

# *Public Libraries Australia - Creating the Future*

## Workshop

22nd February 2002

[Note: this document was presented by Lynne Makin at the workshop as a PowerPoint presentation.]

### *Background*

- The idea of an Australian Public Libraries Network came from a national meeting on the future of public libraries in Australia on 11-12 May 2000 held here in Adelaide
- The question was asked, “Is there a National public Library agenda?” and the answer was , “Yes”.

### *National Public Library Agenda?*

- Public libraries as a network have a strong product to offer government and business
- This strong product not yet properly articulated
- Network could be brought about by cooperation of all stakeholders, improved telecommunications and relevant content
- Network considered to represent a five billion dollar investment
- Potential impact on economic and social development is largely untapped
- Representatives from all levels of government and jurisdictions required to work together to actively promote key strengths of the NPLN

### *Key Strengths*

- Potential value of 1700 service outlets throughout Australia
- the high level and equity of service provided by public Libraries
- considerable investment in public library infrastructure
- strong client focus in public library services
- equity of services
- potential for partnerships and alliances

- strong focus on and connection with communities and their sustainability

### *Australian Public Libraries Network*

- Meeting agreed that a consultancy be undertaken to develop brief for the business case for APLN
- This body to represent a coordinated voice and promote the interests of all public libraries in Australia
- This would take a great deal of planning, coordinating - all stakeholders to play a key role

### *The birth of APLN*

- Libraries Alive engaged to investigate business case
- APLN Forum held on 28th September 2001
- Representative Committee formed to look at 8 major points from forum

### *Libraries Alive*

- The final report to CASL “*APLN: THE WILL - OR THE LAST TESTAMENT*”
- Three recommendations

### *Recommendation One*

#### The Model

- Establishment of a APLN (Public Libraries Australia) project team as the single point of contact - the gateway to PLA, housed within ALGA’s Canberra headquarters and constituted to accept the cash and in-kind offers of the ACTLIS, ALIA, ALGA, NLA and other supporters
- As the first task of the APLN (PLA) Interim Committee formed at the Forum on 28th September, the active solicitation of further offers of cash and in-kind support until a total of \$250,000 is reached. Once this target is attained that an APLN (PLA) Director and Deputy director be appointed and APLN (PLA) activities commence
- Application of a go/no go decision point. Recommend 18 months.
- Interim committee appointed
- Supporting group for APLN (PLA) to have voluntary membership
- Participation in activities and benefits to be limited to those organisations supporting APLN (PLA)

## *Recommendation Two*

### Initial Activities

- Business Plan with revenue and cash flow targets
- Three core activities
  - identifying and qualifying Federal Government customers for APLN (PLA) services
  - identifying and applying for available Federal Government funding
  - gathering information (success stories)
- Business Plan to span an 18month period
- At end of 18months progress to be assessed by the Board (Company Model)
- If considered to be unsatisfactory, Project Team and Board to be wound up
- Project Team establish a web site and email addresses to provide information on members and services, and encourage interaction with customers and supporters

## *Recommendation Three*

### Ongoing Activities

- CASL accepts the ALGA offer to raise profile of public libraries in general and PLA in particular with local government associations around the country
- CASL authorises the publication and wide distribution of the Final APLN Report and uses it to heighten awareness and engender support for the activities of the Project Team

### *What actions have been taken since the release of the final report?*

- The interim committee had three telephone conferences to keep APLN (PLA) moving
  - Terms of Reference determined
  - The following issues raised and discussed
    - Name
    - Stakeholders
    - Members
    - Aims and Objectives
    - Structure
    - Funding
    - Projects
- Meeting held in Melbourne at ALIA conference - name changed to Public Libraries Australia (PLA)
- CASL approves Recommendation One from Final Report
- CASL establishes that APLN (PLA) Interim Committee be a sub- group of CASL.
- Committee to be Lynne Makin, Robert Knight and Cr Beverley Giegerl as set by

CASL

- CASL also approved Recommendations Two and Three

### *Why are we here today?*

- CASL recommended that there be a one-day workshop to brainstorm the recommendations and to develop a framework for the Public Libraries Australia business plan
- Interim Committee and existing steering committee (Lea Giles-Peters, Chris Williams and David Toll) to take responsibility for this task

### *Creating the Future*

- This is our task today
  - to brainstorm the recommendations
  - to develop the business plan framework
- It is a very big task
  - some research has already been undertaken
- Let's think laterally
- The process to be followed
  - The morning sessions
    - Take each recommendation as adopted by CASL and work through what has been achieved and brainstorm ideas for how we can achieve the future
    - All ideas, no matter how “out there” they may be to be looked at as they are often provide the germ for the development of great ideas
  - The afternoon sessions
    - Take the ideas from the brainstorming sessions on the recommendations and build the business plan framework
    - Some work has been done on this as a starting point

### *What do we want to achieve*

- At the end of today we need to know
  - What Public Libraries Australia is
  - What it is aiming to achieve
  - How it is going to achieve this
    - What services will it offer?
    - How will it operate?

- Who/what is the membership?
- What direction will it take?
- Where will it be positioned in the sector?
- How will achieve its funding?

*What happens after today?*

- A report is to be given to the next CASL meeting In March
- Actions developed from the Business Plan to be followed through