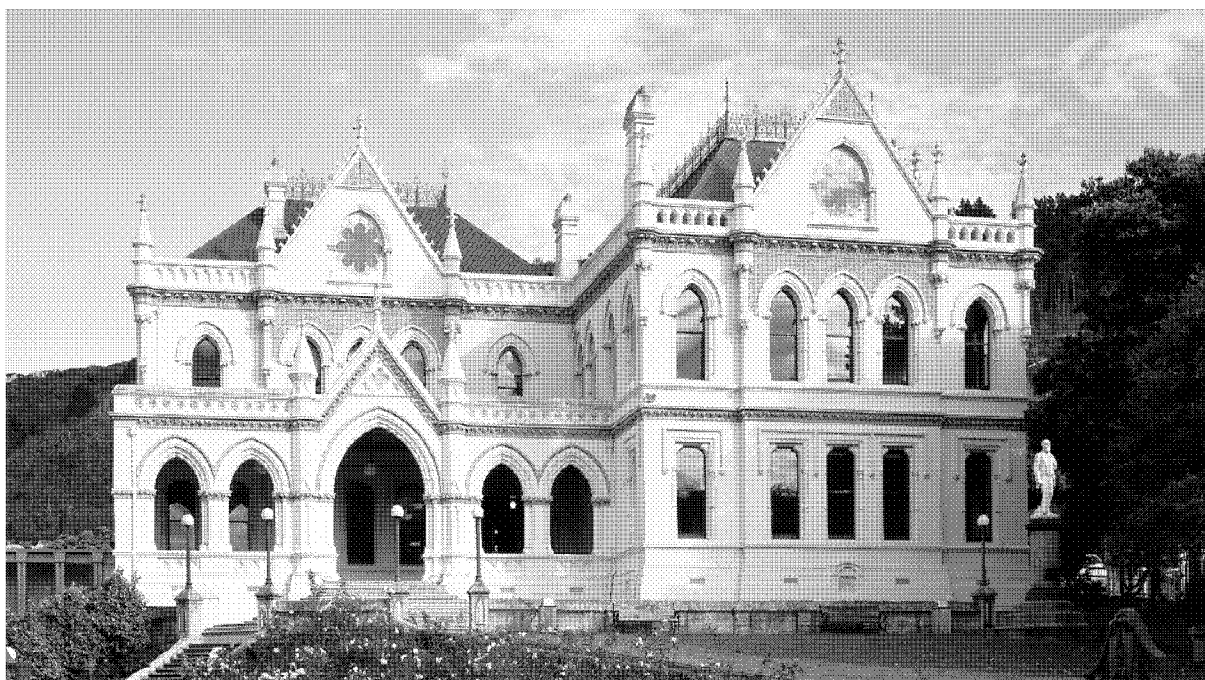# Newsletter

1. Introduction

Welcome to the 'News' section of the Newsletter. Practical information about the forthcoming Conferences and on Section business was in the previously-circulated 'Conference Special' section.

The Newsletter format and frequency are both new in 2007/8. They should be reviewed - your feedback now or at the conference would be appreciated. Be as frank as you like!

Iain Watt, Secretary

2. News-round

1. People & organisations

Parliamentary Library Building   *Murray Hedwig photograph*

New Zealand's Parliamentary Library to celebrate its 150 years

"Having appointed its first librarian in 1858 the New Zealand Parliamentary Library will commemorate its 150th anniversary in September 2008. There will be a launch of a book on the history of the library and a staff reunion. The library will also feature in Parliament's annual Open Day for the public in the same month. The library has served Parliament and met the changing information needs of its members throughout the 150 years, housed for the last century in a splendid Gothic building that has recently been restored. It has also been at the centre of library developments in New Zealand. It was the de facto 'national library' for many years and a national historical resource with its collection of archives and newspapers. People interested in the anniversary can contact us at library150th@parliament.govt.nz or visit our blog, http://wga150.wordpress.com/ " Katherine Close

Ellie Valentine (USAID)

"On March 1 this year Ellie moved from Pakistan back to Kyiv, Ukraine to resume the position with Indiana University as Project Director in Ukraine of the USAID supported Parliamentary Development Project of Ukraine. Ellie began her work in legislative capacity building as Field Coordinator of PDP in 1994. The USAID Pakistan Legislative Strengthening Project continues and many of our Pakistani assembly colleagues plan on attending the IFLA conference and Section Pre-Conference in Canada. Ellie can still be contacted at ellieval@aol.com or evalentine@iupdp.org ."

