

Annual report of Solomon Islands National Library Service

Period covered by this report: January to December 2015

Name of country: Solomon Islands

Name of library: Solomon Islands National Library
Service

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1. RELATIONSHIP TO GOVERNMENT:

The Solomon Islands National Library Service is a Division of the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development. The National Library of Solomon Islands was established in 1974 with the aim of reorganizing existing library services and extending reading services to the entire nation. It was not until 1979, a year after independence, however, that the Libraries Act finally established the National Library Service and required it to provide an “efficient library service throughout Solomon Islands”. The National Library moved into its present premises, built by the Government in 1981, from its earlier location at the Honiara Secondary School.

Initially, the role of the National Library Service covered two areas of service. The first being to support a national identity, it is responsible for the collection, preservation and exploitation of local and international publications on Solomon Islands including materials deposited under the Legal Deposit Act of 1972.

The second area of service was the organization of public library services throughout the country, the provision of technical assistance to the government departmental libraries and assistance in the organization of libraries in schools and other educational institutions.

2. FACTS AND FIGURES:

The Solomon Islands National Library was established under the National Library Service Act No.4 of 1979. It is situated in the capital city, Honiara opposite the Ministry of Infrastructure and Development.

The National library has two collections (Solomon Islands Collection (SIC) and the General Reference Collection) and is accessible free to all nationals, both to researchers and readers within the country and overseas. The Solomon Islands Collection housed at the National Library is a collection of national importance and the most important kind in the country. As the name implies, the SIC consists of materials on Solomon Islands, featuring subject areas such as anthropology, history, World War II, education and government. Other publications in the collection include reports, statistics, theses and dissertations on Solomon Islands and by Solomon Islanders. The SIC is the legal depository section of the National Library, a requirement of the Libraries (Deposit of Books) Act. It is a closed access collection and is mainly used by students and researchers. The SIC holds 10,000 items. The General Reference Collection holds about 5,000 items on all subjects including atlases, dictionaries, mathematics, accounting etc.

All funding for the National Library is controlled by the Ministry of Education. The total annual operating budget for this year was \$560,336.

The National Library has eight staff. Two graduate with diploma and three with certificates. The other three are auxiliary staff.

We usually have an average of 400 people per month who come to the library to read newspapers, do researches and other services provided.

2. A BRIEF GENERAL OVERVIEW OF RECENT MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS:

The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development has funded twenty school libraries in the capital city of Honiara. Twelve schools are owned by Honiara City Council Authority and eight are privately owned. The total cost to build these twenty libraries is worth \$700,000.

Over the past years the National Library had submitted proposals to the Ministry of Education to provide funding for library automation system but has always been turned down. However in May this year with the

assistance of an Australian Business Volunteer (ABV) who the National Library has engaged for three months came to our rescue. The ABV assisted us with the proposal and presented it before the Management team in the Ministry of Education and has been approved.

Book Donations

In August and November of this year the Ranfurly Book Aid in Sydney has donated 54 cartons of used books for schools throughout the country. The last consignment which contains 4 pallets of used books is due to arrive on 23rd December 2015 from New Zealand. These books were donated from schools and the public in New Zealand.

3. NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN BUILDING AND MANAGING COLLECTIONS:

- The National Library will continue to provide reading books and reference materials to schools throughout the country
- Provide basic training for teacher librarian. Conduct training for teacher librarian and library volunteers as to how books and collection can be preserved and looked after. Also taught them on basic library operations, basic cataloguing and classification.

4. NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN PROVIDING ACCESS TO COLLECTIONS:

- Library Management System

The National Library started using the open source software KOHA in June 2015 which became available online to all Government Ministries only.

5. NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN OTHER SERVICES:

The National Library organized story-telling session for children ages 3 to 5 years every Tuesday and Wednesday from 10 to 11am every week. This story-telling session was organized purposely for children who were not able to secure space in any of the Kindergarten schools in Honiara. Since the introduction of this story-telling session in 2007, the total enrollment increased drastically every year.

6. NOTES ON YOUR COLLABORATION WITH OTHER LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES AND MUSEUMS IN YOUR COUNTRY:

- A librarian network was formed in August this year. This librarian network comprises of librarians working in Government department libraries, Special Libraries, University of South Pacific (SI) Campus Library and Solomon Islands National University Library.

7. NOTES ON INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION:

- 2015: An invitation from the National Library of New Zealand to attend CDNL-AO meeting was sent to me in early November which I am very honoured for this wonderful opportunity as this is will be my first time to attend this very high and important meeting.

(Revised template October 2015, NL_#562055)