

**Conference of Directors of National Libraries in Asia and Oceania  
Annual meeting of 2016 – at the National Library of New Zealand, Wellington NZ**

Annual report of the National Library of Australia

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**Name of country: Australia**

**Name of library: National Library of Australia**

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The functions of the National Library of Australia, as set out in the *National Library of Australia Act 1960*, are:

- To maintain and develop a national collection of library material, including a comprehensive collection of library material relating to Australia and the Australian people;
- To make library material in the national collection available to such persons and institutions, and in such manner and subject to such conditions, as the Council determines with a view to the most advantageous use of that collection in the national interest;
- To make available such other services in relation to library matters and library material (including bibliographical services) as the Council thinks fit; and
- To co-operate in library matters (including the advancement of library science) with authorities or persons, whether in Australia or elsewhere, concerned with library matters.

The Library enables and is a participant in the creation of knowledge. It develops, curates and preserves an astounding and diverse collection that inspires, delights and educates Australians. The Library's collections and services extend understanding of issues of contemporary significance, build strong community connections and underpin its leadership activities.

In 2015 the Library presented its Corporate Plan 2015-2019 with three strategic priorities:

1. Build the nation's memory
2. Make access happen
3. Lead, partner, connect and excel

The Corporate Plan 2015-2019 is available at <http://www.nla.gov.au/corporate-documents/corporate-plan-2015-2019>

## RELATIONSHIP TO GOVERNMENT:

The National Library of Australia had its origins as the library of the Federal Parliament, established in 1901. With the passing of the *National Library Act 1960* it formally separated from the Parliamentary Library. The Library fulfills its role by carrying out the functions defined in this legislation.

The Library is a statutory authority within the Ministry for the Arts, Department of Communications and the Arts. The Library operates within a reporting and accountability framework as set out in the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*. The *National Library Act 1960* provides that a Council of 12 members shall conduct the affairs of the Library. The Library's Council meets six times a year and includes representatives of the Parliament, academia, business and the general community. More information about the Library's Council can be found at <http://www.nla.gov.au/library-council>.

## FACTS AND FIGURES:

- The National Library of Australia operating revenue for 2014–2015 was \$66 million, comprising:
  - \$50.4 million (76%) in government appropriation
  - \$16.2 million in external revenue
- In addition to the above revenue, the Government provided the Library with \$9.82 million to acquire materials for the collection.
- In 2014–2015, staff averaged at 444 employees (equal to 420 full-time staff):
  - 68% of staff are female
  - 31% of staff have worked at the Library for at least 15 years
  - the median age of staff is 47 years
- The Library has a volunteer program with 75 registered volunteers who work at the Library welcoming visitors, offering public tours and engaging in a range of activities that make the collections more accessible. In 2014-2015, the Library's onsite volunteers contributed nearly 8,000 hours.
- The Library also has digital volunteers who contribute to Trove through newspaper text correction, the addition of tags and comments, and the creation of user-generated lists. Since June 2008, when Trove text correction began, this digital volunteer contribution is estimated to exceed \$27 million in value.
- Onsite visits to the Library of local, national and international visitors numbered 453,000 in 2014–2015. 40,000 people participated in onsite public events including education and programs for school students.
- The National Library of Australia's websites received on average 74,000 visits a day, totaling 27 million visits in 2014–2015.

## Facts on the Collection

- There are approximately 10 million items in the Library's collection. The Library collects books, journals, newspapers, music scores, maps, e-resources, websites, manuscripts (personal papers and organisational archives), documentary pictures, oral history and folklore recordings.
- In 2014–2015, the Library received 137,700 new items.
- As at June 2015, the proportion of the Library's collection described on the online catalogue is 93%.
- The Library digitises selected items to make the collections more accessible, engage with new audiences and preserve rare and fragile materials.

