Special Libraries in the Public Sector

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Agenda

- Provision of Professional Services to Special Libraries
  - A historical perspective
  - Special Libraries managed by NLB today

- Unique Value Propositions

- Challenges Faced by Special Libraries

- Trends in the Library & Reference Services

- Strategies for Special Libraries

- Advantages of Remote Library Services

- Conclusion – Going Forward
Library & Information Services to Government Agencies

The provision of library & information services to government agencies by National Library Board (NLB), & the former National Library started as far back as the 1960’s.

Services include manpower services, where qualified & experienced library professionals from NLB are deployed to manage libraries at the government sites.
Public Libraries:

- **Standalone Libraries (10):**
  - Ang Mo Kio Public Library
  - Bedok Public Library
  - Bishan Public Library
  - Bukit Merah Public Library
  - Central Public Library
  - Geylang East Public Library
  - Jurong West Public Library
  - Marine Parade Public Library
  - Queenstown Public Library
  - Toa Payoh Public Library

- **Mall Libraries (12):**
  - Bukit Batok Public Library
  - Bukit Panjang Public Library
  - Cheng San Public Library
  - Choa Chu Kang Public Library
  - Clementi Public Library
  - Jurong Public Library
  - Khong Guan Public Library
  - Kallang Public Library
  - Mountbatten Public Library
  - Pasir Ris Public Library
  - Punggol Public Library
  - Tampines Public Library

Regional Libraries (3):
- Jurong Regional Library
- Tampines Regional Library
- Woodlands Regional Library

National Library

National Archives

Network of libraries
Special Libraries Managed by NLB Today

NLB’s professional library staff are deployed to fully manage & operate the following Special Libraries:

1. Attorney-General’s Chambers
2. Civil Defence Academy
3. Civil Service College
4. Home Team Academy
5. Legal Aid Bureau
6. Ministry of Foreign Affairs
7. Ministry of Social and Family Development
8. Ministry of Trade and Industry
9. Parliament of Singapore
10. Singapore Tourism Board
11. Subordinate Courts
12. Supreme Court
Special Libraries: The Law Cluster

1. Attorney-General’s Chambers
2. Legal Aid Bureau
3. Parliament of Singapore
4. Subordinate Courts
5. Supreme Court
Special Libraries: The Business Cluster

1. Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2. Ministry of Trade and Industry
3. Singapore Tourism Board
Special Libraries: The Social Science & Humanities Cluster

1. Civil Defence Academy
2. Civil Service College
3. Home Team Academy
4. Ministry of Social and Family Development
Unique Value Propositions

- Offer expertise in the management & provision of library & information services.
- Responsible for continuous professional development & skills upgrading
- Automatically connected to NLB’s network of:
  - Vast collection of physical and digital resources
  - Sharing of knowledge & best practices
  - International & regional networks such as IFLA & CONSAL
Challenges Facing Special Libraries

- Downsizing of Library Budget
- Downsizing of Physical Collection
- Downsizing of Library
Reference services & sources are changing to meet new user interests & needs. Libraries must re-engineer to accommodate users’ workflows & habits.

Advances in ICT technologies have led to irrevocable, ongoing paradigms shifts in service innovations and delivery.

Libraries are shifting from the physical to the virtual medium.
Strategies for Special Libraries

- **Remote Reference & Information Service**
  - Reference enquiries are supported off-site by email or phone

- **Remote Research Service**
  - Research services such as Alerts, Pathfinders, Current Awareness Service can be provided at regular intervals to clients

- **Collection Development & Collection Services**
  - Collection services are supported off-site through consultancy and delivery order requested by clients

- **Hybrid of Onsite & Remote library Services**
  - If desired by clients, a hybrid of onsite & remote library services may be considered
Advantages of Remote Library Services for Clients

**Cost Saving for Clients**

- With remote reference & research services, clients may save substantially compared to having full-time librarian(s) onsite

- Clients do not have to incur overhead expenses for full-time staff to be stationed at their premises, e.g. office space & related expenses

**Uninterrupted Services**

- Clients do not worry about onsite staff being away on vacation, medical leave or training

- The remote library services, which are not provided by a single staff, are available uninterrupted
NLB is assessing & offering clients with off-site Reference & Information Services, as well as Research Services to augment the current provision of services

Currently the Ministry of Communications & Information (MCI) subscribes to the off-site Reference & Information Services, as well as Research Services (fortnightly Trend Alerts)

Others like the Ministry of Social & Family Development (MSF) & the Civil Service College (CSC) are considering such remote services
Thank You!