



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

# Official Committee Hansard

## SENATE

ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNICATIONS, INFORMATION  
TECHNOLOGY AND THE ARTS REFERENCES COMMITTEE

**Reference: Role of libraries in the online environment**

TUESDAY, 22 APRIL 2003

BALLARAT

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**SENATE**  
**ENVIRONMENT, COMMUNICATIONS, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**  
**AND THE ARTS REFERENCES COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday, 22 April 2003**

**Members:** Senator Cherry (*Chair*), Senator Tierney (*Deputy Chair*), Senators Lundy, Mackay, Tchen and Wong

**Substitute members:** Senator Moore for Senator Wong

**Participating members:** Senators Abetz, Allison, Bolkus, Boswell, Brown, Buckland, George Campbell, Carr, Chapman, Conroy, Coonan, Eggleston, Chris Evans, Faulkner, Ferguson, Ferris, Greig, Harradine, Harris, Knowles, Lees, Mason, McGauran, Moore, Murphy, Nettle, Payne and Watson

**Senators in attendance:** Senators Cherry, Lundy, Moore, Tchen and Tierney

**Terms of reference for the inquiry:**

To inquire into and report on:

The role of libraries as providers of public information in the online environment, having particular regard to:

- (a) the current community patterns of demand for public information services throughout libraries, including the provision of such information online;
- (b) the response by libraries (public, university, research) to the changing information needs of Australians, including through the provision of online resources;
- (c) possible strategies which would enhance the wider use and distribution of information resources held by libraries, including the establishment of library networks, improved online access in libraries, online libraries, and greater public knowledge and skill in using library resources;
- (d) the use of libraries to deliver information and services over the Internet to more effectively meet community demands for public information in the online environment; and
- (e) the roles of various levels of government, the corporate sector and libraries themselves in ensuring the most effective use of libraries as primary public information resource in the online environment.

**WITNESSES**

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**Committee met at 2.24 p.m.****RAE, Ms Julie Adele, Chief Executive Officer, Central Highlands Regional Library Corporation**

**CHAIR**—I declare open this public hearing of the Senate Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts References Committee and welcome Ms Rae here today. As I stated first thing this morning, we are pleased to be here in Ballarat as it will give us an opportunity to hear first-hand the experiences of people living in the region in relation to the role of libraries in the online environment. I welcome our first witness, Ms Julie Rae, Chief Executive Officer of the Central Highlands Regional Library Corporation. Thanks for giving us your time today. It is very much appreciated. The committee has your submission before it, which it has already published. Would you like to make any alterations or corrections to that written submission?

**Ms Rae**—No, thank you.

**CHAIR**—The committee prefers all evidence to be given in public, but should you at any stage wish to give your evidence, part of your evidence or answers to any specific questions in private, you may ask to do so, and we will consider that request. You are reminded that the evidence given to the committee is protected by parliamentary privilege. We also inform you that the giving of false or misleading evidence to the committee may constitute a contempt of the Senate. I now invite you to make an opening statement before we move to questions.

**Ms Rae**—I was not really sure what to talk about. I suppose I am just reinforcing what is already in the submission. In public libraries—especially in my environment—troubleshooting, redundancy of equipment, security, download costs, booking systems and fair access for people make it very difficult to provide Internet services, let alone provide what, on the other hand, are a lot of great benefits from the Internet especially in our being able to provide enhanced information services to members of the community.

**Senator MOORE**—In your submission you go through the issues that you are facing as a public provider. At the end, you state, ‘State and federal governments should provide leadership and support to local communities in further developing library services.’ What do you mean by that? What form of leadership should the levels of government provide?

**Ms Rae**—We do not have a national library policy on public libraries; it is run by the state and local governments. It is actually down to the local government to do this. So, therefore, we have a very inequitable system. There are huge differences between the types of services provided, depending on how much money that you get, so maybe we should be looking at a national information policy that public libraries should be able to come under for that. The other thing is that in the United States, public libraries get heavily discounted access to the Internet and download costs, whereas we do not get that; we pay the same as anybody else pays. So why could we not look at some system where libraries in general, regardless of whether they are public or not, get cheaper access to the Internet?

**Senator MOORE**—It was clear all the way through your submission that the biggest issue as far as access to the PCs was the lack of PCs—that came through a few times. You mentioned the word ‘security’. Have you had much loss or damage to your equipment?

**Ms Rae**—No, but as you would know, a PC can have 100,000 things go wrong with it, which makes it very difficult to actually troubleshoot. People do like to change settings in computers, so we have to make sure that we can lock down as much as we possibly can. We have to be careful about viruses coming onto our network so that makes it difficult for people to download to A drives and those sorts of aspects. We do not allow anyone to bring their own disk in because we do not have excellent resources for checking them for viruses because we do not have the money. The corporation is run by a board, and that board is realising that we need to put more money in to update our equipment and to provide things like security. But the biggest issue I would say is the bookings—

**Senator MOORE**—I saw that.

**Ms Rae**—Seventy per cent of staff time is spent on booking people into them. With the privacy legislation now, you really should not allow them to book themselves in unless you have some form of code for that person, which we are looking at. Then there is the policing issue as well—making sure that people are off after their hour of use and the next person can get access to that.

**Senator MOORE**—And there is the issue of conflict between users.

**Ms Rae**—Yes.

**Senator MOORE**—In discussions we had with people on this issue in Canberra, we talked about people with English as a second language or learning English accessing this form of library service. Is that something your system has been coping with?

**Ms Rae**—We have less than one per cent of people who speak another language other than English, and it is not an issue that we have found. Our biggest issue would be accessibility for disabled people.

**Senator MOORE**—In and out of the system or people with disabilities using the system?

**Ms Rae**—Large screens—adaptive technology.

**Senator TCHEN**—Ms Rae, you seem to have done some monitoring of the users of PCs in public libraries through your system. Could you provide us with further information? You said in your submission that during the 2001-02 financial year 660,000 people visited your branch libraries of whom nearly 15,500 people accessed your public PCs. Do you have public access PCs in all your libraries?

**Ms Rae**—In the 12 branches, yes. The majority have only one PC.

**Senator TCHEN**—In percentage terms, it is not a large number; just over two per cent of people actually use the PCs. Do you monitor how much time they spend on them? Some of the people who come into the library just walk in and walk out, I guess—they pick up a book and they go—whereas the PC user will actually come in and camp themselves for the duration.

