for the November 1989 General Council meeting.

ALIA Executive Director

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