

# ASTEFIX: A cure for the student blues

*Ergad Gold has some good news for school librarians (and others)*

**P**LEASE GIVE me everything you have on the Greenhouse Effect. I have to hand in a project next Thursday'.

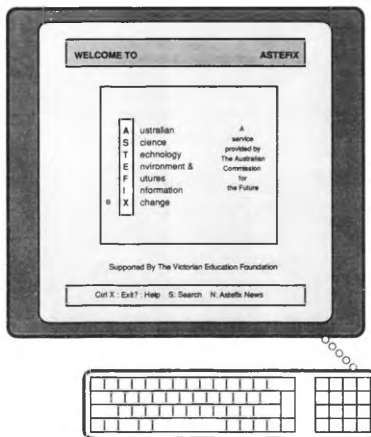
The Ozone hole. Plastics recycling. Endangered species. Toxic waste disposal. And many other similar topics.

How often are librarians approached by desperate students seeking reference material for school assignments? Increasingly it seems, schools are pointing students towards the use of outside resources, especially for the projects and assignments which are so much a part of education today.

The Australian Commission is also one of these resources. After extensive consultation with teachers, librarians, unions, educational authorities, and many others, the Commission has now implemented a dial-up information service which should make life easier all round.

Not another database! Well, yes. But one which is rather different. For a start it is very cheap—just \$10.00 a year, and with no usage charges

either. More importantly, it is designed to cater for students: they do not need a period of training before becoming a user since the search process has been designed to be



*ASTEFIX Welcome Screen showing simple user-interface using a menu*

simplicity itself. And the information contained in the database is directly in line with the topics which are in greatest demand.

It is planned to have a broad range of relevant articles, numbering around 20-50, on the database for

each of the main topics covered. The articles will be drawn from a variety of sources including educational bodies; accredited Information Suppliers such as industry, government agencies and public interest groups; and articles from published journals. The balance of material should encourage students to read around a topic, learning to weigh up various perspectives before preparing their project report.

The new information service, called ASTEFIX (the Australian Science, Technology, Environment and Futures Information Exchange) allows full text searching and document delivery. In searching the database, the user can select whatever search phrases come to mind without being restricted to a predefined set of key words. In view of its simplicity, many libraries allow student to access ASTEFIX directly using a computer and modem located in the library's reference room, without librarians feeling obliged to spend time locating information for students.

Information about ASTEFIX is available from the Commission for the Future on (03) 663 3281. □

## In today's fast-moving world, maintaining your standards isn't easy

Australian Standards. They're one of the best sets of national standards in the world. To keep them that way, we're constantly reviewing them, issuing new editions to reflect changes in technology, regulations, or social need. With over 5000 documents, maintaining an up-to-date collection in such a dynamic environment can be a headache for the professional user.

To meet this challenge, we provide the popular ASSET PLUS Private Library Updating Service. Subscribers automatically receive all revisions, amendments and

updates to their own nominated list of Australian standards. ASSET PLUS cuts administrative time dramatically, and ensures each collection of standards is always up-to-date. ASSET PLUS is a low-cost, high-value service. For around a dollar per year for each standard maintained, (plus the cost of any standards supplied under the service), you eliminate time-consuming update work, but with the certainty your collection of Australian standards is always current. And of course you can add new standards to your list or delete existing ones at any time.

For a detailed brochure, contact Asset Services on (02) 746 4646 Fax (02) 746 3333, or write to the address below.

## ASSET PLUS

PRIVATE LIBRARY UPDATING SERVICE  
Standards Australia, PO Box 1055, Strathfield, NSW 2135.

Please send me more information about ASSET PLUS

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Return this coupon to Asset Services Standards Australia PO Box 1055  
Strathfield NSW 2135