

▶ ABN is still looked on as a basic catalogue for the nation's libraries and the 'distributed national collection'. It could become the foundation of a broad set of national bibliographic services available to libraries and their clientele including more effective and automatic access to locations and the journal literature. It would also develop a news and scholarly publishing function.

It is clear that mechanisms will eventually have to be set up to monitor what is accessible through these networks and the Internet and to control and order traffic that is already threatening to become chaotic in its volume and complexity. The need for directory services was seen as one of the forces contributing to a redefinition of the 'reference' function of the library. The library of the very near future will need to be able to do for mushrooming electronic information sources what traditionally it has done for paper-based,

conventionally printed sources.

The conference struggled with how to resolve the increasingly difficult tensions, between the need for new developments and meeting present basic library needs. Most libraries now face enormous pressures on their current staff collections and technological infrastructure from massive and escalating undergraduate use.

They also must respond to pressures to provide more effective information skills training especially involving computer literacy, electronic information storage and retrieval, and exploration of national and international networks. Under these difficult conditions in a climate of steadily reduced budgets, how are they to meet the present research needs for their institutions, participate in national initiatives currently underway to exploit the nation's library resources more effectively and prepare for an increasingly electronic future?

One of the most important issues raised in the conference was who speaks for university libraries at the national level and how could useful information and advice be made available to government and to the higher education community more generally. There were calls for more detailed consultants to build on existing coalitions. The need for systematically prepared position papers on the issues facing libraries was also recognised. There was a clear recognition that it was now urgent that academic libraries begin to find a consensus on their preferred futures and to map out more clearly they have in the past the options and strategies that had to be explored to realise these futures.

Papers from the seminar will be published as a special monograph issue of the journal, *Australian Academic and Research Libraries*. ■

AIMA to move to Canberra

Heads of Agreement signed by AIMA and NLA

THE AUSTRALIAN Information Management Association (AIMA) was formally established on 17 May 1985, with its founder Margaret Trask as its Executive Director. Based upon the American Organisation OMS, AIMA was formed to provide training in advanced management skills for librarians. Since then, AIMA has built up a distinguished record in all parts of Australia and in New Zealand, and has expanded its range of offerings to include such topics as strategic planning.

The AIMA Board agreed in 1991 to explore the possibilities of AIMA not only moving from its present site at the Macquarie University Library to the National Library of Australia (NLA) in Canberra, but also changing its management structure. On 2 June 1992, the Board considered the Heads of Agreement drafted jointly by AIMA and the NLA to provide for the transfer of AIMA to the NLA, and resolved to accept them. The Heads of Agreement were then signed by the president of AIMA, Marion Bate, and the Director-General of the NLA, Warren Horton, and will go to AIMA's AGM in September for ratification.

Under this agreement, AIMA will continue in very much its present form. This involves minimum change to the legal arrangements under which AIMA operates, and demonstrates confidence by both

parties in the basic structure of AIMA and its programs, to ensure continuity in the institutes and other courses



Margaret Trask

over the next 2-year planning period. Other familiar elements will also continue, such as the use of co-trainers and consultations with members and clients on future training needs.

A new management committee, chaired by the Director-General, will consist of two nominees of the Director-General and three nominees of the existing AIMA Board: the President Marian Bate, the Vice President Hans Groenewegen and the Treasurer Steve O'Connor. An appropriate advisory committee will facilitate consultation with members and clients.

Margaret Trask will move to

Canberra for a minimum of twelve months from about 13 July, to oversee the transition. The office will gradually be transferred between that date and the end of September. Until then, inquiries should be directed to AIMA at Macquarie.

At the Heads of Agreement ceremony, Marian Bate expressed her pleasure that the NLA was prepared to join in the further expansion and diversification of AIMA and to provide a new home for it. Warren Horton emphasised that NLA saw part of its role as holding AIMA in trust for the library community. He acknowledged the enormous part that Margaret Trask had played in developing the provision of continuing education for library managers in Australia and New Zealand. ■

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