

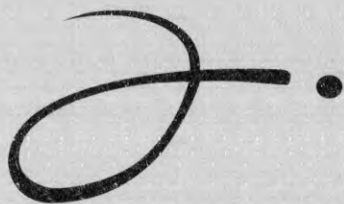
Online day for older people

7 September 1999

A project of the
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Something fishy

Denis Abbott, CSIRO Marine Research Library

The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), established in 1926, is a national organisation which conducts research in agriculture, environment and natural resources, manufacturing technology, minerals and energy, building construction and information technology. CSIRO has a staff of more than 7000, including 3000 scientists working in laboratories and field stations around Australia.

The Marine Laboratories Library serves CSIRO Marine Research, a division formed in February 1997 by the merger of the Divisions of Fisheries and Oceanography. The Division of Fisheries was one of the oldest in CSIRO, having been established in 1938.

CSIRO Marine Research has its headquarters in Hobart (where there are 270 staff) and it has regional laboratories in Brisbane and in Perth. CSIRO owns the seventy-metre fisheries research vessel *Southern Surveyor* and operates the oceanographic research vessel *Franklin* as a national facility. Like many marine science institutions, the Marine Laboratories has an attractive location, on the harbour looking out over the River Derwent.

The library is well-placed in the laboratory complex. The library room is 384m² with natural lighting on both sides for twenty-four metres overlooking the harbour on one side, and Princes Park on the other. A librarian's office, staff work area, photocopier room and entrance area add another 60m².

The collection includes over 10 000 books; 1000 current serial titles; 400 videos (mainly recordings of weekly seminars); 900 nautical charts and maps; and 850 metres of serial backruns.

The serials collection has titles which are unique, or little held, holdings for Australia. Many of these, plus the foreign language titles and most of the report literature, have been acquired through exchange. Although

CSIRO has ceased the exchange of its scientific journals, the library receives most of the report literature through exchanges. Access to the report literature is enhanced with a short-entry database using InMagic which, since 1985, has accumulated over 10 000 records. The library is widely-regarded as Australia's foremost collection for fisheries and oceanographic research.

Being a member of the CSIRO library network of forty-one libraries (counting branches) has some advantages. The network has a union catalogue based on the Voyager library system. The network satisfies sixty per cent of our interlibrary loan requests, and journals are circulated from other libraries.

Since 1995, CSIRO has provided desktop access for all staff to the latest two years of Current Contents using Structured Information Manager. In 1998, CSIRO took out a licence to the last five years of *Web of Science* (Science Citation Index on the Web) and, after a trial during 1998, has taken out a licence for web access to all the Cambridge Scientific Abstracts databases. For CSIRO Marine Research, the Cambridge access is vital as it includes the main marine science databases: Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Abstracts and Oceanic Abstracts. To these CSIRO-wide services Marine Research has added site licences, for the headquarters in Hobart, to two NISC Biblioline databases: Marine, Oceanographic and Freshwater Resources, and Fish and Fisheries Worldwide.

The two branches in Perth and Brisbane are served from the main library in Hobart, with part-time library assistant or secretarial staffing on site. The Marine Laboratories library is staffed by a librarian, deputy librarian and a shared library officer position. The challenge we see at present is to perform an active teaching role with the scientists in their use of desktop access to databases, effective use of the web and electronic journals. ■