**Ms Rae**—Most bookings are for an hour, unless someone else is not waiting for it and then they can continue. So we would say an average of an hour a week.

**Senator TCHEN**—I am just wondering whether you can throw some light on time spent in the library versus—

**Ms Rae**—No. Because we have people who come in and sit down and read the newspapers all day. I would have to do some serious investigation on that.

**Senator TCHEN**—Just over 15,000 people use your PCs and you have 31 access points. Does it overload your system? You talk about booking problems as well. Does that mean that you have long queues to use them?

**Ms Rae**—It depends where you are. In some of our branches we have one PC available for access. In other branches, we share with a Networking the Nation community enterprise centre, so there is a large range of PCs there and they are being charged for. We have one free PC. All of ours are free. The biggest issue would probably be at our Ballarat and Wendouree Village branches, because they have a higher population and fewer PCs.

**Senator TCHEN**—You have calculated that your average population per PC is just under 3,500. Is that a satisfactory service level or could you use more?

**Ms Rae**—It is an average that pretty well the state is maintaining. Whether it is satisfactory, it is hard to understand. We recently did a survey where we found that 64 per cent of our population have access to the Internet at home. I do not see the need for us to increase the number of PCs we have in our branches because of that. We also did a turn away survey of how many people we have turned away because there was not a booking available, and it is very minimal.

**Senator TCHEN**—That is useful to know. You also say that you responded to 69,000 questions. They were not questions about the Internet; they were just questions generally?

**Ms Rae**—They were general reference questions which we would use the Internet to answer. Without the Internet, we would find it very difficult to provide speedy, accurate, reliable answers.

**Senator TCHEN**—I am sure this is a question of interest to you. Unless some radical funding reforms are implemented, do you think you will be able to continue to provide free Internet access? You talk about funding aspects in all this.

**Ms Rae**—It is a state government requirement that we do provide free Internet access.

**Senator TCHEN**—Does the state government fund you?

**Ms Rae**—They funded the start up of it, and then again the cost shifting means that we take that on board so the local government now has to pay for that. That is why we would not increase the PCs unless we could do it on a cost recovery basis. I do not see that we could actually ever charge for it. We would not receive our state government subsidy otherwise.

**Senator TCHEN**—Ms Rae, if you had your druthers, how would you fund your service to provide free public access?

**Ms Rae**—So if I was in control, how would I fund it?

**Senator TCHEN**—What is the best model to fund public access to the Internet?

**Ms Rae**—I am happy that it is free. I have no problems with it being free because it goes along—

**Senator TCHEN**—But somebody has to pay for it. Who should pay for it?

**Ms Rae**—I think there should be a more equitable split between the state government subsidy and the local government subsidy, because part of this is about reciprocal rights. Anybody can come into any library and use it, and anyone can join any library in Victoria. We are looking at federal funding levels. That may not necessarily be funding in terms of our recurrent expenditure, but an area such as IT could perhaps be something that could be done federally. We could collectively purchase PCs—the libraries throughout Australia could do this—and we could all be on the same ISP plan or whatever.

**Senator TCHEN**—In some of the earlier hearings, some witnesses suggested that a better way of funding free Internet access would be for the federal government to bypass state governments and fund the libraries directly. What do you think of that?

**Ms Rae**—If you are going to give us more money, I think it is great. It would all depend.

**Senator TCHEN**—How would it sit with your management organisation?

**Ms Rae**—They would be fine. Again, they would be quite happy about whoever did the funding. What our board and most councillors feel very annoyed about is that the state government, or whoever funds us, puts a whole lot of conditions onto that funding. The difficulty is that we get funded for one-off grants but it is then up to us to continue those. Costs for Internet access, such as broadband et cetera, are coming down but the costs for downloads and those sorts of things are going up. It is far better for me, with our library service, for people to access the information we have via their home PCs, because they pay for the downloads, not us. But, with the introduction of free Internet PCs, it is now a core service that public libraries offer; it is very much expected.

**Senator TCHEN**—Should downloading be part of this free access, because access means you can get copies of the information?

**Ms Rae**—Downloading is onto the screen—when it comes back into the PC.

**Senator TCHEN**—Okay. On page 6 of your submission you refer to the importance of cooperation between libraries and between libraries and other agencies. What other agencies are you referring to?

**Ms Rae**—Networking the Nation funds were used to provide community enterprise centres throughout western Victoria in a regional connectivity project. I have only been in this role for 12 months but it was very clear why we were not tied in with libraries. Why wasn't it looked at—that these Internet PCs would be provided in libraries? These places have incredible IT infrastructure that has been funded, and we could have benefited from it. Also they could have

benefited from our being there because we are information providers and we can help people provide information and those sorts of things. There could be mutual benefits from things such as that. Instead of having a branch of the public library here and an Internet café or something like that down the road, why aren't we combining and working together more? That is what I was thinking about.

**Senator TCHEN**—What are the barriers that exist to stop them from combining?

**Ms Rae**—Ego.

**Senator TCHEN**—There is not much you can do about that.

**Ms Rae**—It is plain and simple. I have two branches that are combining with visitor information centres and a lot of other resources. It is hard at times, because you have to set up special rules of management to ensure that everybody is happy and everybody's priorities are met, but it can be done. It basically boils down to ego.

**Senator TCHEN**—Quite a lot of smaller communities have things such as rural transaction centres, and they have Internet points. In your experience, have you had any cooperation with those outlets?

**Ms Rae**—We are only just starting to look at one of those rural transaction centres in Clunes. We want to cooperate and put that with the library, as well.

**Senator TCHEN**—I am pleased to hear that there is no legislative or organisational barrier to this!

**Ms Rae**—I do not think so. I think it is the will more than anything else.

**Senator TCHEN**—In that case, that cannot be done.

**CHAIR**—I will come back to the issue of cooperation between libraries, which Senator Tchen spoke about. Is getting cooperation between libraries an ego problem as well, particularly with respect to issues like your suggestion of a national search database?

**Ms Rae**—Traditionally, libraries have very good cooperation. Victoria's public libraries have been working together for a long time; even if the local governments have not been working together in that sense, the libraries have been. At the moment we are looking at a proposal for a state wide library management system where we share the one system. That has created a few problems with library managers, who say, 'We want to choose our system.' It is a very big ego thing. But half of us are now saying, 'We don't care.' As long as it works and as long as it does what we want it to do then we are happy. If I do not have to manage it, that is great. I think it is moving more towards that. I am very much of the mind that we should be using our skills to develop a sort of librarians' Google.

