



# Book Industry Strategy Group (BISG)

## Public Submission Process

Australian Government  
Department of Innovation  
Industry, Science and Research

Name of organisation or name of individual making the submission	Australian Library and Information Association
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### QUESTIONS *(500 word limit for each question)*

1. How will digital book production and distribution technologies affect you, your business or your clients over the next two years?

See attachment

2. How will digital book technologies influence your use/production/distribution of printed books?

See attachment

3. What are the specific costs and/or benefits to you, your business or your clients of digital delivery versus printing?

See attachment

4. Comment on any topic related to digital book production and distribution, including what factors, if any have influenced your decisions to adopt, or not adopt, digital book technologies

See attachment



# Submission from the Australian Library and Information Association to the Book Industry Strategy Group

*January 2011*

## **Introduction**

The Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) welcome the opportunity to make a submission to the Book Industry Strategy Group (BISG).

ALIA representatives have appreciated being invited to participate in BISG meetings as observers. We hope to continue to support the work of the Group, the recommendations from reports and outcomes. ALIA also looks forward to working with the other stakeholders of the BISG on a whole-of-industry response to the challenges that will be ahead for the industry.

ALIA supports the submission by the Council of University Librarians (CAUL) which outlines academic library comments for the BISG.

## **Background**

ALIA is the peak body representing the library and information services sector. It represents 6000 members, the library and information profession, Australian library and information services, and the interests of over 12 million library users.

We are committed to promoting the free flow of information and ideas in the interest of all Australians and a thriving culture, economy and democracy.

We advocate the development of an informed society that can partake and participate in skilled decision-making. Accurate, relevant and timely information is the key ingredient to effective decision-making. Australia's long-term economic development is dependent on its ability to use information to make decisions that enable growth, progress and productivity.

Library and information services professionals are committed to the following core values:

- Promotion of the free flow of information and ideas through open access to recorded knowledge, information, and creative works.
- Connection of people to ideas.
- Commitment to literacy, information literacy and learning.
- Respect for the diversity and individuality of all people.
- Preservation of the human record.

## **The library and information sector**

Australians are supported in the areas of literacy and reading, education, business, health, community and digital access through an extensive network that includes:

- approximately 1,600 national, state and public library service points
- approximately 9,000 school libraries
- 42 university libraries
- 387 TAFE campus libraries, and
- 448 health/medical libraries
- over 400 corporate/business libraries
- thousands of other special libraries including government, corporate and law libraries.

Statistics of library use include:

- there are approximately 12 million registered users of public libraries in Australia – almost half of Australia's total population
- there are approximately 108 million visits to public libraries each year
- each year Australia's public libraries lend over 178 million items
- TAFE libraries had 14 million visits in 2006
- there are over 21 million loans every year in Australian university libraries
- in 2007-08, 7.7 million people visited Australian and New Zealand national and state libraries

## **Why are libraries an important part of the book industry?**

Libraries are an integral part of the book industry for the following reasons:

- libraries are the custodians for all books ever published
- librarians preserve published books
- libraries have a substantial expenditure on books
- the development of a culture and love of reading is nurtured by libraries from early childhood, through school years, to higher education, and then as part of lifelong learning
- libraries provide services and resources to meet the needs of the aged and people with disabilities
- libraries support Australian culture by providing Australian content
- many people who borrow from libraries are also likely to buy books, especially people aged from 30 to 60 years.

Australian libraries are an integral part of the book industry. They support the book industry as a major purchaser, as custodians and conservators and, as the main provider of books for many users. Libraries support literacy and encourage reading thereby building a culture of books.

Libraries are committed to the development and preservation of Australian intellectual and cultural heritage and as part of this commitment, are instrumental in making Australian content available to the nation.

## **Statistics - Public libraries**

### *Book holdings*

In June 2004, public libraries in Australia held a total of 52.8 million books and other library materials such as video and audio tapes and discs. About 39.0 million items were available as lending stock, of which 34.3 million were books. There were 176.2 million loans, of which 138.2 million were books. There were 10.1 million registered borrowers in that year.

### *Library funding*

Public libraries are particularly reliant on government funding for their operation, with the majority of funding coming from local government. According to *Cultural Funding by Government, Australia, 2007-08* (ABS 4183.0), the Australian Government provided \$65.4m towards funding for public libraries in 2007-08, while the state and territory government contributed \$317.6m.

### *Expenditure on library materials*

The expenditure on library materials was \$108.31m in 2007-08. Expenditure on library materials has grown by 16% over the five year period from 2003-04 to 2007-08, with all states and territories recording increases. South Australia and Victoria both recorded increases of over 20%.

### *Expenditure on electronic resources*

The expenditure on electronic resources was \$3,714,599 in 2007-08. Expressed as a percentage of total collection expenditure, the Australian Capital Territory allocated the highest proportion of funds to electronic resources at 20%, with New South Wales and South Australia the least at 3%. Expenditure on electronic resources has grown by 16% over the previous year.

## **Statistics - University libraries**

The Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL) produces comprehensive statistical data annually. The collection and compilation of these statistics is managed by CAVAL.

