

Statement from the Steering Committee

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The 'Strategic review of library co-ordination and representation' Report provides a unique opportunity for the Australian library and information community to take a major step to redevelop and revitalise the provision of services to Australian libraries and library staff.

The report indicates that there is strong support from the Australian library community for one peak cross-sectoral organisation. The report recommends that the most effective way of creating one peak body is to combine the existing strengths in program delivery by ACLIS and ALIA into one organisational unit, based on the existing organisational strengths of ALIA.

The steering committee appointed for the Review strongly supports that recommendation and offers in this statement further recommendations which it believes will deliver the most professional and relevant services to both the institutions and the individuals which make up the Australian library community.

The steering committee intends to present the report of the Strategic Review and the following course of action in more detail to a joint meeting of the members of the ACLIS National Council and the ALIA General Council in Adelaide on 12 June 1997.

At the meeting of 12 June 1997, the ACLIS National Council and the ALIA General Council will be asked:

1. To agree in principle to form one peak body to represent both institutions and individuals, to be based around the existing administrative structure of ALIA.
2. To agree to work towards the signing of a 'Memorandum of understanding' between ACLIS and ALIA to give effect to the decision to form the new peak body.
3. To consider a set of principles which will form the basis for the 'Memorandum of understanding'.

Development of a Memorandum of understanding

A 'Memorandum of understanding' between ACLIS and ALIA will be developed by 1 September 1997, and will set out the formal constitutional steps which will need to be undertaken to achieve the new body, the or-

ganisational and financial arrangements which will apply until such constitutional changes are effected and the date by which it is expected that the new organisation will commence. It is expected that the Memorandum will include at least the following elements:

- administrative and constitutional arrangements which will accommodate ACLIS' services and functions within the overall structure of ALIA;
- the blending of current service delivery mechanisms by ACLIS into the existing service delivery provisions of ALIA;
- participation by ACLIS in the organisational review currently being undertaken by ALIA;
- agreed financial arrangements necessary to create a mutually agreeable working arrangement;
- agreed timeframe.

Establishment of a new national cross- sectoral body, to take place no later than 1 January 2000

The new organisation, with a new constitution and organisational structure, will be formally launched. The Vision underpinning the new organisation is of the highest quality service delivery to individuals and institutions in the Australian library community.

The Steering Committee will continue its mandate to oversee the review process until the 'Memorandum of understanding' between ACLIS and ALIA to implement the thrust of the review's recommendation is signed. This is expected to be on or about 1 September 1997, at which time the steering committee will be dissolved.

The full text of the report and this covering letter is mounted on the NLA's website at <http://www.nla.gov.au> and pointers to this location are found on the ACLIS and ALIA home pages. If you have comments on the report or the thrust of the recommendations for action outlined in this letter, they may be directed to either (or both) the ACLIS executive officer, Gordon Bower or the ALIA executive director, Virginia Walsh.

For its part, the steering committee strongly urges you to seize this opportunity to restructure the delivery of services to you and your library. ■

The Report provides a unique opportunity for the Australian library and information community to take a major step to redevelop and revitalise the provision of services to Australian libraries and library staff.