**CHAIR**—That is a great idea.

**Ms Rae**—You would have the one search engine to a whole range of authoritative databases. You would get not 200,000 hits back to Fred Smith's favourite—as, just because he is into this

subject, he has his own little web page up there—but authoritative information. I think we should be working together towards that, and slowly we are. In Victoria, we have a state wide consortium of online information databases, which we could not afford individually but can collectively. I have mentioned that in my submission as Gulliver. That has now extended to New Zealand, and the Canberra public library service is in that as well.

**CHAIR**—Do you think the Gulliver model would be a national model?

**Ms Rae**—It could be, yes.

**CHAIR**—That is that authoritative database you are talking about?

**Ms Rae**—Yes, that is right.

**CHAIR**—It is proving exceptionally popular in its first year, isn't it?

**Ms Rae**—Yes. It is now into its second year, and its third year is coming up. One library service in Victoria placed it on their web site so that people could access it from home or work, and their statistics doubled in that month. That means that people are accessing these databases and that it was not just staff use.

**Senator TIERNEY**—I wanted to turn to some of the earlier points you made in terms of free Internet access at libraries. You mentioned that people come in and use email and those sorts of things. Obviously, as the country becomes more e-literate, that is going to expand fairly rapidly seeing that not everyone is going to have a computer at home. What do you think the long-term position is for funding that sort of service so that it is viable in the long term?

**Ms Rae**—What do I think it should be?

**Senator TIERNEY**—Yes.

**Ms Rae**—As I said before, if we could have assistance from the federal government with pressure on Telstra or whoever to say that public libraries should get discounted access to the Internet—or to telecommunication lines, anyway—that could assist in funding. I do not think I would really know the answer to that. I suppose you would have to look at what the level of service is and why we are providing this service. We are providing it for our communities, and you could argue that it is a community issue and that therefore local government, as local government are responsible for libraries, should be paying for it. However, it comes back to the issue that if we had a national information policy—if we had those sorts of things—then it could be rightly funded by the federal government. I think the state government should be contributing to it because they were the ones who made this happen in the first place. I think we might have got there eventually, but we would not have done so as fast. I cannot really answer your question, I am sorry.

**Senator TIERNEY**—In the current situation with that free service, what is the balance in the funding for it from local to state government? Do the state government provide you with any sort of subsidy for doing that?

**Ms Rae**—They provide us with a subsidy based on a flat amount per council and an amount per capita. Across the state it is roughly 80-20; 80 from local government, 20 per cent from state government. In my case, I have six municipalities under the corporation, and we receive roughly 40 per cent from state government and 60 per cent from local government.

**Senator TIERNEY**—So why does it vary?

**Ms Rae**—Because our local government municipalities have not put in as much per capita as other municipalities have. It is a historical fact that we hopefully are changing right this minute.

**Senator TIERNEY**—And the state governments are happy to pick up the gap?

**Ms Rae**—They do not pick up the gap; they just say, ‘We’re going to give you this,’ and the local government picks up the gap. The reason that they give us the money is for reciprocal membership. Anyone in Victoria can walk into any library service, join, borrow and use the services. There are some areas of isolation, languages other than English and those sorts of things.

**Senator TIERNEY**—What has been the trend in state government funding in this area?

**Ms Rae**—It is going backwards.

**Senator TIERNEY**—Even though we have moved into the information age, they have increasingly said, ‘This is more a local government function’?

**Ms Rae**—Yes. It is very much a cost shifting process, but they would argue that this is also from the federal government as well.

**Senator TIERNEY**—Not in this area, because it is a state-local matter. You have formed this consortium. You have said there are always problems with the personalities in it, and yet you have managed to bring together this very large area. Are there any other parts of Victoria that do a similar thing or are you the only ones?

**Ms Rae**—This is all of Victoria’s public libraries—44 of us.

**Senator TIERNEY**—I thought you were talking about the Central Highlands Regional Library Corporation.

**Ms Rae**—We are a regional library corporation under—

**Senator TIERNEY**—I am asking whether there are other regional—

**Ms Rae**—There are 16 regions throughout Victoria.

**Senator TIERNEY**—Does that cover the whole state as it is set up?

**Ms Rae**—No, there are 44 library services. Sixteen of those are regional library corporations covering more than one municipality.

**Senator TIERNEY**—So why do other areas not have similar arrangements, as you say? You are going to say ‘personalities’, aren’t you?

**Ms Rae**—Yes. There are good things and bad things for a regional library corporation. I provide a service for six municipalities, so we are seen as being outsourced, even though we are incorporated under the Local Government Act. So they see the library at arm’s length, whereas if it is in council, the services they provide are in their face. However, we have a lot more autonomy to do what we want as a corporation.

**Senator TIERNEY**—Where are the economies in the operation?

**Ms Rae**—There are huge economies of scale. We have a population of 156,000 that I cover. The six municipalities range from the smallest municipality of a population of 6,000 to the largest, which has a population of 85,000. So if the municipality of 6,000 wanted to run their own library service, it would cost them probably three times as much to do it themselves to the level that they are doing it at the moment.

**Senator TIERNEY**—That is very interesting. I now turn to national aspects. In regional libraries, there are the most wonderful and massive databases available nationally through all sorts of sources—the National Gallery, the National Library and other cultural organisations. Can you describe for us your access to those sorts of sources, and what might be the blocks in the system currently because you cannot get access to what you might want to get access to?

**Ms Rae**—We do get access to the National Library database, especially in terms of being able to track interlibrary loans, and also to locate material in other libraries for the National Library database. The only issue was the speed of access. The speed of it was rather slow, but since we have gone to broadband that has not been a problem as much. We pay an annual fee to be able to use that database, so they are, in a sense, like a vendor providing us with a service. Therefore, with places like the National Gallery, we would have to seek their approval to access that.

**Senator TIERNEY**—What do you mean you would have to seek their approval to access it?

**Ms Rae**—If they were allowing us to access their online database, it could be that we would access it like an ordinary citizen would access it or if they allowed us to go in and do other things within that database and take records or whatever, we would have to seek approval for that.

**Senator TIERNEY**—I am not quite understanding why that is the case, given that it is a national cultural institution.

**Ms Rae**—Because it is theirs; they own it.

**Senator TIERNEY**—Can you explain why they are putting restrictions on it?

**Ms Rae**—I am not sure they are putting restrictions on it, because we have never ever sought to have any access to it. But if you take the National Library’s database, they are seeking to recover their costs of running a national database; therefore, we have an agreement with them to pay a certain amount a year, as long as we use a certain amount.