## **Statistics - National and State Libraries**

National & State Libraries Australasia (NSLA) represents the National, State and Territory Libraries of Australia and New Zealand.

In 2008-09, \$26.7 million was spent purchasing resources for collections. This figure includes all resources, both books and serials, and both print and electronic.

Electronic Resources Australia (ERA), managed by the National Library of Australia, is a consortia across all library sectors that purchases and provides online resources at competitive prices.

Comprehensive statistics for state and national libraries can be found at <http://www.nsla.org.au/publications/statistics/>

## **Statistics - School and TAFE libraries**

Statistics for expenditure by libraries in these sectors are not readily available and obtaining figures or estimates would require more research. Statistics for primary, secondary, tertiary and academic educational publishing are available from the Australian Publishers Association.

## **Statistics - Special libraries**

This sector includes libraries such as law and health/medical/pharmaceutical libraries which have significant expenditure on specialist books and manuals.

## **Books, Reading and Literacy**

E-books through public libraries provide the Australians with 24/7 access to reading. Improvements to Australia's literacy levels are needed. ALIA supports the variety of ways to enable Australians to read to improve our economy and productivity. The recent report by the Productivity Commission highlights the economic benefits of literacy. [http://www.pc.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/102024/literacy-numeracy-labour-outcomes.pdf](http://www.pc.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/102024/literacy-numeracy-labour-outcomes.pdf)

If we are to become a nation of readers, as Prime Minister Julia Gillard stated in her speech at the Prime Ministers Literary Awards 2010, then more needs to be done. [http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/news/news\\_items/2010/2010\\_prime\\_ministers\\_literary\\_awards](http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/news/news_items/2010/2010_prime_ministers_literary_awards)

"Of course reading is a gift that grows by being shared. I want Australia to be a community of readers." "I want every Australian to have the power of words and ideas at their command so that together we can 'nudge the world a little'", states Ms Gillard.

If Australia is truly to be a reading nation, and remain that way, wider initiatives than just publishing and selling books are needed. The Australian Library and Information Association, State and National Libraries and Public Library Associations have formed the founding partner group for the National Year of Reading 2012.

If the basic premise of using ebooks is the ability to read, ALIA encourages all stakeholders of the Australian book industry to be enthusiastically involved in the National Year of Reading 2012. <http://www.love2read.org.au/>

## **Libraries and internet access**

ALIA supports the basic right of library and information services users to unhindered access to information regardless of format. Through these services, Australia's libraries play a key role in addressing the need for equitable community access to online information and services. Libraries and information services facilitate and promote public access to the widest variety of information, reflecting the diversity of society. The selection and availability of library materials and services, including ebooks, online content and services, is governed by professional considerations and not by political, moral and religious views. Access to electronic information resources should not be restricted except as required by law and this basic right should not be eroded in the development of further regulatory or legal restrictions on online information.

Users are assisted with the necessary skills and a suitable environment in which to use their chosen information sources and services freely and confidently. Each user's right to privacy and confidentiality is protected with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, including which ebooks may be used.

## **Libraries, funding and the National Broadband Network**

ALIA notes the importance of a national framework for funding for Australian public libraries to enable Australia's digital future. This is to ensure greater coordination and collaboration in addressing issues concerning the online environment including DRM, Copyright and costs association to deliver, maintain and provide access to e-books and other electronic resources. Availability and access to broadband is an infrastructure required for ebooks and therefore equity of access to this should be considered.

ALIA believes that libraries are a major stakeholder in the national broadband strategy and therefore access to electronic resources for the delivery of better literacy, health, education, business, community, and government services.

Public libraries are a major stakeholder in the national broadband strategy for the following reasons:

- there is existing physical and technological infrastructure in public libraries in every local government area across the nation
- there is a huge and increasing usage of electronic information services in public libraries and a resulting increase in community expectations of internet assistance
- public libraries are the key provider of free internet access for many people who do not have access at home or through school and work
- public libraries have a crucial role in building strong and sustainable communities by providing equitable internet access in remote and rural communities, in Indigenous communities, to people at lower socioeconomic levels, to seniors, and to marginalised groups who are without internet skills or computers at home.
- public libraries have a role in enabling internet access, assistance and technology for people with disabilities
- the provision of quality online information, through Electronic Resources Australia, is fundamental to a well-informed, educated, economically competitive and democratic society
- support for internet education and skills training for users is required and can be delivered to communities via public libraries

### **New technologies**

Wireless and mobile applications and devices are driving profound changes across all industries and sectors, providing increased flexibility, convenience and control for users. Portable, multifunction devices and increasingly available wireless access in public places facilitates greater use of electronic resources and drives demand. User behaviour in this changing online environment is driving and being driven in unpredictable directions by these new technologies and applications. Ebooks are an excellent example of this.

### **Ebooks and Public, State and National libraries**

Public libraries are community hubs within rural, regional and metropolitan areas. Libraries are at the heart of local communities. The free public library network in Australia is the key provider of free access to information and services; public libraries are recognised as trusted, friendly, neutral and non-threatening spaces for individual or group social inclusion.

