



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

Submission Number: 039

Date Authorised for Publication: 26 September 2018

Submission to

INQUIRY INTO ACT LIBRARIES

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Introduction

Living in the ACT is enlivened by the joys of ACT Libraries. The helpful staff, the comprehensive collection and the easy access to the resources makes the libraries a daily draw card.

The experiences on which my comments are based are related to the excellent Woden Library.

Role

The policies regulating the libraries seem to me to be thorough and service oriented.

Strategic planning

The emphasis placed on digital and data resources seems appropriate. However paper documents continue to be essential in the transmission of information and therefore should not be diminished in importance. Nor should the joy of reading a (paper) book be overlooked.

The current staff employment practice seems to be leaning towards casualization of the vital library staff. In an environment such as the library it seems important that all service providers are confident in their roles and placements and that unease, due to job insecurity, should not be evident in the workplace.

There is a detailed policy regarding volunteers. There is work being done by library volunteers in the library however there seems to be a greater opportunity for more volunteers in areas such as general directions, computer assistance, language assistance, document creation and help for the disabled.

Community demand

There may be excellent library services within ACT schools and colleges however it seems that there may be scope for greater integration with ACT libraries and for mentoring of students.

The integration of Café Ink into the libraries is excellent.

The booking service is extremely useful and optimises use of the library resources.

The interior design and layout of the Woden Library is routine and acceptable but would benefit from a review and implementation of new technology, furniture and layout providing interest, noise control and focus groupings.

Access Canberra was located adjacent to the Woden Library. When Access moved to the Square, limited signing was provided and 12 months later Access patrons are

still asking Library staff for directions. I am not sure of how many people have benefitted from becoming linked to the library through the co-location.

The aging of the population in Woden would indicate that there may be more elderly people still of sound mind who need library services who may not be able to access the library. Could a service be provided under a joint venture with NDIS to assist these people to continue to access the library through some type of delivery service other than downloading electronic material. (Also relates to Accessibility)

The Audio Book collection seems to be increasingly acquiring books recorded on MP3 discs. I have recently tried to purchase an MP3 player and was unable to purchase one other than an extremely expensive and large model. It seems that MP3 players are no longer being produced. So could the library refrain from purchasing MP3 please.

Accessibility

The opening hours are very convenient for me. Maybe there should be a survey to ascertain the demand for extending or changing the hours, possibly opening in the evening.

Conclusion

Retirement gave me the opportunity to read widely. The Woden Library has enabled me to achieve that joy and stimulation. The services provided and the brilliant staff have enhanced my pleasure and development. Thank you !