



### Qualifying for the quango

The retirement of Russell Doust as State Librarian of NSW was a front page story in *InCite* (20 March 1987). The subsequent advertisement for State Librarian should also have been run on the front page, as part of an LAA national campaign for all State Governments to recognise professional qualifications in librarianship as a prerequisite for the most important library posts in their control.

NSW apparently does not require either librarianship qualifications or library management experience from its State Librarian! Apart from being the latest political blow to our profession, this is bureaucratic thinking worthy of Sir Humphrey appointing the head of a quango.

Can the LAA make a move to ensure that this is the last such advertisement seen in *InCite* — or anywhere else?

Ross Kingsley

**Note:** This matter has been placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Executive Committee and may be referred to the General Council meeting in September. The outcome of these discussions will be reported in a future edition of *InCite*.

Louise Lansley

### Living in the ideal world

As the person in charge of acquisitions at one of the libraries accused of evincing 'cultural lag' in Stephen Alomes' letter (*InCite* 22.5.87), I wish to make the following points.

The substantial increases in the cost of periodicals over the past few years has meant that many libraries, and certainly this library, have found it necessary to discontinue subscriptions in order to remain within budget.

At Moonee Valley Regional Library (of which Sam Merrifield is the major branch) the policy in regard to periodicals is to be guided by the borrowers requests and suggestions. That is, we see our role as responding to the needs of our borrowers. A check of our records for the past four years indicates that no request has been received at any of our branches for the publication *Island Magazine*. This is not to dispute the fact that *Island Magazine* is 'the best literary magazine in the country', but merely to explain its exclusion from our holdings.

In an ideal world we would be subscribing to many more magazines than the present limited number to which we subscribe. However, the financial constraints which have been imposed on libraries, and the further reductions foreshadowed by the Victorian Government for the future, mean that is most unlikely that we will be able to expand our subscriptions.

Vera Boston  
Deputy Regional Librarian

**Order your copy of the Proceedings of the first national TAFE Conference, Half-way There: Between Kangan and 2000. Don't miss out!**  
Forward your order to: Mr R. Manley, 20/8 Macleay Street, Elizabeth Bay NSW 2011. \$25 LAA Members; \$30 Non-members

### Library qualifications cont'd

Margaret Dugon (*InCite* No 5, 3 April 87) draws attention to the fact that only two of the three prerequisites for appointment to the sub-professional or para-professional grade of Library Officer at the University of Tasmania (University degree, ALAA eligibility or equivalent, Library Technician certificate or equivalent) actually require formal qualifications in librarianship.

The present situation in respect of these grades, which are comparatively recent innovations on the library scene, and are thus still finding their appropriate niche, is somewhat unclear even in theory. There is an argument for instance, that these grades being sub-or para-professional, require their own qualification (that of library technician) and that graduate librarians should be ineligible for appointment to them unless they also hold a library technician certificate.

In practice, a large library is likely to have a large number of categories of staff who, though they hold qualifications, do not have the graduate professional qualification generally required for appointment as Librarian. Such categories may include library technicians, non-graduate ALAAs, three-year trained graduates (where the employer specifies four years of training for professional appointments), graduates who are studying part-time for their Dip.Lib. (often with lengthy library experience), and graduates who wish to get a 'feel' for library work before committing themselves to the profession. Quite obviously, an employer cannot be expected to have separate salary scales for each of these different categories. Equally obvious, I suggest, it would not be reasonable to restrict people in these categories who have not yet completed their qualifications in librarianship, to unskilled grades, unskilled duties, and unskilled salaries.

The conditions of employment at the University of Tasmania have been framed with these considerations in mind.

A.L. Rees  
Acting Librarian University of Tasmania

### Broadening the base

Professor Jean Whyte (*InCite* No 7, 8 May) uses words such as 'slightly shady business', 'sharp practice', and 'unworthy' when referring to Council's attempt to change the Association's name by registering the new name ALIA. On behalf of Council I categorically refute such allegations.

The new name was, of course, only one of dozens of recommendations debated at Branch, Section, Executive Committee, Council and indeed throughout the membership during 1986, following the Report of the Corporate Plan and Review Committee.

One of the principal thrusts of the Report was that the Association should broaden the base of its membership to make it possible to include, rather than exclude, emerging professions in areas contiguous with, or closely related to librarianship. A change of name was seen by the architects of the 'new' Association as one of the most important manifestations of this change, and that accordingly it should be introduced as soon as possible.

We simply do not know how long change via the Royal Charter will take although this has been estimated variously as many, many months if not years; hence the suggestion by our legal adviser that we seek registration of the new name.

The Council would deny emphatically that it is trying to do anything underhand, illegal or improper. Rather it is seeking to respond to the wishes of the majority of the membership in both substance and time.

Peter Dawe

## ERIC ...an education on Silver Platter™ in itself

The transition to laborious searches of educational literature is now at your fingertips.

The world's leading database of educational literature ERIC (Educational Resources Information Centre) is now available from ALDIS on Silver Platter Compact Discs.

ERIC on Silver Platter gives you quick and easy access to the full online ERIC database without online costs.

ERIC on Silver Platter covers Resources in Education and Current Index to Journals in Education from 1966 to the present.

It is available as a three disc set and is updated quarterly.

FOR MORE DETAILS SEND IN THIS COUPON:

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TEL: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF LIBRARY \_\_\_\_\_

ALDIS  
AUSTRALIAN LASER DISK INFORMATION SERVICES PTY LTD.  
Private Mail Bag 16,  
Port Melbourne  
Victoria Australia 3207  
Telephone: (03) 647 9780