John Pullinger (United Kingdom, House of Commons)

"The UK House of Commons Library has been part of wider changes, that took effect on 1 January 2008, designed to create a "unified" service for Members and the public. I am now Librarian and Director General, Information Services with responsibility for the Library (including the Research Service, Information Services for Members and Information Management) and the associated public Information Office and Education Service plus the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology, Visitor Services, the Website, Media and Communications Service and Curator's Office. I retain a seat on the House of Commons Management Board where we are working to deliver significant improvements in our services as well as give better opportunities for staff to realise their potential.

I can report that progress so far is very encouraging and look forward to sharing what we are doing when we meet in Ottawa."

John Pullinger

Alfredo De Feo (European Parliament)

Alfredo De Feo has been appointed as Director of the Library of the European Parliament with effect from 2 June 2008. Mr De Feo previously headed the Budgetary Affairs directorate of the committee secretariats.

Mr De Feo started his career in the Parliament in Research, then moved to the secretariat of the committee on budgets, of which he became the head of unit in 1999.

As Director of the Library, he will contribute to the setting up of the new briefing service for the MEPs (see item below).

Latest news:
The web page and documents for the IPU-ASGP-IFLA conference are now online on the IPU site:

http://www.ipu.org/splz-e/asgp08.htm (English)

http://www.ipu.org/splz-f/asgp08.htm (French)

Andy Richardson

Parliamentary Resource Centre, Inter-Parliamentary Union

andy.richardson@mail.ipu.org

Tel: +41 22 919 41 35

Fax: +41 22 919 41 60

Australian and New Zealand Parliamentary Libraries activities

Inaugural Association of Parliamentary Libraries of Australasia (APLA) Reference & Research Symposium

Group Photo in the Victorian Parliamentary Gardens.
APLA Research & Reference Symposium
Melbourne, Parliament of Victoria, Friday 8ᵗʰ February 2008

In February 2008, 36 Reference and Research staff from parliaments around Australia and New Zealand meet for the inaugural Association of Parliamentary Libraries of Australasia (APLA) Reference & Research Symposium held at the Parliament of Victoria in Melbourne. The symposium was organised by Jon Breukel, Senior Reference Librarian and Dr Greg Gardiner, Senior Research Officer, from the Victorian Parliament.

This was the first time reference and research staff had formally come together to discuss issues of common concern. This was an excellent opportunity to share knowledge about the challenges they faced in their research and reference services and how each library was responding to these.

Group discussion was facilitated by Paddy Plunket from the NZ Parliament which allowed participants the opportunity to learn about practices occurring in other parliaments and identify the individual and collective talents of their parliamentary colleagues.

The day's proceedings included presentation of papers relating to parliament and Australian politics. Paul Bellamy, Research Analyst in the Social Policy Team at the New Zealand Parliament spoke on 'The role of parliamentary libraries in democracies (a NZ case-study)'.

Dr Sarah Miskin, from the Research Branch at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Library, spoke on 'Politics and technology in the 21st century'. Dr Sally Young, Senior lecturer in Media and Communications at Melbourne University, delivered a fascinating analysis of the impact of the media on the recent 2007 Australian federal election. Each session was followed by questions and answers, generating lively discussion amongst participants.

The symposium was voted a huge success by all delegates and a commitment was made for hosting similar symposia as an annual event shared amongst the eight participating parliamentary libraries around Australia and New Zealand.

Papers and presentations from the symposium are available at http://www.apla.org.au/events/melbourne2008/program.pdf

Jon Breukel, Victorian Parliamentary Library

Association of Parliamentary Librarians of Australasia (APLA) conference

The 2009 APLA conference will be held in Hobart on 24th July, with the APLA meeting to be held on Friday 25th July. The program includes:

Welcome by Tasmanian Parliamentary Librarian, Juliet Scaife

Opening address: Governor Peter Underwood

Session 1: The important role of Parliamentary Libraries and Research Services in keeping the members informed
Speaker : Mr Paul Calvert, former President of the Australian Senate

Session 2: Digitisation in the Heritage and Tasmanian Information Services – access to collections and services
Ms Noelene Kelly Manager Systems Projects - Integration, State Library of Tasmania
Ms Mandy Oliver Manager, Digital Services, State Library of Tasmania

Session 3: Digital preservation workshop, Cornell University. Digital planning and processes
Jan Lavelle Senior Librarian Systems Development, State Library of Tasmania

Session 4: Digitisation in Canadian Parliamentary Libraries
Vicki Whitmell, Executive Director Legislative, Library Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Open forum – A users perspective
Panel of Parliamentary Members

Summation and thanks—Mary Seefried

Formal close—Peter Alcock Clerk House of Assembly

We will have a number of international visitors including a delegation from the Parliament of Ghana led by Gloria Insaidoo, and, of course, Vicki Whitmell.