- At June 2015, 235,622 items had been digitised, including maps, music, books, journals, pictures, archives, oral history and folklore.
- The Library is also digitising historic Australian newspapers and as at June 2015 over 17 million digitised pages, or 170 million articles, were freely available to the public through Trove.
- The Library collects online publications and websites through its curated PANDORA web archive and has also conducted large scale harvests of the Australian web domain.
- In June 2015, the total size of the Library's digital collections exceeded 3.8 petabytes, containing over 9 billion files.

#### **Facts on access**

- In January 2015, the Library opened a new Special Collections Reading Room and, in May 2015, a new Newspapers and Family History zone within the Main Reading Room. The Library now operates three reading rooms:
  - Main Reading Room (including Newspapers and Family History)
  - Special Collections Reading Room (including the Petherick Reading Room)
  - Asian Collections Reading Room
- In 2014–2015 over 144,890 physical items were delivered to users either in the reading rooms or offsite via interlibrary loan, and document supply and Library staff answered over 44,990 reference and information enquiries.

#### **A BRIEF GENERAL OVERVIEW OF RECENT MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS:**

**Legal Deposit for electronic materials:** In August 2015 amended Commonwealth legislation for the legal deposit of electronic publications received Royal Assent after being passed with bipartisan support from both houses of Parliament earlier that year. The new legal deposit law becomes effective in February 2016. The Library is consulting with publishers to communicate the new requirements and is developing in-house systems that will enable the digital ingest of electronic publications. It will be possible for single publications, whether books or serial titles, to be deposited with the Library using a simple web deposit form. The Library will use batch deposit processes for multiple titles issued by larger publishers.

**Digital Library Infrastructure Replacement Project (DLIR):** This project is replacing existing systems that form the core of the Library's digital library infrastructure and is adding capabilities for digital preservation, online deposit and the ability to support an extended range of digital formats. This project is one of the Library's highest priorities. The Library has completed three of five stages, and the program has successfully delivered new systems supporting end-to-end processing, from digitisation to end-user access. New production services are now in operation and support workflows for books, journals, pictures, manuscripts, maps, sheet music, digitised government gazettes and oral history recordings held in the Library's collection.

As at December 2015, the end-of-life system replacement portion of the program has been completed. Focus for the remaining 18 months of the program now shifts to leveraging and enhancing the new infrastructure to support managing and preserving both published and unpublished born-digital content. Significant productivity improvements and end-user access optimisations will also be delivered before the program is completed in June 2017. For more information about the DLIR project see <http://www.nla.gov.au/about-us/dlir>.

**Reading Room Integration Project:** On 5 January 2015 the Library opened its new Special Collections Reading Room, the first stage in a major Reading Room Integration Project. Under this project five formerly separate reading rooms have been merged into two larger

spaces. The Special Collections Reading Room provides a facility for users of rare and unique special materials, including archives and manuscripts, pictures, maps, oral history recordings, rare books and other material requiring supervised use. It also provides special facilities for advanced researchers who make heavy use of the Library and enjoy extra privileges. As well as better meeting the needs of users, the integration of multiple smaller reading rooms has enabled the Library to offer extended hours of convenient access to rare and special collections in the evening and on weekends.

In May 2015 services provided from a formerly separate newspapers and microforms reading room moved into the expanded Main Reading Room. The project has also included developing an expanded informal casual area for group work and use of e-collections adjacent to an enlarged informal café next to self-service lockers and new toilet facilities on the lower ground floor.

The Reading Room Integration Project has upgraded services and facilities to comply with current standards and to achieve greater environmental sustainability. Associated staff work areas have also been modernised and integrated. When the project concluded, all the major public areas of the Library had been modernised and refurbished, ahead of the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the building in 2018.

The specialist Asian Collections Reading Room remains unchanged, offering services to users of Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Thai script materials, and staff with language expertise.