**Senator TIERNEY**—So that does not apply to the National Gallery or the National Archives?

**Ms Rae**—No. Because we do not tend to use them—they have not been a high priority for public libraries. But I dare say it would apply to the National Archives if we used them.

**Senator TIERNEY**—I am curious that the National Gallery is not accessed very much; there is not much demand for it.

**Ms Rae**—I am not 100 per cent sure.

**Senator TIERNEY**—One of the things we are quite interested in is digitalisation. Often there are picture forms that are difficult to download if you do not have the speed, but you do not seem to have that problem here. Now you have got the links that will do it, you seem to be saying at the source there are—

**Ms Rae**—We do access Picture Australia.

**Senator TIERNEY**—But that comes in through the National Library.

**Ms Rae**—Yes. I am also running one in Victoria, which we call Picture Victoria, where we will be doing a digitalisation process of local history—photographs.

**Senator TIERNEY**—If I walked into one of your branch libraries and I wanted to access something online, could you draw me a picture of what I would find there? How many terminals are there?

**Ms Rae**—If you came to the Ballarat branch and you wanted to do it yourself, you would have access to six PCs, which would all be full—you would have to wait until there was a vacancy; which there might be right at that moment or there may not be. The staff could do it for you if you would like.

**Senator TIERNEY**—So if you had unlimited resources, how many terminals do you think you would need in the Ballarat Library? You have six. How many do you think would satisfy current demand?

**Ms Rae**—As I said before, we have recorded turnaways—how many people we have turned away—and it has been very minimal. Also, 64 per cent of our population have the Internet at home. I probably would have no more than 10 and, because of lack of funding, I am not putting any extra in.

**Senator TIERNEY**—So if I went out to a smaller town within your network, what would I find there?

**Ms Rae**—Let us say you went to Bacchus Marsh, which you would have come through on your way to Ballarat this morning—

**Senator TIERNEY**—We flew, so we possibly went over the top.

**Ms Rae**—Why did I not just assume that? If you walked in there, there would be two PCs available for you, depending on whether the library was open—it is closed some lunchtimes. Therefore, you would probably have access to a PC there without a problem. It is very underused. However, if you went further to Ararat, which is an hour's drive west of here, you would have access to four PCs and you would probably have to book for those before you got there.

**Senator TIERNEY**—Why is Ararat doing so well in this area?

**Ms Rae**—Why does it have more PCs?

**Senator TIERNEY**—And more people—both supply and demand seem to be up.

**Ms Rae**—We have just got a new library there, so it is in really high demand.

**Senator TIERNEY**—You mentioned the Gulliver consortium, and you are saying this is a model. I take it that in Australia it is only in Victoria at this stage—curiously, it is in New Zealand as well.

**Ms Rae**—They have joined us and so has Canberra.

**Senator TIERNEY**—The ACT has joined you.

**Ms Rae**—Their public libraries.

**Senator TIERNEY**—Are other states showing interest in doing it?

**Ms Rae**—South Australian TAFE colleges are taking a big interest. I have had discussions with New South Wales; they want to do it their way. Queensland has already started; they want to do it their way. I have not actively sought these people. I run this consortium, but I have not sought them.

**Senator TIERNEY**—They are doing Gulliver type things. They are doing it a different way with different technologies or platforms?

**Ms Rae**—No, it is down to the same databases.

**Senator TIERNEY**—They just do not want to cooperate with Victoria; is that it?

**Ms Rae**—No, I do not think so. I think there is an element—and it comes back to ego—that we, all of us, believe that we are doing it the right way.

**Senator TIERNEY**—Is there a role for the National Library in there, trying to bring some sort of uniformity in the way in which organisations—

**Ms Rae**—Can we do something off the record? Can we actually say something in camera?

**Senator TIERNEY**—Yes, we can. We have got to clear the room, though.

**Ms Rae**—There is no-one here. Discussions have been had, I should say.

**Senator TIERNEY**—Where is that all up to? Is that because the National Library want to do it another way?

**Ms Rae**—I found the National Library to be very patronising and paternalistic in their approach.

**Senator TIERNEY**—Towards the Gulliver system?

**Ms Rae**—No, towards how to go about doing this. Not involving us.

**CHAIR**—Is it their leadership role, or is there an association of libraries that would be a level above that?

**Ms Rae**—There is an association of libraries.

**CHAIR**—Would you see it as the National Library's role to take that leadership or do you think that would be more of an association issue?

**Ms Rae**—The association is also looking at it at the moment. I am on that committee as well. However, the National Library has taken a national role with state libraries—not with the public libraries, but with the state libraries. There are differences. They spent a lot of money writing a very thick legal document, where we just got in and did it.

**Senator TIERNEY**—Did your Gulliver systems cover the Victorian state library as well?

**Ms Rae**—The Victorian state library did not want to be a part of it.

**Senator TIERNEY**—I see. So this sits at a different level: national library to state library, and then—

**Ms Rae**—Public library.

**Senator TIERNEY**—public libraries locally. So are we going to have some sort of meshing problem in terms of the technologies?

**Ms Rae**—I do not think so.

**Senator TIERNEY**—No? It is not a problem?

**Ms Rae**—No, there are just different ways of doing it. What we do is negotiate with vendors the pricing for online databases, and each library makes it available through their own web page or library borrowers can access it using their library membership card. At the moment, we have three databases, offering 21,000 online full text resources, that we make available to people. We also have another smorgasbord approach where each library may want to pick up extra databases, and this model is what is being touted as the national model.

**Senator TIERNEY**—Do you see problems of duplication across different levels of libraries coming in with different approaches? We are not building railway tracks in different widths in different states, are we?

**Ms Rae**—No, we are not, thank goodness. It would be more of an issue for vendors than for libraries or library borrowers.

**Senator TIERNEY**—In what way is it an issue for vendors?

**Ms Rae**—Because Victorian libraries might have a trial of a database and negotiate a price, and so would New South Wales libraries—but it could be done once.

**Senator TIERNEY**—If it was done once, it could probably be done at a lower cost within the new market.

**Ms Rae**—Exactly right.

**CHAIR**—There being no further questions, I thank you for the evidence that you have given today. It has been very helpful. Good luck with Gulliver.

**Ms Rae**—Thank you.

[2.58 p.m.]

