



*Library and Information Association
of New Zealand Aotearoa
Te Rau Herenga O Aotearoa*

Department of Internal Affairs Portfolio

BRIEFING FOR THE INCOMING MINISTER

October 2017

Contents

1.	Executive Summary and Recommendations	3
2.	Purpose	4
3.	About us	4
4.	The role and impact of libraries	4
5.	The Future of Libraries and the National Library Strategy	5
6.	The National Library Act (2003)	6
7	Legislation for Public Libraries	7
7.	Current State of the Sector	8
	7.1 Access to Research.....	8
	7.2 Impact of Copyright Legislation	8
	7.3 Support to Public Libraries.....	9
	7.4 Developing School Librarians	9
	7.5 Prison Libraries.....	9
	7.6 Remuneration	10
8	Bibliography	10

1. Executive Summary and Recommendations

In today's digital age the role of libraries within society has become more critical than ever, providing equitable access to information and therefore bridging the next socio-economic divide – information poverty.

Key benefits delivered by libraries include:

- Increased literacy and educational outcomes for communities
- Improved societal well-being
- Improved economic outcomes, especially in rural regions

If realised the current National Library strategy *Turning Knowledge into value: strategic directions to 2030* will support and enhance these outcomes for New Zealand communities, however, there are many constraints within the existing structure. Libraries are not currently resourced at a level in line with their value-proposition to society, the legislation environment is not conducive to effective library and information services, and system constraints impede progress.

We are therefore supportive of the government's policy as outlined in the Labour Party manifesto to:

- Increase funding to speed up critical digitisation of heritage collections across New Zealand so existing collections are available online as quickly as possible
- Support Archives NZ, the NZ Film Archive, as well as public and private galleries, libraries, archive organisations and museums to work collaboratively to develop a smart and consistent approach to archiving cultural materials nationally and in the community
- Commit to Archives New Zealand and the National Library being provided with an alternate governance model providing greater independence; which may sit outside the Department of Internal Affairs
- Implement legislation in line with UNESCO Guidelines on Libraries to have free public library services enshrined in law

LIANZA would welcome the opportunity to be involved in any discussions on the future repositioning of the National Library as a separate entity within the State Sector.

In addition we propose that:

- Researchers be incentivised to publish in an open format
- A partnership be developed between National Library and the Ministry of Education to ensure that each school has access to the support of a professional school librarian
- A partnership be developed between National Library and the Department of Corrections to support literacy outcomes for prisoners
- Librarians should be considered as a subject for pay equity rulings

2. Purpose

The purpose of this briefing is:

- to provide an outline of the value which libraries contribute to society across a range of cultural, social, and economic well-being factors.
- to provide an overview of the integral role that National Library plays in delivering these services to New Zealand Communities
- to articulate the current barriers impeding libraries from reaching their full potential
- to provide recommendations to strengthen the provision of library services in New Zealand and improve the ensuing community outcomes around literacy, societal well-being, and economic success

3. About us

The Aotearoa New Zealand Library Association Inc, (LIANZA) is the national organisation supporting organisations and professionals working in library and information services throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. LIANZA represents 379 institutions and 1418 individuals.

Founded in 1910 the Association serves and promotes the interests of the Aotearoa New Zealand library and information industry. It advises and advocates on developments in libraries; promotes excellence and quality in librarianship with a range of awards and recognition; supports reading, authors and publishers through its long standing book awards, including the oldest award in Aotearoa New Zealand, the Esther Glen medal; and encourages lifelong learning for those working libraries through its professional registration scheme and professional development opportunities.

LIANZA maintains links with national and international bodies with similar values and objectives. It has a partnership with Te Rōpu Whakahaui, and is a member of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA).

4. The role and impact of libraries

Libraries play a key role in the communities they serve, creating equity of access to information both digitally and physically, enabling civic participation, supporting reading for pleasure, and enhancing community social and economic outcomes.

Literacy is a significant focus in central government strategy, from the TEC initiative to improve literacy of university graduations to the Department of Corrections initiative to improve literacy of offenders. In addition to language literacy libraries support the new literacies including digital literacy, information literacy, and media literacy.

As the boundaries of privacy and data protection continue to be redefined a key component of digital literacy that libraries will support, will be in helping community members manage and protect their privacy in the digital world.