Anyone interested in attending should contact:

Janet Thorp
Acting Parliamentary Librarian
Parliamentary Library
Parliament House
Hobart   7000
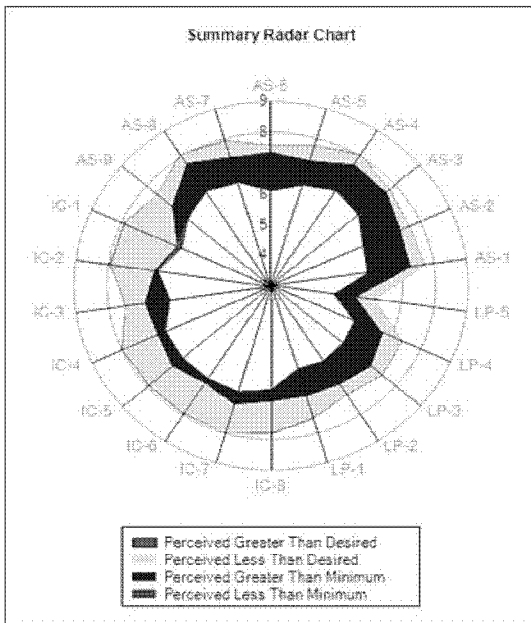Phone: (03) 6233 6255
Fax: (03) 6223 3964
janet.thorp@parliament.tas.gov.au

Keep up to date with APLA through our web site - http://www.apla.org.au/

Roxanne Missingham

European Parliament—client survey

In 2008 the Library ran for the first time a client survey using LibQUAL+™ (FR version here) This service offered by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) has been used by over 500 libraries worldwide. It is based on the SERVQUAL method of assessing quality and it allows libraries to measure how well they are meeting client expectations. The wide use of LibQUAL+™ means that they can also compare their results with similar libraries. So far the European Parliament is the only member of a group of parliamentary libraries, although the survey has been run by at least one other parliamentary library in the past (the Welsh Assembly). We would welcome other parliamentary participants as the opportunity to compare results is potentially one of the most valuable elements of the system.

Summary Radar Chart

Perceived Greater Than Desired
Perceived Less Than Desired
Perceived Greater Than Minimum
Perceived Less Than Minimum

The basic approach is that clients are asked to indicate their 'minimum', 'desired' and 'perceived' level of service for different aspects of the library, on a scale from 1 to 9. This establishes the gaps in quality to be managed – aspects where expectations are either not met or exceeded. The summary results shown left indicate that we do not over-perform (green) on any aspect of service, that we are for most people comfortably above minimum in 'Affect of Service' (customer service, coded AS on the diagram) and the library as a place (coded LP). The areas of greatest weakness are those coded IC (information control) and concern questions on whether users are able to find the required information in the Library in the format of their choosing, in an independent and autonomous way. The two specific points where the chart shows red (below minimum service) for some clients were the questions "A library website enabling me to locate information on my own" and "Making electronic resources accessible from my home or office". We have a very well-used intranet site but we realise that the many individual resources on it can be difficult to find and to use. It is not accessible except through PCs on the parliament's network—clients are interested in off-site use and access via mobile devices. A new library website is in preparation for the new parliament in 2009. Access off-site and on mobile devices are less-easily resolved issues.

Although using LibQUAL+™ has been an interesting experience and the detailed results quite useful there have been various challenges in implementation and analysis. We would be happy to share experiences with others who might want to pursue it. (Teresa Marto)

European Parliament – new Briefings service for individual Members

A pilot project to establish and test a new Library service of 'briefings' opened for business in June. The service is for individual Members and will complement an existing research service, based in the Committee secretariats, which is dedicated to Committee support. The Library Briefings are not original research but rather summarise published expert information. The look and feel is also distinct from normal research reports – they are intended to be written and presented in the style of quality journalism, focused on the key points for the Member. In the initial stage the language will be either English or French according to staff availability and Member preference. They will normally be around 2000 words and in most cases should be produced in around one week from the date the final specification for the job is agreed. Based on that model, the Library expects to produce around 40 briefings per author per year. (Iain Watt)