**CLARK, Ms Judith Elizabeth, Head, Academic Support Services and University Librarian, University of Ballarat**

**CHAIR**—I now welcome Judith Clark, Head of Academic Support Services and University Librarian at the University of Ballarat Library. Thanks for giving us your time this afternoon. It is very much appreciated by the committee. The committee prefers all evidence to be given in public but, should you at any stage wish to give your evidence, part of your evidence or answers to specific questions in private, you may ask to do so. We will consider your request. You are reminded that the evidence given to the committee is protected by parliamentary privilege. I also inform you that the giving of false or misleading evidence to the committee may constitute a contempt of the Senate. I now invite you to make an opening statement before we move on to questions.

**Ms Clark**—I have not had enough time to prepare for this. I had a quick look through the list of submissions that the committee has received already. I do not think that the University of Ballarat provided a submission, so I was interested in what you expect of the University of Ballarat; however, we will come to that. My institution has a very big role to play, as we have been talking about, in the role of public libraries and assisting the peoples of western Victoria and this region to develop the skills and literacy that they need to be able to make good use of public information.

The role that university and TAFE libraries play has been well addressed in the submissions that you have received from the University of Newcastle and the University of South Australia. So I do not really want to go into that too much, except to say that 18,000 people a year attend a TAFE course offered by the University of Ballarat and, in a sense, we could be said to be providing the pathways and articulation that people in these communities need to adopt an approach or a mentality that supports a lifelong learning culture in their lives.

We have four libraries. In addition to those four physical libraries, we seek to provide an online learning environment, available to all of our students. In both the physical environment and the online environment, we try to encourage our students—who may be a great range of ages—to develop an awareness of how they can harness the information that is publicly available to improve the quality of their lives. I think it is really important to acknowledge that role that libraries have.

In response to comments that were made by your previous witness, in theory, the people in our communities have very good access to a range of online resources and particularly the cultural resources that you have been talking about—Picture Australia, the museums, the National Gallery and all of those things. But I would say that, for people in regional communities, simply to have online access is not enough. There is no way that people have the motivation and the interest to use those resources when they do not even know what they are—there is something there on a computer. I think that it needs to be made more real to people for them to be able to make good use of those resources.

Online information is not enough. On one side, we need to think about motivation and inspiration. Those are very personal things that libraries help to give to the people in their communities. On the other side, we need to have very good retrieval and resource discovery tools that make those resources very readily and easily available to people in a way that they can relate to straightaway—and I do not think that we are there yet.

In terms of public libraries in Australia, I think it is important not to be too focused on the information access role. Yes, that is an important part of the role that libraries play but, particularly for public libraries, we want to be encouraging communities to use communications, online resources and the Internet for recreational use and for communication purposes, so it becomes part of community building and enriching the lives of people in these communities. The libraries ought to be providing access to not only online resources but also email services, word processing, graphics formatting and multimedia tools. I would see all of those things as being part of the role of libraries—not that they are particularly resourced to provide those things, and perhaps there are questions about whether they should be but I will leave that aside.

A point that I would personally like to make strongly to this committee is that libraries have a critical role to play in developing the infrastructure that enables public access to public information. I would like to draw the committee's attention to the complexities of structuring electronic information resources for effective retrieval. It is not something that just happens. You do not have a repository of electronic resources and simply because they are there, they have been digitised and we have the telecommunications in place, they can be accessed. There is a lot more infrastructure required to make those resources usable.

The tools and technologies that allow libraries to deliver specific information resources at point of need to individual users are very complex and nontrivial. A lot of work is being done in the international digital library community and it is critical that Australians have the ability to participate in that sort of research in the international community and in current research in electronic information and retrieval.

A lot of the submissions have talked about the important role that libraries provide as gateways to global information resources via the Internet. This role is largely demand driven. It draws heavily on the aggregated output of the major international publishers. We have just been talking about those as being our 'vendors'—that is a library word for describing publishing output, both print and electronic. I note that the submissions from VATL, the Victorian Association of TAFE Libraries, and the Victorian branch of ALIA, our national association, represented a number of concerns that cluster around the role of libraries in fostering equitable access to the output of an international publishing community but I would like to make the case for increased attention to the supply side of information resources.

The University of Ballarat is a dual sector tertiary institution. So far it has a very limited research role and research profile but the university has a mission to serve the social and economic wellbeing of the communities of western Victoria. The research activities of the university focus on applied and social research. Libraries have not traditionally been very effective in capturing the output of that research. There is a great need to become better at ensuring that the data that is collected, analysed and fed into the research being done in our universities is preserved and made readily available as a knowledge building type of tool. The

need there, in terms of specific strategies, is to increase the role of libraries in the online environment and it is about upskilling.

Particularly in regional and rural Australia, we have an ageing profile in the library profession and we have very limited access to the continuing education that is required to keep on top of the skills that are needed to work on that supply side of information. I would like to make the point that the role of libraries in the past was building collections; we now think that the library is a gateway to resources. However, the library still has a role in preserving, structuring, organising and making available those resources. In the case of the University of Ballarat those are valuable local and community data and information that are of interest to our region, and the communities in our region, and will contribute to the strategic importance of Australian information in an international environment. So, in addition to recognising the need for ongoing education of library staff, there is a desperate need for Australian libraries to be able to access research funding, and currently there are few options for that.

**CHAIR**—Thank you. I am interested in expanding that theme a little bit, particularly given that yours is a regional university. There is a notion that people coming into regional universities often come from towns where they have not had a great deal of access to the Internet and that they are from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and so forth. One of the things that comes out in a lot of reading I have done on higher education and access and equity issues is the need for additional resources and support services to help people from lower socioeconomic and rural backgrounds properly participate in the university environment. In talking about the supply side of library services, what do think that would entail?

**Ms Clark**—I think it is important to make the case that the types of students that regional universities are dealing with do need a lot more support. They need a lot more encouragement, and they need a lot more motivation. They even need to develop an understanding of what a library is. If they come from, say, Warracknabeal and their local library is a room one-quarter of the size of this room with only two Internet terminals, they do not have that sense of a body of knowledge that you get if you are a familiar user of one of the state libraries. Yes, we do need to provide a lot more support for our equity category users. Equity funding is available through universities but, unfortunately, in the case of libraries, that tends to allow only one-off exercises. It is not something that we can use to systemically upgrade the services that the library offers those students; it has to be spent on initiatives that are one-offs because it is not recurrent funding.

