

# Boarderline



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Financial management, staff issues, legal compliance, politics, governance, crisis management, paperwork. And sadly, not a library book in sight.

For many the role of library manager would be their worst nightmare; however for me it is exactly where I want to be.

The same could be said for my role as ALIA Director. Both roles are challenging and rewarding, offering tremendous personal and professional growth.

Being the library manager or an ALIA Director places you at the coal face of library service. In either role you are responsible for major projects, realising staff potential while shaping and influencing the future of library services for your community.

As Manager or ALIA Director, the beginning is the strategic plan. Without a plan you can't prepare or defend a budget, advocate on behalf of your industry, develop collections or policy, provide the technology, infrastructure or the staff that provide the services. Without a plan there is no future.

ALIA's overarching strategy is to be 'the Association of choice for information professionals and the library and information sector'. Information about our planning, including our 2008 goals can be found at <http://www.alia.org.au/governance/planning/>

The importance of strategic planning is not to be under-rated. It's budget time at the City of Wanneroo Library and I am developing my five year operational, capital and workforce plans, covering 93 staff (53 FTE), five libraries and heritage sites, as well as project management of the new Library and Cultural Centre costing \$20 million.

Budgets are a strategic tool intrinsically linked to the articulation of the strategic plan. It's important to remember that budgets shape the future effectiveness of an organisation, while determining the priorities and imperatives of the business. Good budgets make organisations competitive in an environment that is changing rapidly and provide the opportunity to look at things differently, reviewing core business activities, and the ability to assess that goals and objectives are on the right track.

Library managers and the ALIA Board face the perennial dilemma of being caught between the paradox of resisting rising costs balanced against the demands for better resources, education, infrastructure and well being.

The reality is that we will NEVER have enough resources to do what we do now, never mind more. The best we can do is to identify the preferred strategy, then stick ruthlessly to that business model.

And don't forget this small piece of advice 'no plan survives first contact with the enemy' so always have a plan B up your sleeve.

But that's another story.

# Conferences

## ALIA Biennial Conference 2-5 September 2008

### The venue

The Biennial Conference will be held at the Alice Springs Convention Centre, winner of the 2006 Brolga Northern Territory Tourism Award for meetings and business tourism, and located just over a kilometre from the CBD. The main function room, the MacDonnell Room, is where the keynote speakers will present their papers and the corridor separating the breakout rooms will be filled with poster exhibits.

### THIS MONTH'S QUIZ QUESTION:

What does the Mantle of Safety refer to?

Send your answer to any member of the Committee <http://www.alia2008.com> and be in the running for a gift voucher to be spent in Alice Springs in September. A winner will be drawn on the first working day of each month.



front of the Conference Centre. Large enough to hold 74 exhibitors, the huge marquee will cover an area of the car park directly in front of the centre. There will be a row of trees inside the marquee adding to the originality of this exhibition space.

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## 4th ALIA New Librarians Symposium 5th & 6th December 2008

It's amazing how the months fly. It's already March and almost one quarter of 2008 has passed. It's now time to start thinking ahead. Are you planning to submit an abstract? Abstract submission closes on 4 April 2008.

Highlighting issues affecting new graduates, the Symposium will showcase new and innovative developments, providing a forum for professionals from all library and related sectors to network and exchange ideas.

The theme of 'Breaking Barriers' has been developed to stimulate discussion and debate, as well as encourage innovation, best practice and information sharing on issues facing new entrants into the profession.