Public libraries in Australia are also conducting many ebook reader projects, with ebook devices being loaded and lent to library clients. This is another method of providing equity of access, as well as opportunities for the public to learn more about ebook technology without having to purchase all the infrastructure required (hardware, internet access etc) before being able to use and read ebooks.

Currently the Overdrive system and rights management is used by a number of public libraries.

Libraries also invest in encouraging Australian author content, through Writers in Residence programs, scholarships and other fellowships and grants, with two examples being state libraries <http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/about/awards/index.html> and the National Library of Australia <http://www.nla.gov.au/grants/haroldwhite/>.

The National Library's ebook collection information can be found at <http://www.nla.gov.au/pub/ebooks.html>

### **School libraries, teacher librarians and electronic resources**

Teacher librarians have an important role in teaching information and digital literacy skills to teachers, students and parents, including the ability and skills required to access and manage ebooks, such as e-textbooks.

It is important to note that in many schools, the main location for internet access outside of the classroom is in the library. The school library also acts as a communications hub; in many schools, teachers, parents, students and members of the wider community gather in the library to work together on issues or projects.

However, many schools do not have a qualified teacher librarian and some do not have a school library. They are therefore disadvantaged in being able to access electronic materials such as ebook packages, and to teach information and digital literacy skills.

ALIA has been involved in the federal government's Inquiry into School Libraries and Teacher Librarians in Australian schools and we are hopeful that the outcomes of this report will mention improved access to electronic resources and ebook packages for all Australian students whether they be in a state school, Catholic or independent or private school.

In 2009 Wesley College received the School Library Association of Victoria Research Award to investigate e-Readers in Schools and some of the conclusions noted the Digital Rights Management issues <http://slav.globalteacher.org.au/2010/06/21/wesley-college-investigates-ereaders/>

The American Library Association conducted an e-Book Summit for School Libraries in 2010 <http://ebook-summit.com/> and these papers include valuable information about user feedback, changes to library staffing skillsets to manage ebooks.

### **Print on Demand**

It is expected that the introduction of Lightning Source into Australia in 2011 and other Print on Demand options will also change the landscape for libraries, library suppliers and clients over the next few years.

### **Environmental and sustainability considerations**

While there may be many areas of environmental sustainability gains with e-books, the future challenges of hardware disposal should also be considered by governments. This relates to how people dispose appropriately their ebook readers, tablets, iPads, other similar devices. E.g. mobile muster bins – will we be able to deposit our old ebooks readers in a similar manner.

### **Growth in Demand**

There will continue to be a growing demand for both digital books and electronic resources in libraries. The costs associated with meeting this demand and equality of access, so as to not disadvantage any one group of our community, should be considered by governments. While storage costs are reduced (less print books on the shelf) the price of electronic books are not necessarily dramatically less, and there are still requirements for cataloguing, licensing and rights management of all ebooks in libraries.

ALIA members look forward to working with the BISG on the outcomes of the Group's final report in 2011 and beyond.

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## Recommendations – Book Industry Strategy Group – January 2011

ALIA makes the following recommendations :

1. That Libraries are recognised as an important part of the digital book industry as a large consumer and supply group, and through their role in encouraging wider use and adoption of ebooks and other electronic resources by all Australians.
2. That the BISG consider recommending to the Attorney Generals Department a review of Australian Copyright legislation in the context of e-books and electronic resources within the next three years due to the rapidly changing requirements for electronic resources.
3. That the Australian Government, through specific initiatives funding for the National Library of Australia and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations ensure equal access to all Australians, including all Australian students, to online electronic book and other electronic resources.
4. That the Australian Government, through Minister Crean and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, support and provide funding for the National Year of Reading 2012 initiative which will encourage further takeup of digital books, especially Australian content and improve Australia's literacy rates.
5. That Minister Carr and the Department of Innovation continue its support for the Book Industry through ongoing support by a funded section of the Department. An Industry Innovation Council model should be considered.
6. That the Department of Innovation, as part of the ongoing work of the BISG, undertake a study into the cost implications and digital rights management issues for smaller Australian libraries (as noted in the July 2010 BISG *Digital Technologies in Australia's Book Industry* Research Report).
7. That the Department of Innovation work with key industry stakeholders and Associations to convene a number of Symposium conferences over the next three years for the library industry, publishing and bookselling industries to further discuss the issues and challenges faced as electronic books change the landscape of book publishing, reading and hardware requirements.
8. That as part of the final BISG report, that environmental and sustainability challenges are considered, including the waste disposal options available for Australians for ebook reader hardware.

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### References

Australian Bureau of Statistics *Arts and Culture in Australia: A Statistical Overview, 2009 (ABS 4172.0)*  
Australian Bureau of Statistics *Cultural Funding by Government, Australia, 2007-08 (ABS 4183.0)*  
Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL) <http://www.caul.edu.au/stats/>  
National & State Libraries Australasia (NSLA) <http://www.nsla.org.au/>  
*Australian public libraries statistical report.* Compiled by Public Library Services, State Library of Queensland. <http://www.nsla.org.au/publications/statistics/>

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