**CHAIR**—Do you have any thoughts on the sorts of ongoing services that could assist in that regard, or is it simply a case of having more librarians on the floor to help people work through things?

**Ms Clark**—It comes down not only to having more librarians on the floor—there is nothing that beats that personal attention—but also to more librarians developing better online environments that students sitting at home at their computers will find more engaging and will be drawn in, changing them from being an 18-year-old on a farm somewhere to being someone who sees themselves as participating in a scholarly community. We can do that online if we have the resources to do it.

**CHAIR**—Is there much discussion between university libraries about making that sort of thing happen?

**Ms Clark**—There is a lot of discussion not just within Australian university libraries but also internationally on those subjects.

**Senator LUNDY**—Can you outline for the committee what those terms, conditions and charges are to keep your institution connected?

**Ms Clark**—The University of Ballarat, obviously, is a member of AARNet, so access to the Internet is via the Victorian regional network office at the University of Melbourne. In the early days, the University of Ballarat addressed its bandwidth issues by setting up a private microwave network. Our six campuses are connected by a microwave network, at 34 megabits. We have the same connection—34 megabits microwave—to Melbourne, to the AARNet office. We have been very active in a number of forums through HEBAC, under the systemic infrastructure initiatives funding and through a number of state initiatives to improve that access for the University of Ballarat.

**Senator LUNDY**—As a library in the university, do you have any specific accounting that you have to do to measure your costs associated with that, or is it all pulled into the university's use of bandwidth through AARNet?

**Ms Clark**—Yes, it is pulled into the university's use of AARNet. The university is introducing a quota, in a scheme that most universities now have, that I suppose will help us to contain what would be otherwise just an uncontrolled, huge growth in our Internet access bills. The library simply fits into that broader university environment, except that the library plays an advocacy role in ensuring that the access is there in an equitable way.

**Senator LUNDY**—In getting that bandwidth, you say you have contained demand. How much demand do you have to contain, and does that limit your ability to expand your own services or reach your own potential? What sort of constraining effect does that economic issue have on you?

**Ms Clark**—The microwave network is a private microwave network. Universities AARNet is not a commercial carrier under telecommunications regulations. We have a relationship with an approved carrier in Melbourne, and that carrier can actually on-sell some of the bandwidth that the University of Ballarat provides. We are currently working with a number of proposals—we have talked about the university being active in the regional connectivity program—and we are looking at opportunities to leverage off the universities bandwidth to benefit communities at the end of our network. Was the next part of your question about the constraints on the university?

**Senator LUNDY**—Yes, what limiting effects all of those considerations about your difficulty getting bandwidth have, the cost of it and how that stifles your potential.

**Ms Clark**—It is a cost driver in some senses. We have to have a centralised network and that centralised network relies on the microwave connections between our campuses. This makes us very vulnerable in a number of ways and drives up the cost of internal provision of IT within the university. Individual students, I would say, are not constrained currently. In fact, we have artificially choked our 34 megabits and our users, on the whole, do not complain about that. However, we are very aware that the university does need a fibre based network, and the sorts of uses we would expect to see increasing would be not so much by library users but in

multimedia, the use of video conferencing and participation in that high-end, high-bandwidth research. I do not think it is a limiting factor at the moment for the library.

**Senator LUNDY**—Do you have any dealings with Telstra?

**Ms Clark**—Yes.

**Senator LUNDY**—What sorts of dealings?

**Ms Clark**—Clearly, in a regional area, the university has a relationship with our local Telstra Countrywide office and, where we can, we would seek to work with Telstra and to inform them of what our needs are so that they could address those needs. But, in many ways, Telstra does not offer cost-effective solutions for us, so we look to other potential providers in the marketplace.

**Senator LUNDY**—What are you looking for that they cannot provide in a cost-effective way?

**Ms Clark**—It would be for the high-bandwidth connections across our regional campuses.

**Senator LUNDY**—So, the alternative to microwave?

**Ms Clark**—Yes. We do use Telstra for our normal phone services, but the costs are prohibitive for us to shift from our microwave to fibre or to high-bandwidth connection for students from home. In fact, even on our campus at Mount Helen, mobile phone reception is very bad—we have a technology park on campus at Mount Helen—

**Senator LUNDY**—Yes, I am familiar with it.

**Ms Clark**—that has a very unreliable mobile phone connection! I live in the centre of Ballarat, and my service via Telstra to the Internet was unusable.

**Senator LUNDY**—Was it too slow?

**Ms Clark**—Yes, I now have broadband access with Neighborhood Cable, and that is usable.

**Senator LUNDY**—Are you in a position to make any observations about why Telstra is unable to be competitive in providing an alternative to the microwave link? Is there no competitive pressure on them to do that here?

**Ms Clark**—I think they are very aware of the competitive pressure; there is competitive pressure. There are alternatives and we are negotiating with those. I think the main problem is not the infrastructure—Telstra has the infrastructure—it is the pricing structure for regional communities.

**Senator LUNDY**—That keeps you locked out.

**Ms Clark**—Yes.

**Senator LUNDY**—Thank you.

**Senator TIERNEY**—It has been quite a while since I visited the University of Ballarat. You mention six campuses. You have got the main campus and a mining school—and what else?

**Ms Clark**—Horsham, Stawell, Ararat and Camp Street—which is the one that was opened by Premier Bracks last year, and that is also in town. It is a combined higher ed and further ed arts campus.

**Senator TIERNEY**—Are all the campuses outside Ballarat co-located with TAFE in those centres?

**Ms Clark**—At Ararat and Stawell they are almost exclusively TAFE. At Horsham there are some higher ed students, but a small number. It is an integrated university. The network and libraries are managed centrally.

**Senator TIERNEY**—So outside Ballarat there is really only one campus that has some higher ed component. Is that right?

**Ms Clark**—Yes.

**Senator TIERNEY**—You made an intriguing statement that I would like to explore a little further. You were talking about the Internet experience for people and coming online. You said that it needs to be made more real. You seem to be saying that people will turn up, and they have got the skills, the connectivity and the materials at the other end. But you seem to be saying that there is something missing in all of that.

**Ms Clark**—That is probably the motivation issue. Why would somebody want to look at paintings in the National Gallery online? It has to relate to something that has meaning to a person in their life and their community.

**Senator TIERNEY**—So there is a vast treasure-trove of material that people could access and most will remain blind to it, possibly.

