

OFFICE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR

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30 June 2008

Mr Russell Chafer
Secretary
Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit (Parliament of Australia)
House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Submission re the National Library

Dear Sir

I am writing to make a brief submission to the Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit regarding the finding of the National Library. The National Library of Australia plays a pivotal and crucial role in the intellectual life of Australia. This role has a direct effect on the economic prosperity and social health of Australia.

It is incredible to me that the Library is so poorly funded. Not only is it poorly funded but each year there is a productivity dividend removed from its budget. Any initiatives then have to be funded by special application.

The National Library has delivered enormous benefits to Australia. The Library is very well managed and its resources are used very efficiently. I can say this because for eight years I was a member of the Council of the National Library.

I believe very strongly that small cost centres such as the Library should not be included in the efficiency dividend. Efficiency dividends may have a place in large agencies like Centrelink but in small agencies the efficiency dividends remove the capacity to innovate, to collaborate, to maintain the core collection, to maintain existing services and to perform the core functions.

I therefore request that the National Library of Australia be excluded from the efficiency dividend, and instead, that its operating budget be indeed at the cost price index. I would also suggest that increased funding would provide a significant economic and social dividend.

Yours sincerely



Alan Robson
Vice-Chancellor