**National Resource Sharing:** In August 2014, the Library completed redevelopment of the Libraries Australia Search service. Libraries Australia is a resource sharing service managed by the National Library for Australian libraries and is used daily by more than 1,000 libraries. The redevelopment delivered significantly enhanced capacity and performance, which has supported the large-scale data processing and new data flows required in the advent of cloud-based library management systems in the Australian library environment. The Library is part way through a large project to ensure that the holdings of Australian libraries implementing Ex Libris' Alma are added to and kept up to date in the Australian National Bibliographic Database.

**Integrated Library Management System (ILMS) Replacement:** the Library completed an exhaustive environmental scan and an initial evaluation of available discovery service products to potentially replace its public catalogue (VUFind), e-resources interface and mobile catalogue app. It was determined there was no business case for moving to a discovery service ahead of a planned replacement of its backend library system (currently Ex Libris's Voyager). This will begin in 2016-17.

**Enterprise Agreement 2014:** The Library's staff Enterprise Agreement 2011-14 which sets out the pay and conditions for Library staff notionally expired in mid-2014. Negotiations with staff towards a new Agreement conforming with the Government's bargaining framework have been underway since late 2014.

**Shared Services:** As a result of a Government decision in the 2014-15 budget announcement it had been intended that the Library move to a shared services model for various corporate functions, including accounts processing, payroll processing and records management. These services were to be provided by the Portfolio Department and the Library had been scheduled to be on board by December 2015. It is no longer mandatory for the Library to move to a shared services model, however, the Library will continue to review market offerings to determine whether any corporate functions could be better delivered through an outsourced arrangement.

## NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN BUILDING AND MANAGING COLLECTIONS:

**Collection Development Policy:** the Library issued a substantial revision of its Australian, overseas and Asia-Pacific collection development policy, covering all elements of its collections. The new policy is principles-based and presents an integrated policy framework for both print and digital collecting intentions. See <http://www.nla.gov.au/policy-and-planning/collection-development-policy>.

**Improved management of unpublished collections:** The Digital Library Infrastructure Replacement Project has enabled better integration of the Library's archival collection management systems and documentation approaches. The Manuscripts finding aids which were in paper or unstructured electronic form have been converted to Encoded Archival Description (EAD) and loaded into ArchivesSpace (the collection management system used for unpublished collections). ArchivesSpace can be used to exchange data with the Library's Digital Collection Management System and allows staff to manage physical collections, digital items and update and publish finding aids as part of their collection management work.

The first stage in a two part project to create a simple record for the unaccessioned component of the Pictures collection documented 70% of the photographic rearrange. A finding aid like structure was used to collect the information and this was loaded into the Pictures instance of ArchivesSpace.

## NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN PROVIDING ACCESS TO COLLECTIONS:

**Preservation policy:** The Library issued a revised Preservation Policy at the end of 2015, together with a preservation strategic plan setting out directions and actions for the next three years. The revised policy recognises that broad-based preservation measures are the most effective and economical means of protecting and caring for the collection over time. In general, preventive preservation measures for the collection as a whole take precedence over individual collection treatments. This includes maintaining stable temperatures and relative humidity levels, managing light exposure, controlling pests, disaster preparedness and protecting items from other physical and chemical damage or technical obsolescence.

**Improved delivery to users:** Australians are benefiting from the Library's new digital delivery system – developed as part of the Digital Library Infrastructure Replacement Project – and its integration with Trove discovery capability. By the end of 2015, the Library's pictures, maps, sheet music, oral history recordings and manuscripts collections were all delivered via modern, mobile friendly and responsive user interfaces, and the contents of complex collections could be discovered via Trove. In February 2016, the Library will implement its next generation newspapers interface, and deliver digitised Government Gazette material for the first time. The Library has also commenced digitisation of Australian journals, benefiting from efficiencies gained through its Digital Library program.

The Library has implemented the National Information Standards Organization (NISO) 'free to read' label for as much Trove content as possible, using existing metadata to do so. The Library also now utilises ORCID identifiers in Trove's people zone, matching identifiers to those found in metadata contributed from all of Australia's university research repositories. Trove is now the only place where an Australian 'view' of the ORCID community can be found.