**Ms Clark**—That is at the user end.

**Senator TIERNEY**—Yes, that is what I meant. They do not particularly want to look at it anyway. Another statement that you made was about making resources usable. I would like you to explore that further. Again you seem to be saying that it could be all set up but there is something about the nature of the material in terms of the way in which people may want to access it, and unless there is a lot of work done this is not going to happen. Could you explain that a little further?

**Ms Clark**—I could talk for four hours about this. The last witness said, ‘Wouldn’t it be great to have a librarians’ Google?’ Yes, it would be great to have a librarians’ Google. But there is a fundamental difference between information that is available on the Internet and information that is available in libraries. Information that is collected traditionally and held by libraries physically in their collections has gone through an editorial process. There has been an author, an editor and a publishing house that has seen some economic viability in creating that resource,

and along with that sense of economic viability goes an implied authoritativeness or validation of why that material is considered to be important; whereas, as we know, anybody can put stuff up on the web and it does not have all of that infrastructure surrounding it. So to create a librarians' Google requires, firstly, tremendous intellectual input in selecting and determining what might be relevant to present to users and why. Secondly, it requires very sophisticated retrieval tools and resource discovery tools that work across a number of different areas.

Going back to the National Gallery collection again, if somebody is interested in the types of eucalyptus in Australia and decides to go to some of the early painters to look at how they represented eucalyptus then they want to be able to move from an image of a painting to textual material that might have a scientific base. They might want to move from that to anecdotal material—what farmers have done and how they use and perceive eucalyptus. I am trying to pull an example out of my head. What I am saying is that there are a lot of different genres and media types. To be usable and to make sense, the user needs to be able to easily pull all those things together and somehow fuse them in a way that makes sense to the user.

**Senator TIERNEY**—So it is a matter of having the links structured?

**Ms Clark**—Structured information and sophisticated search tools. Structured information is an enormous part of it.

**Senator TIERNEY**—So you can jump across databases to pick up the different genres?

**Ms Clark**—Yes. Libraries have catalogues. Catalogues help you to find things in a library. Electronic resources have metadata. The National Library is a leader in the metadata community in Australia and internationally. Intellectual input creates that metadata and the quality of that metadata enables you to find what you want, when you want it.

**Senator TIERNEY**—Students and citizens who may wish to use a library and find this material online can rely on the e-literacy of librarians, I suppose. Where is all that up to, do you think, in terms of the skills of librarians and the need to constantly upgrade the skills of librarians to assist in this way?

**Ms Clark**—It is as variable as the skills of any other profession—the skills of engineers, architects, doctors or anyone. It varies. But the library association and the professional bodies at all the different levels of libraries do what they can to ensure that a user walking into a library in Warracknabeal or Canberra will get what they are looking for.

**Senator TIERNEY**—I was in Singapore last year and they were trying to get their e-literacy rates up to, I think, 65 per cent by another three years. I picked up a sense that they might see that as a sort of limit. I am wondering what your views on that are. We are always going to be left with a group that will never want to get involved with any of this. Do you think there are any adult education strategies that we could try to bring that wider group online that do not have any natural inclination to use any of it for any purpose whatsoever?

**Ms Clark**—It is interesting that Singapore has a 65 per cent target. I would say that, if you need to use electronic information as part of your work, you will. Most of us will need to use it as part of our work. The garbage men will have their route mapped out on some sort of

electronic device that they will need to carry around with them. The baker in Bright will be ordering his flour online.

**Senator TIERNEY**—Finally, we are also interested in the lack of access to certain databases. I bring this up in the context of the universities. Are you finding, as a smaller regional university, that you have—because of cost possibly—more limited access to certain major databases? That might not be a problem for the University of Melbourne, but it might be for some of the others that have a bigger resource base because they are much bigger universities.

**Ms Clark**—Yes, very much so. It is a great concern. We have strategies to try to address that. Basically, the strategies include increasing our access to electronic resources at the expense of our print collections, and that brings with it other problems. But, yes, I would say we have tremendous problems in trying to provide for our students a comparable level of access to core databases.

**Senator TIERNEY**—Wouldn't that be part of a natural evolution, that you would be relying proportionately more on electronic than print just because of the way technology is going?

**Ms Clark**—Absolutely.

**Senator TIERNEY**—But you seem to see some disadvantage in that as well.

**Ms Clark**—No. I suppose it is just that students do not stop using print just because electronic is now there. There is still a huge demand from students for print resources. What I am saying is that we are no longer purchasing those print materials.

**Senator TIERNEY**—If we take a database like the Web of Science, for example—and the University of Melbourne has quite good access to that—what is the University of Ballarat's position?

**Ms Clark**—No, we did not opt into that consortium arrangement for Web of Science. We could not justify it on our number of users.

**Senator TIERNEY**—Was it a number-of-use thing compared to the cost?

**Ms Clark**—Yes, that is what it comes down to. The University of Melbourne might have 5,000 undergraduates in science and we might have 500.

**Senator TIERNEY**—The state of Kentucky in the US purchased the Web of Science for all the citizens of the state, which is an interesting approach. You do not even have to be at university; you could be anywhere. Do you think that is a viable model? It is a model of sort of supraorganisations and not universities.

**Ms Clark**—It worries me a little bit. National site licensing is a big issue at the moment. Clearly, if you have one licence instead of 42 for the Australian universities, the administrative overheads are reduced.

**Senator TIERNEY**—And the pricing is a lot better, isn't it?

**Ms Clark**—There have to be cost savings. The argument is that, by coming to the vendor as an aggregated market, you will have better bargaining power and be able to negotiate a better price. I suppose I see that in the longer term that may become negative. If you have a monopoly in the sense of the purchasers being one body, what incentive is there for the vendors to continue to be competitive? I suppose in the longer term I worry about national site licensing schemes, but, yes, I do think—

**Senator TIERNEY**—You think it might eventually just put costs up?

**Ms Clark**—Yes, I think eventually it will. But I think it is the way to go, and it is the only way to deal with the equity issues in terms of information provision.

**Senator MOORE**—Can anyone graduate from university without using the library at all?

**Ms Clark**—People do.

**Senator MOORE**—That is what I thought.

**Ms Clark**—We hear about them.

**Senator MOORE**—I have heard about them. Is there a variation in the usages of the libraries across the different locations on your campuses?

**Ms Clark**—Most definitely. That variation would reflect the availability of materials and the need for them in terms of how the lecturer or teacher structures their course delivery.

**Senator MOORE**—Is the library involved with the lecturers and teachers in terms of structuring the courses so that, if you were planning a particular course, you would build into the case load an effective introduction to library use?

