

The 1991-1992 Library Placement Survey

Marion Nicolson presents Library Locums fourth annual analysis

SINCE 1988 Library Locums has compiled an annual analysis of all the library positions it has filled, both temporary and permanent. This information is a unique record of job opportunities, job movements, skills breakdown and salary data across a wide range of positions and library types in both the public and private sectors. The analysis reveals some interesting facts and trends about the library job market.

Major trend — part-time work

There are some significant trends apparent in the figures which suggest that changes predicted about the future make-up of the Australian workforce are already evident in the library job market.

In its 1990-1991 survey, Library Locums identified a significant increase in the number of permanent part-time positions — up from 3% in 1989-1990 to 28% in 1990-1991. This trend continued in 1991-1992 — 31% of permanent jobs and 41% of temporary jobs were part-time. Overall, part-time jobs accounted for around 40% of all Library Locums' placements.

Some analysts believe that part-timers will make up the workforce of the future. According to a study done for the Business Council of Australia called *Workforce 2000*, in the future there will be 2 main groups of workers: a stable workforce and a flexible workforce. The flexible workforce will be separate and dynamic, comprising casuals, part-timers, jobsharing, contracting and out-sourcing.

Major trend — demand for Experience

The other major finding of the *Workforce 2000* report is that companies will be looking to hire more specialised, experienced workers. Again this trend is apparent in the Library Locums' survey — 61% of all Library Locums' placements required qualified and experienced Librarians. Over 50% of jobs required Librarians with 2-5 years' experience. Qualified and experienced Library Technicians accounted for 19% of placements up 1% from last year.

Where the jobs are

The greatest number of library jobs occurred in the Finance sector which has been the leading sector for the last 3 surveys. The number of jobs in Legal libraries slumped at the end of 1991 but employment recovered in this sector to put it in second place by the end of the financial year. Engineering, Medical and Management libraries shared third spot for the number of job placements.

According to a recent report in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 'The New Workforce', the information industry

along with health, recreation, personal and community services are earmarked for greatest employment growth until the end of the century. This is a prediction which the Library Locums' statistics partially support. The total number of permanent and temporary jobs which Library Locums handled in the 1991-1992 Financial Year fell by about 12%. According to the National Association of Personnel Consultants, the recruitment industry averaged a drop of 60+% for this period with many agencies closing down completely or diversifying.

The following table is derived from Library Locums' recruitment and placement records and shows the salary trend for Qualified Librarians over the last 4 years. The figures are actual salaries offered and accepted on starting a job.

Salaries

	1991-1992	1990-1991	1989-1990	1988-1989
\$25,000-27,999	16%	22%	30%	56%
\$28,000-31,999	42%	28%	41%	21%
\$32,000-34,999	16%	14%	18%	16%
\$35,000-40,999	16%	22%	11%	7%
\$41,000+	11%	14%		

The good news is that there has been a steady decline in the number of Librarians receiving the lowest salary range over the last 4 years. The bulk of Librarians are paid in the range from \$28,000 to \$40,999 per annum. This broad salary range suggests, at least in the private sector, that there is wide variation in the market place for skilled Library staff.

A disturbing trend is the slip back to the \$28,000-\$31,999 range for a high percentage of Librarians and a drop in the number receiving \$41,000+. It looks as if the salary range for experienced Librarians has markedly plateaued in the past year.

Plateauing

Many librarians are concerned that their careers reach a plateau earlier than they would like. They are unable to rise to levels in which they feel competent; and few feel they have reached their professional limits. It is the reverse of the Peter Principle in which people rise to levels in which they are *in*competent. Promotions end simply because there's no place to move up. When people feel plateaued they often consider changing organisations or changing careers.

Conclusion

The Library job market is following national trends.

- Librarians have been less affected by unemployment in 1991-1992 than say manufacturing, construction,



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- ▶ retailing and property services.
- A strong increase in the number of part-time jobs.
- Overwhelming demand for more specialised, experienced workers.
- The reliance on a 'second flexible workforce' comprising casuals, part-timers, jobsharing, contracting and out-sourcing.

- A plateauing of average annual earnings and promotions. In its report *Australia's Workforce in the Year 2000* (see inCite 5! Ed.), the Department of Education, Employment and Training predicted that Librarians will be one of the fastest growing occupations. Present job market figures and trends suggest that

skilled, experienced and flexible workers will be the ones most in demand.

Library Locums gathered additional information about salaries, skills analysis and recruitment procedures. Call Marion Nicolson on (02) 699 1855 and she'll be glad to answer your questions. ■

AGPS goes for GOLD

THE AUSTRALIAN Government Publishing Service is going for GOLD with the launch on 22 September of its powerful, easy-to-use Government On-Line Directories (GOLD) service.

GOLD provides up-to-the-minute access to complete information on all Commonwealth government organisations and personnel, from a standard computer terminal. Instead of manually searching through indexes and pages, this electronic version of the Commonwealth Government Directory does the searching electronically, finding instantly exactly what users need.

Using the GOLD system, specific staff can be found by job title, personnel function, location details, postal addresses and any communications information including electronic mailing addresses. It even provides details of freecall numbers.

GOLD provides a hierarchical structure of personnel, has a wildcard facility to help users who are unsure of specific details, and will even search phonetically, so users can be sure they have the right person for a particular job every time they contact a Federal organisation. They will also know who to approach should they need further assistance, beyond the authority of the staff member first reached.

The GOLD database is updated as the changes within an organisation are made, so the information is always current, always reliable, and always available.

This new system, recently developed in Australia by Telecom experts, uses the very latest in directory technology, benefiting from the X.500 international directory standards released late in 1991. It will help make government services and skills available to the widest range of customers. ■

SLV budget announced

AVICTORIAN MINISTRY for the Arts news release of 12 August provides some details about the State Library of Victoria budget for the coming year:

Out of a total arts budget of \$105.9 million, almost half will be spent by three bodies, the Museum of Victoria (\$21.3 million, of which \$10.4 million is for the operational budget and the balance for construction work), the State Library of Victoria (SLV — \$16.6 million) and the National Gallery of Victoria (\$9.8 million).

Out of SLV's \$16.6 million, \$11.5 million is for the recurrent operations of the State Library. This includes staffing and operational costs of the two new infill buildings in Russell Street and the upgrading of security services at the Swanston Street complex.

An amount of \$4.1 million has been allocated for the continuation of the State Library Re-development project, including \$2 million for the completion of Stage 1 (Russell Street infill buildings), and \$2.1 to enable construction to commence on Stage 2 (Latrobe Library and foyer renovations).

A further \$760 000 has been provided to enable continued improvement to the collection and service delivery, including bar coding and security tagging of the collection and remedial conservation work. An amount of \$300,000 has also been provided to meet EDP leasing costs and overheads.

In addition, \$1.5 million has been allocated to the Museum and Library for ongoing maintenance and refurbishment of the shared Swanston Street site. ■

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