Publishing Encoded Archival Description (EAD) finding aids online and making them discoverable and searchable has increased access to the Manuscripts collections. In addition, the approach has provided a simple way to deliver digitised content from unpublished

collections with structured contextual information. The first two such projects have been delivered in finding aids. The letters that composer Miriam Hyde sent to her family as a student at the Royal College of Music in London have been digitised and can be viewed in the finding aid for her more substantial archive <http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-144170660/findingaid>. In another example, the Library's mediaeval manuscripts, held individually or within two major formed collections, have been digitised and brought together in a 'meta' finding aid which 'unites' them and is also a very efficient way to describe and load digital information.

**Social media:** In June 2015, the Library's main Twitter account, @nlagovau, was the eighth most followed account in the Australian Public Service and the Library's Facebook page was liked by more than 15,000 people from around the world, making it one of the most popular accounts for an Australian cultural institution. Facebook general post reach exceeded 25,000 people per week during 2014-15. There were 3.57 million Flickr Commons views during 2014-15 and the addition of Instagram in December 2014 attracted more than 1,100 followers in its first six months.

**Online education resources:** The Digital Classroom ([www.nla.gov.au/digital-classroom](http://www.nla.gov.au/digital-classroom)), a new online education resource, was launched in October 2015. Designed to take the Library's collections into Australian classrooms and aligned to the Australian curriculum, the education materials provide activities to engage students with sources from the collection.

#### **NOTES ON YOUR COLLABORATION WITH OTHER LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES AND MUSEUMS IN YOUR COUNTRY:**

- National and State Libraries Australasia (NSLA): NSLA is the peak body for the ten National, State and Territory libraries of Australia and New Zealand. The National Library of Australia manages the NSLA eResources Consortium on behalf of NSLA libraries, providing services such as managing product subscriptions and vendor negotiations, and arranging new product trials. For 2015, 269 subscriptions for 56 products were under Consortium management, including six products common across all members. A review in late 2014 confirmed that NSLA members believe the Consortium delivers value for money, and enhanced access for library users; the members committed to supporting the Consortium for a further five years.
- More than 1,200 Australian libraries collaborate to develop and maintain the national union catalogue through the Libraries Australia service. In 2015, the Library continued its work to ensure that the holdings of major libraries implementing Ex Libris' Alma library management system are accurately represented on the union catalogue. The Library shifted from an in-house to OCLC hosted implementation of the VDX software which underpins Libraries Australia Document Delivery, the resource sharing service used by more than 700 libraries across all library sectors.
- In addition to these libraries, more than 200 archives, museums and galleries share their collection metadata through Trove, ensuring that small, medium and large specialist digital collections are accessible through a single search service and single API.
- In 2015, the Library was an active participant in the initiation of a new cross-sector group, Australian Digital Access to Collections, which met several times during the year to establish areas of common values and need. The group aims to develop a framework to guide endeavours aimed at strengthening national digital access to collections.

- The Library engaged closely with the Australian publishing community following the passing of the revised legal deposit legislation for e-publications. A publisher fact sheet was issued setting out in clear terms what would be required of publishers once the legislation became effective. Staff met with publisher groups, gave presentations at publisher conferences and began trials of systems and workflows with a selected group of publishers. The Library already re-uses some publisher ONIX metadata to create MARC records, and the possibility of scaling up this re-use will be explored further with publisher partners.

#### **NOTES ON INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION:**

- The National Library of Australia and the National Library of China worked together to scope a major exhibition drawing on the collections of the two institutions. *Celestial Empire: Life in China 1644-1911* presents a unique selection of works from the Qing dynasty (1644-1911). The exhibition includes books, maps and other documents produced under the Qing dynasty. The exhibition represents a journey through different levels of society and present life in China over the last centuries of imperial rule. This major exhibition will be shown at the National Library of Australia from 2 January to 22 May 2016.