**Ms Clark**—Yes, and the University of Ballarat has an excellent in-house developed template called Discovery that does exactly that.

**Senator MOORE**—It really helps people?

**Ms Clark**—It is really very valuable. But, on the other hand, we are limited by having two full-time professional librarians.

**Senator MOORE**—That is all you have?

**Ms Clark**—No, we would have four full-time librarians and the rest would be sessional, casual or part time. The traditional model for a university library is subject organisation, so you would have a librarian who works with the lecturers in education, for example. We have a constituency model, because we do not have enough staff to be able to run a more personalised service. I think that is the future of libraries; delivering the information via the course materials, totally embedding it in the curriculum, is where we are going.

**Senator MOORE**—So the culture of using a library is part of the educational process?

**Ms Clark**—It is.

**Senator MOORE**—At the last sitting, we talked with the librarian from the ACT CIT system about people who were unfamiliar with libraries and about using the electronic medium more comfortably than books. Our discussion ranged far and wide in that area. Do you have any views about whether people are now more comfortable with using IT than accessing books?

**Ms Clark**—Yes, I think a lot of younger people are more comfortable with it. They are used to chunking—getting short bits of relevant information. You come across undergraduate students who cannot or have not read a newspaper article.

**Senator MOORE**—That is right, but they have been able to find something on the Internet.

**Ms Clark**—They could probably do their movie bookings on the Internet and share music files without any problem at all.

**Senator MOORE**—What about students with different language issues? We were talking about that issue as well. Does your campus have a number of international students?

**Ms Clark**—There are about 400 international students on campus at Mount Helen, and almost one-fifth of our students are offshore, being taught through third-party providers.

**Senator MOORE**—Is an electronic component, an Internet linkage process, used in that particular field?

**Ms Clark**—Where we can. It comes back to being able to negotiate with the vendors, who normally license their material for our on-site users only and require extra if we are making it available to students at a different site.

**Senator MOORE**—Senator Tierney referred to the professional development of librarians. I am interested in the training and numbers of librarians, because across the country there is a need for people with the skills. Where do librarians train in Victoria?

**Ms Clark**—The Australian Library and Information Association—and I would hate to be quoted on this—used to run a very good accreditation program. It had a board of education that accredited library courses, and there were about seven graduate library courses—at least one in each state in Australia. That is breaking down a lot at the moment, and I think it is partly to do with it being a profession that is perhaps questioning what its professional base is. Often librarianship is based in an information science—information management—context. I think there is a bit of a struggle at the moment. The professional body that used to govern the accreditation of those institutions is in demise, so there is fairly widespread concern about what we are doing to educate the coming generation of people to run libraries.

**Senator TIERNEY**—You said, ‘It is in demise.’ Why is that happening?

**Ms Clark**—I think it is because of the lack of strength of a professional role. If you walk into a regional library, you are confronted with a person at the desk who stamps the books, which is not the same as a skilled information professional. As with a lot of other professions, there is

increased complexity, which dilutes the boundaries of what is librarianship and what it means to graduate as a librarian. I think ALIA's board of education simply does not exist at the moment.

**Senator MOORE**—You spoke earlier with great passion on the changing face of the profession and also the need for some very serious research in terms of the point of user and how you actually do that. Does Australia offer the kind of training in development and research in that area so that our people could choose to study that here?

**Ms Clark**—No. In library schools, yes, there is some basic training in research. Universities have basic training in research, but there are not the opportunities. Once you get into the workplace, there is no body that you could apply to for funding. I am clearly familiar with the university sector and not so much with other sectors. There are some private fellowships and some scholarships that are available, but they are very limited. Some universities have schemes within their university that allow people to do things like take a six-month sabbatical and carry out some research, but those opportunities are just incredibly limited. The UK has something called the JISC, the Joint Information Systems Committee. It has off-the-top funding taken out of the higher education funding councils.

**Senator TIERNEY**—It is £60 million.

**Ms Clark**—Yes, £60 million. That is managed in such a way that people have to bid for the funding to undertake research, and that has the result of distributing the research and embedding it within individual universities. I actually think there is probably a middle ground. In Australia the opportunities for librarians are too restricted to what your organisation, your own institution, can offer. In the UK, because there is access to that research funding through the JISC, many of the JISC projects are actually a bit isolated from the user base in a particular university, which makes them a little bit esoteric in some cases. I think there is a middle ground between those two; I am not quite sure what it is.

**Senator LUNDY**—You mentioned the added licensing charges if you need to provide information to students off site. I know this is a huge issue for libraries, particularly in the digital era. How much of a burden is it for your library in trying to actually provide digital information to your non-campus-based students? Again, is it a barrier to the number of students the university takes on? Does it become a financial burden? Or do those students just miss out on that resource?

**Ms Clark**—It is a very political argument. Yes, the students miss out on the resource, although in some cases you could say that what students in Shenzhen can access through the University of Ballarat web site may be better than anything that would be offered locally. It is debatable. It is a concern to me because I feel that our library services at the moment are funded by the university but really only meet the needs of four-fifths of our students, soon to be three-quarters of our students. The way the contracts are established means that in our university's case we are dealing with a third-party provider who contracts to provide the required level of library and Internet access. What is a required level is where the politics of it come in.

**Senator LUNDY**—Do you think the holders of copyright are looking to this expansion of online information as a way to secure greater revenue sources, more revenue? Or do you think it is just translating into an online environment all things being equal? I have heard both arguments, but I would be interested in your observation as a librarian.

**Ms Clark**—Copyright legislation is behind usage and behaviour in the real world, so that is a problem. Yes, I think that CAL, the copyright agency, is able to maintain a lobby that works against free access to information. On the other hand, I am not against fair recompense to the owners of the property.

**Senator LUNDY**—I guess what I am thinking is that for students it is a step along from just free access. It is universities providing information—for which they are paying something—to all of their students as opposed to some of their students.

**Ms Clark**—Very few people in universities understand that, and I think that is one of our major issues. Users think of the Internet and, if they are using a computer, they imagine that that information is free. They do not realise that the university purchases the right on an annual basis.

**Senator LUNDY**—Thank you for that.

**CHAIR**—That concludes this afternoon's public hearing. I thank Ms Clark and Ms Rae, our other witness today, for their informative presentations. The committee is travelling to Mildura tomorrow to continue its hearings.

**Committee adjourned at 3.46 p.m.**