

Directline

ALIA Public Library Summit

The ALIA Board of Directors decided to postpone the ALIA Public Libraries Summit with a number of key invitees having to reluctantly decline the invitation to attend in March due to competing priorities, including the Queensland Election and Victorian bushfires. A new date in July 2009 will be finalised soon with Senator Ursula Stephens' office. The Ambassador program is in full swing with further resources to assist libraries to get their program underway. We encourage public libraries to continue to develop and confirm local ambassadors around the country. Please continue to visit the Summit website and blog for more updates: <http://www.alia.org.au/summit09>

Annual Report

Included in this edition of *inCite* is also the Annual Report for 2008. In early 2008, ALIA undertook a refurbishment of the National Offices in Deakin, Canberra. This had become an essential expense to meet OH&S and accommodation requirements.

Also in 2008, the Association undertook a long awaited and overdue upgrade to the CRM system in order to be able to continue delivery and ultimately significantly improve services to members. As with all implementations, there have been teething problems continuing into 2009 to get all modules of the system interacting.

These major expenses were planned during 2007 and budgeted at that time within the longer term financial plan for the Association, but did not allow for the global downturn (the Global Financial Crisis). The loss experienced by ALIA through the 2008 financial year (Jan-Dec) is primarily due to contraction in investments, a direct result of the worldwide economic downturn and drop in share market value. This contraction in value is for ALIA (as it is for every Australian with shares in their superannuation portfolio and Australian business) is an issue which will be managed by the Association. The Association is in receipt of ongoing professional advice on the management of its investments and expects this situation to improve as the global downturn slows and steadies.

While it is disappointing to see a slight drop in membership numbers this year, this is a worldwide trend also. Trends in professional association membership are showing similar decline with retention of membership as professionals adapt their networking, education, and communication needs. Professional associations as well as clubs and service groups generally are planning for the need to meet retention challenges in the region of 10–15% reductions on average per year, both in Australia and overseas. Professional associations are redesigning their services with a strong focus on core business, which includes education, advocacy, and maintenance of standards of practice. ALIA has recognised this challenge and is already well along the path to servicing these new and adapting expectations. The recent personal member survey shows the

majority of members are employed full time and are members of the Association because of the professional recognition and professional development opportunities it provides. The survey points to a continued focus on course recognition, professional development and professional recognition: these are all major priorities in ALIA's strategic planning. The Association plans to undertake a major member recruitment/retention campaign in the run up to IFLA in 2010.

On the positive, it was a great year of achievements – recognition of our volunteers, focus on workforce and education issues, continuing efforts in lobbying and advocacy, and a sustained member focus.

Your continued support is needed throughout 2009 and during times of economic trials. As one famous quote says "libraries will get you through times of no money better than money will get you through times of no libraries." It is the same for the Library Association that represents you and provides a wide range of vehicles for professional development, and coordinates on behalf of ALL Australian library associations and organisations – initiatives that include, but are not limited to, course recognition, the inter-library lending scheme, conferences, academic publications, advocacy, public promotional campaigns, industrial relations, copyright, and networking through active groups and e-lists.

May Day



May Day is the 1st May. It is a day to remind us that disasters can happen at any time. This year, with the Victorian Bushfires and Queensland Floods, it is even more relevant and important to be disaster aware. Here are just three small things you can do on May Day to raise awareness and keep safe:

1. Take a look at your disaster plan and make sure it's up to date (or make a timeline for developing one).
2. Identify the three biggest risks to your collection and library site.
3. Conduct a building evacuation drill and evaluate the results.

For more information and ideas take a look at <http://www.alia.org.au/mayday>

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