Reading for pleasure has been demonstrated to have significant positive societal outcomes in addition to improving literacy within a community, such as supporting economic development, and enhancing empathy and mental well-being. Reading for pleasure on the part of school children during holidays also prevents the “Summer reading loss”. It has been shown that children who do not have access to reading material over school holidays can end up several years behind their peers

with regard to literacy levels by the time they graduate from high school. Libraries play a critical role in ensuring all aspects of society have access to material to enable reading for pleasure. In addition librarians are able to curate collections designed to appeal to the tastes, information needs, and reading levels of the communities they serve.

Libraries also have an essential role in collecting, preserving, curation, and sharing the history and memories of communities in both urban and rural environments. This not only supports community groups in capturing and telling their story, but also supports the growing trend of heritage tourism.

From a purely financial perspective ROI studies across public, health, tertiary, and special libraries shows an ROI that ranges from 3:1 to 17:1 – a fantastic return on investment for every dollar spent.

Finally libraries play a critical function in the provision of a commercial free community space, where all parts of the community can meet on an equal footing. A recent report to Auckland Council notes that “A key tenet of the new ‘future libraries’ being developed around the world... is the importance of ‘library as public space’.” As the last non-commercial space available to many within the community the library has an incredibly important role in engaging with and meeting community needs.

Specific examples of library success in these areas are:

- Digital literacy (training classes in basic computing, using e-devices, managing privacy on the internet and social networks)
- Better economic outcomes (CV and resume support, assisting with job applications, access to the web)
- Better societal outcomes (treatment for mental illness through the Books by Prescription scheme; Engagement with people experiencing homelessness to support their use of reading and technology to connect with their families or networks; Support for migrants and refugees through information and provision of content and programmes in their languages supports their successful integration and sense of belonging)
- Improved literacy and better learning outcomes for school children (where a professional school librarian is providing value add services in their library)
- Assisting with university preparedness (through the Tertiary Prep Programme)
- Better health care (contributed to avoidance of adverse patient events through a change in the way that protocols were disseminated by health librarians in the DHB setting).
- Improving PBRF results in the tertiary setting (through the development of technology that aids academics in tracking and measuring the impact and reach of their scholarly publications)
- Maintained and even increased reading levels over school holidays (programmes evaluated confirm this)

5. The Future of Libraries and the National Library Strategy

In 2015 LIANZA held the Future of Libraries Summit. LIANZA brought key stakeholders and members of the Aotearoa New Zealand Library and Information profession together to develop a shared

future for Aotearoa New Zealand Libraries. The report from that day and documented outcomes can be found here: <https://lianza.org.nz/our-work/projects/future-libraries-summit>

The profession indicated clearly through their feedback that they expect National Library to take a leadership role, in partnership with other peak sector bodies, in delivering that future. We were delighted to see that the National Library Strategic plan, *Turning Knowledge into Value – Strategic Directions to 2030*, contained some of the key themes raised during this planning day and also indicates that the National Library will be assuming that leadership role.

We are strongly in support of this strategy, developed after significant community engagement, and believe the three strands: Taonga, Mōhiotanga (Knowledge), and Pānui (Reading) deliver on the purpose of National Library as outlined in the Act. We are excited to see the changes National Library is rolling out in order to deliver on these critical outcomes.

However, due to the efficiency regime that National Library (like the whole of government) has been operating under since the 2008 global financial crisis, existing workstreams are already under-resourced. National Library has indicated they will partner with the sector to identify those areas for priority in resource allocation, however, in order to realise this transformation strategy we believe that central government will need to re-imagine current funding models.

6. The National Library Act (2003)

The National Library Strategic Plan clearly delivers on the outcomes expected for the library as articulated by The National Library Act (2003):

1. Collect, preserve, and protect documents (particularly those relating to New Zealand) and ensure they are accessible for all the people of New Zealand
2. Supplement and further the work of other New Zealand libraries
3. Work collaboratively with other institutions having similar purposes

However, it is less clear whether the current structure allows the National Librarian the scope and autonomy to deliver on their role. As stated in the Act the role of the National Librarian is to:

1. Ensure that the National Library carries out its purpose
2. Promote co-operation in libraries matters with authorities and individuals within New Zealand and elsewhere
3. Deliver services to New Zealand libraries as deemed appropriate by the Minister

The Act implies a close working relationship between the Minister and the National Librarian and articulates a need for the National Librarian to drive sector collaboration. This is supported by an expectation that the National Librarian take on a strong leadership role within the sector.

