

The ABS Year Book and Libraries

Following concern expressed by the library community about the future of the *ABS Year Book*, the Australian Bureau of Statistics is seeking the advice of libraries concerning the future role of the *Year Book*.

ABS wishes to determine:

- The precise role which the *Year Book* is presently filling in the general reference area
- Whether there are mechanisms by which others could perform the role in the area of non-statistical information which the Bureau and its predecessor statistical offices have played for more than a century
- What ABS material should be included in Year Books
- What ABS material should be in other publications
- What ABS material should be disseminated in other ways

Year Book Australia 1988 will follow the present general format and will be a special issue recognising Australia's bicentenary. Special issues aside, ABS will be aiming at smaller year books with greater emphasis on statistics. It will also be seeking to increase circulation and sales, particularly of the state year books.

LAA members wishing to contact ABS about the *Year Book* may forward information to: Mr I Castles, Australian Statistician, Australian Bureau of Statistics, PO Box 10, Bellconnen ACT 2617

Louise Lansley
Educational and Industrial Services Mgr

AUSTRALIAN TENDER WINS!

The news has just come through. SAZTEC has been awarded a major contract for computerising the British Library's General Catalogue.

The contract has been awarded to SAZTEC Europe Ltd, set up by Australia's Chris Dowd in 1985, and involves the conversion of 360 printed volumes containing around 8 million entries. When completed the machine readable catalogue will be one of the largest single bibliographic databases in the world.

Readers in the British Library reading rooms will have direct online access to all the records of the library's collections. This will be linked to an automated system for ordering up the books selected from the catalogue. Similarly remote users will be able to consult the catalogue through BLAISE-LINE, the Library's existing online information retrieval system.

Saztec Europe has also been given exclusive ten-year worldwide rights to publish the converted catalogue on CD-ROM or on other optical storage media. The British Library will receive royalties from the sales.

Some history

SAZTEC was formed in Sydney in 1973. The initial thrust of the company under Chris Dowd's direction was introducing the Australian market to cost-effective creation of large databases, i.e. the transfer of printed information into a form that can be read and processed by a computer.

SAZTEC soon became involved in associated computer products including hardware and was responsible for introducing the Australian market to IBM compatible communications equipment, optical character recognition, and the first Japanese Hitachi computer equipment.

SAZTEC's growth called for the incorporation of many SAZTEC companies, including SAZTEC Equipment, SAZTEC Software, SAZTEC Systems to name a few. As it developed, SAZTEC expanded further both in Australia and overseas, and there are currently SAZTEC offices in London, Scotland, the Philippines, and in five states of the United States.

A recent expansion was the formation of SAZTEC IRS, representing such databases as Pergamon-InfoLine; European Space Agency IRS, Decentralum, Fiz Technique, and the Official Airlines Guide.

SAZTEC has provided retrospective conversion services to Australian libraries since 1981 — a logical extension of its previous conversion services to business, industry and government.

SPECIAL LIBRARIES IN QLD: A DIRECTORY

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