

Policy statements

The Board of Directors is currently reviewing all ALIA policy statements to ensure that these reflect and promote the Association's Objects. A new format for policy statements has been adopted and all policy statements will now be formulated in this new format. In undertaking the review the Board of Directors has considered the statements that are seminal to the Association, *Statement on Freedom to Read*, *Statement on Free Library Services to All* and *Statement on Professional Ethics*. It is proposed that these three foundation statements be reformulated into two statements, *Statement on Professional Conduct* and *Statement on Free Access to Information*, which combines the Statements on Freedom to read and Free library services to all.

Drafts of the two proposed statements have been developed in the new format and are included in this of *inCite* to enable members and ALIA groups to comment. The Board will discuss comments on the draft statements at its October meeting. Comments on the statements may be forwarded to reach Marie Murphy in ALIA National Office by 30 September 2001. The draft statements, along with a feedback form are available on ALIANet at <http://www.alia.org.au/incite/09/policies.html>.

Draft revision of the ALIA Statement on Professional Conduct

Short title: Statement on professional conduct
[change of title to reflect actions rather than beliefs]

Objects

- To promote the free flow of information and ideas in the interests of all Australians and a thriving culture and democracy
- To ensure the high standard of personnel engaged in information provision and foster their professional interests and aspirations

Principle

People engaged in library and information services are members of a profession committed to intellectual freedom and the free flow of ideas and information.

Statement

Because of the role of library and information services in fostering the social, cultural and economic well being of their communities the people who work in those services have responsibilities for creating and providing access to information for the clients of their services. The interactions between library and information services and their clients should be guided by the highest standards of service quality and characterised by the highest levels of integrity. Library and information service professionals should observe these standards by:

- encouraging intellectual freedom and the free flow of information and ideas;
- exercising their responsibilities within the context of duty of care for the clients of the library and information services they offer;
- recognising and respecting the intellectual property of others [from Point 3 in existing Statement]
- protecting their clients' rights to privacy and confidentiality [from Point 4 in existing Statement]
- distinguishing in their actions and statements between their personal viewpoints and those of the library and information service that employs them or the Australian Library and Information Association;
- maintaining and enhancing their professional knowledge and expertise, encouraging the professional development of their colleagues and fostering the aspirations of potential library and information service professionals;
- avoiding situations in which personal interests might be, or be seen to be, in conflict with the interests of clients of library and information services, colleagues or employers.

Draft revision of Statements on Freedom To Read and Free Access to Information

[One statement proposed as an alternative to 1 And 2 As separate statements]

Short title: Statement on free access to information

Object

To promote the free flow of information and ideas in the interests of all Australians and a thriving culture and democracy.

Principle

Freedom can be protected in a democratic society only if its citizens have unrestricted access to information and ideas.

Statement

There are several different levels at which the free flow of ideas can be impeded. At the societal level legislative bodies of all kinds are expected to consider the legislative and regulatory frameworks they put in place to support the free flow of information and ideas about the interests and concerns of citizens. At the institutional level library and information services are expected to encourage the free flow of information and ideas within the scope of their roles and responsibilities. At the individual level citizens are expected to make informed decisions in exercising their rights and responsibilities.

The Australian Library and Information Association believes that library and information services have particular responsibilities in supporting and sustaining the free flow of information and ideas including:

- asserting the equal and equitable rights of citizens to information regardless of age, race, gender, religion, disability, cultural identity, language, socioeconomic status, lifestyle choice, political allegiance or social viewpoint;
- adopting an inclusive approach in developing and implementing policies regarding access to information and ideas that are relevant to the library and information service concerned, irrespective of the controversial nature of the information or ideas;
- ensuring that their clients have access to information from a variety of sources and agencies to meet their needs and that a citizen's information needs are met independently of an ability to pay;
- catering for interest in contemporary issues without promoting or suppressing particular beliefs and ideas;
- protecting the confidential relationships that exist between the library and information service and its clients;

- ▶ resisting attempts by individuals or groups within their communities to restrict access to information and ideas while at the same time recognising that powers of censorship are legally vested in state and federal governments;
- observing laws and regulations governing access to information and ideas but working towards the amendment of those laws and regulations which inhibit library and information services in meeting the obligations and responsibilities outlined in this Statement.

Related documents

Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights <http://www.un.org./Overview/rights.html>.

Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights http://www.unhcr.ch/refworld/refworld/legal/instrume/detent/civpot_e.htm

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions Statement on Libraries an Intellectual Freedom <http://www.faife.dk>. ■

Farewell to Alf Gans

Alfred Gans, managing director of RoweCom Australia, retired in July after many years in the serials subscription industry.

Alf was an accountant for twenty-seven years before he took over the family owned company of ISA in 1979. ISA was established in Brisbane by his father in the mid-1950s, and under Alf's outstanding leadership and development, RoweCom has become an innovative, client-focused, friendly and effective

organisation. During his time as managing director of both companies, no-one has made a greater contribution to Australia's libraries than Alf Gans.

In his support for libraries and the library profession, Alf has provided generous company sponsorship and participation at conferences, seminars and workshops. A founding member of ASSIG (the Australian Serials Special Interest Group) in 1987, Alf has since held the position of treasurer on the ASSIG

committee. In recognition of Alf's consistent and considerable contribution to the library profession the ALIA Board of Directors recently conferred on Alf the Redmond Barry Award — an award well-deserved well received. On behalf of the profession and ASSIG in particular, I thank Alf for his outstanding contribution to the library industry and wish him a long, rewarding and relaxing retirement.

Jenni Jeremy, convenor, ASSIG

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