



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES

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Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into ACT Libraries

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From: Deborah Hamilton
To: [LA Committee - ETCS](#)
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Hello LA Committee ETCS

ACT Public Libraries provide a wonderful service to people from all walks of life and socio economic backgrounds. The home library service is also a very important part of the service provided.

I visit my local library at Dickson at least twice each week to return and borrow books that I reserve online. I have been doing so since I retired 8 years ago and have had plenty of opportunity to observe the heavy use people make of this library from research, catching up with the news, using the computers, learning through the education programs and time for parents and children.

However, many of the actual buildings are showing signs of age and need more regular maintenance and upgrades to ensure they can continue to provide services into the future especially with Canberra's rapidly growing population.

As an example, recently while Dickson library was temporarily closed I had to use Belconnen library and where the library shutes for book returns are very high and don't seem to lock, they have no ledges to rest heavy books while using the shute and the doors are hard to open without using two hands. Who has two hands free these days? With handbags, shopping, young children, prams or mobility issues. Fixing this would be a good thing. The signage to Belconnen library needs to be improved including signage for disabled access as at that time I was temporarily disabled after an injury and I found the access to that particular library very confusing as the library is located in a sadly neglected and barely used piazza - which obviously the architects imagined people sitting in but they don't so with no street frontage more effort needs to be put into welcoming signage and branding.

The ACT Government needs to review and update and improve library buildings regularly - I don't think much has been done to any of them since they were built by the NCDC!

The library database / catalogue also needs an overhaul as there are many books and other items that show up in the catalogue but when you click on the link to request a copy the item is no longer available. Investing in updating the catalogue and a system that is easier for future updates would be very useful and probably be a big time saver for staff too once the system was up and running.

The staff are unfailingly helpful and courteous and requesting books and other items from the comfort of home and picking them up is something I love being able to do. Being able to download books to tablets is also great and works very well.

I say keep up the good work and invest a bit more in the building infrastructure, signage, disabled friendly access including for book return and updating the catalogue and database would be very helpful in terms of setting ACT Public Libraries up for greater use in the future with the growing population.

Regards

Deborah Hamilton

