



New South Wales Parliamentary Library
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Jason Sherd
Secretary
Joint Committee on Publications
Parliament of Australia
Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr Sherd

Thankyou for your letter inviting a submission to the Inquiry into the distribution of the Parliamentary Papers Series.

The NSW Parliamentary Library would like to comment on the following two Terms of Reference

- *The potential impact of changes to the distribution of the PPS made by the Presiding Officers, namely the tightening of eligibility guideline and the cessation of blister packs to commence on 1 January 2006;*

The NSW Parliamentary Library has a preference for receipt of the Parliamentary Papers series in the blister pack as this form is the most convenient form for us to bind for permanent retention. This form of delivery also makes it much easier for us to keep track of the receipt of the papers and to make sure that all the papers in the series have been received.

- *The provision of the PPS in a digital format, either as an alternative or an adjunct to the hard copy series;*

While the provision of access to the Parliamentary Papers in a digital form would be welcome the NSW Parliamentary Library would not like to see it as the only form of the documents that are made available. I have, however some reservations about the digital form.

When the Parliamentary Papers are published in hard copy there is the assumption by users and libraries that a collection of these papers would be available in at least the major libraries in each state. With the documents being published in a digital format the custodianship of the documents is often removed from the library and vested in the publishing body and the library

maintains a link to the document rather than it document itself. What guarantees is the Parliament offering of access to the documents over time or is the assumption to be that each of the libraries would download all of these documents and arrange storage and access from local digital resources. This is a very time consuming exercise for libraries if this is the case.

Does the Parliament have a policy for how long the papers would remain available on the website? What provisions would be made to archive older copies and what actions or policies would be in place to ensure accessibility over longer periods of time, would there be an agreement with the National Library's Pandora project to preserve access. What provisions would be made for preservation of the material over longer periods of time and the migration of legacy data through future operating and applications systems upgrades. Would the chosen format for the documents be a stable and portable format that would be as far as possible "future proofed" ie to be operating system and application independent so that documents would still be able to be read across a variety of platforms and operating systems in the future.

Thankyou

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