

Australia



Responding institution:

Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA)

Australia submitted reports in 2001, 2003 and 2005. There are 548 public libraries with 1 700 service points, as well as 39 university research libraries. The respondent has also indicated a total of 8 120 school and research libraries in the country.

Between 81-100% of these libraries offer Internet access, which is free of charge at the university and research council libraries. Very much of the content is locally produced, and there has been additional funding in the past two years in the form of government programmes to assist regional and remote access to the Internet, especially in public libraries.

The ALIA supports the filtering of information in order to protect children, and children's library Internet terminals use filtering software for this purpose. According to the respondent, there has been no anti-terror legislation or violations of intellectual freedom in the past two years.

HIV/Aids, according to the respondent, is not an issue in Australia and libraries have not been involved in awareness programmes. Literacy programmes are directed at all members of a community, and there are therefore no special initiatives for women and their information needs.

A code of ethics was adopted in 1977 (see <http://alia.org.au/policies/professional.conduct.html>).

Librarians use this code along with other policy statements of the association when developing library policies, or to support advocacy and related issues. All members (individual and institutional) of the ALIA are committed to uphold the objects of its constitution, the first of which is "to promote the free flow of information and ideas in the interests of all Australians and a thriving culture, economy and democracy".

The IFLA Internet Manifesto has not been adopted because the ALIA refers to its own policy on Online Content Regulation and Free Access to Information, which is communicated through articles in the association's news magazine and through the association's members. The same applies to the Glasgow Declaration, so that formal adoption is obviated by communicating it in the association's magazine *inCite*, and at meetings of members.

User privacy and anti-terror legislation

Although the respondent has indicated that there have been no new anti-terror laws, it may be worth noting that the Anti-terrorism Act was revised and passed on 6 December 2005. This poses serious threats to freedom of expression.

Reported incidents/violations of intellectual freedom in the past two years

Several incidents of the violation of intellectual freedom have been reported in third-party sources. Reporters Without Borders notes that the adoption by the Senate in March 2006 of the law on interception of communications increases the risk of abuse against the

press. Some newspaper reporters and editors are already beginning to feel the impact of this law. On 10 May 2007, a "Right to Know" campaign was launched as a joint initiative of News Limited, Fairfax, the ABC and other media organisations, including Commercial Radio Australia, SBS, Australian Associated Press and Sky News.

Sources:

http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=20763

http://www.rsf.org/article.php3?id_article=22244

<http://www.news.com.au/story/0,23599,21705229-2,00.html>

<http://www.ifex.org/en/content/search?SearchText=Australia&SectionID=4&x=18&y=7>

HIV/Aids awareness

This is not an issue in Australia, in the view of the respondent, and libraries have not launched awareness programmes.

Women and freedom of access to information

Women are included in the wider community focus of

literacy promotion programmes. There are no programmes for special information needs of women.

IFLA Internet Manifesto

As stated in the 2005 report, the ALIA has not adopted the IFLA Internet Manifesto because it refers to its own policy on Online Content Regulation and Free Access to Information, which is communicated through articles in the association's news magazine *inCite* and through groups of members.

IFLA Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom

The same applies to the Glasgow Declaration, the adoption of which is unnecessary in the light of its communication in the association's magazine *inCite* and at meetings of members.

Ethics

An electronically accessible code of ethics is used by librarians to develop policy, and to support advocacy and other service and organisational issues.

Main indicators

Country name:	Australia
Population:	20 434 176 (July 2007 est.)
Main language:	English 79.1%, Chinese 2.1%, Italian 1.9%, other 11.1%, unspecified 5.8% (2001 census)
Literacy:	99%
Literacy reported by respondent:	No data provided

Population figures, language and literacy are from the *CIA World Factbook*, 2007 edition (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>).



Libraries and Internet access

The following section compares data and answers from 2007 with the 2005 IFLA/FAIFE World Report and adds context from the respondent's estimates regarding numbers of public, school, university and government-funded research libraries.

Library services

Estimated number of public libraries*:	548, with 1 700 locations or service points (2005: 513 public library organisations, with 1 510 library locations)
Estimated number of school libraries:	8 120 school and research libraries
Estimated number of university libraries:	39
Estimated number of government-funded research libraries:	8 120 school and research libraries
Source of these numbers:	Australian Bureau of Statistics and Australian School Libraries Association

Internet access

Population online**:	15 300 000 Internet users as of Dec. 2007 (74.3)
Percentage of public libraries offering Internet access to users:	81-100% (2005: 81-100%)
Percentage of school libraries offering Internet access to users:	81-100%
Percentage of university libraries offering Internet access to users:	81-100%
Percentage of government-funded research libraries offering Internet access to users:	81-100%
In your estimate, how much local content*** is available on the Internet:	Very much
To what degree is content on the Internet available in local languages:	Very much
Is the library association in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals:	Yes (2005: No)
Is the use of filtering software widespread in your country's libraries:	Yes, to a certain degree – protection of children (2005: Yes, to a certain degree order to protect children)
Is it free of charge for library users to access the Internet on library computers:	Yes, in university and statutory research council libraries (2005: Yes, in research libraries only)
Has the state or other library authorities made any extra funding available for Internet access in the library system of your country in the last two years:	Yes, government programmes are in place to assist regional and remote area access to the Internet through libraries, in particular public libraries (2005: Yes)

* Public library service points, including branch libraries.

** Online population numbers are from Internet World Stats (www.internetworldstats.com).

*** Local content is defined as content that originates in the country.