The Labour Manifesto recognises this articulating a need for both National Library and Archives New Zealand to have independence and influence in order to fulfil their legislated role.

Greater autonomy and focus provided to National Library operations would support other directions of the new government. There is a commitment to increase funding to speed up critical digitisation of heritage collections across New Zealand so existing collections are available online as quickly as possible, but this requires coordination amongst collection holders, and continued development of

technology that allows easy and useful access to the content which in turn requires National Library leadership and resourcing. Progress against “Supplementing and supporting the work of other libraries”, and in particular public libraries has also slowed down. LIANZA urges the new government to allow National Library to reinvest time, focus and resourcing for this critical activity which in turn supports stronger communities, through equitable information access for New Zealanders by assisting in the removal of capability and technology access barriers.

While there have been some benefits from the positioning of National Library within DIA the work that National Library undertakes is not core business for DIA.

We would welcome alternate governance models that better support the strategic outcomes of the National Library.

7 Legislation for Public Libraries

We believe that legislating community access to Library Services is critical.

The UNESCO Public Library Manifesto states that:

To ensure nationwide library coordination and cooperation, legislation and strategic plans must also define and promote a national library network based on agreed standards of service.

Until the Local Government Act 2002 Amendment Bill was passed in 2012 local government authorities had responsibility for the four well-beings (social, economic, environmental, and cultural) of their communities. These priorities were removed being cited by the government at the time as unrealistic. SOLGM make the point that cultural, social, and community activities may no longer be appropriate under this act. At the same time the ability of councils to use development contributions to fund libraries was removed. While Libraries are still described as a core service, legislation providing both protection and funding has been weakened.

As per the Labour Party Manifesto we strongly support the introduction of a Public Library Act, in the vein of the National Library Act, enfranchising in law the benefits that public libraries offer communities.

Public library legislation focussed on desired outcomes would recognise the contribution of libraries to the UN Sustainable Development goals, in particular delivering access to information which underpins these goals: Quality education, Reduced inequalities, Decent work and economic growth, Industry, innovation and infrastructure and Sustainable cities and communities.

The following are countries that have Acts that allow for the provision of effective library services:

- Finland <http://archive.ifla.org/V/cdoc/finnish.htm>
- Catalonia, Spain <http://archive.ifla.org/V/cdoc/spain.pdf>
- Czech Republic <http://archive.ifla.org/V/cdoc/czech.htm>
- Denmark <http://archive.ifla.org/V/cdoc/danish.htm>
- Norway <http://archive.ifla.org/V/cdoc/norway.htm>
- Philippines <http://archive.ifla.org/V/cdoc/philippinesact.pdf>
- Sweden <http://archive.ifla.org/V/cdoc/swedish.htm>
- Australia <http://www.nsla.org.au/publication/annual-australian-public-library-statistics>

Many of these countries also have more collaboration between school and public libraries by virtue of their governance and funding models, which supports a life-long learning approach.

7. Current State of the Sector

While Library and Information services are contributing significantly to positive community outcomes throughout New Zealand they are not currently in the position to maximise on the benefits they can realise for New Zealand communities. Sector constraints – primarily tied into resourcing – limit the current efficacy. Plainly speaking, libraries are not receiving the level of funding that reflects their value proposition to society.

In addition there are other environmental constraints such as the current copyright regime, and issues around access to research which negatively impact the level of service that libraries are able to provide. With the support of National Library and other central government business units we believe that solutions can be reached in many if not all areas of concern.

7.1 Access to Research

Aotearoa New Zealand currently invests over NZD55 million annually in providing our researchers access to the latest research through journal subscriptions, however, it is becoming clear that the current system is not financially sustainable – nor is it providing our researchers with the access to quality research that they need. Access costs are increasing each year while funding remains static, and we also have an issue where publicly funded research is being hidden behind paywalls.

Other countries (such as France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Austria, Sweden, and Germany) are moving towards national agreements negotiated centrally and stipulating a certain level of “open” publishing for research.

We believe that Aotearoa New Zealand would benefit from the introduction of mechanisms to encourage our researchers to publish in an open environment, particularly when the research has been publicly funded.

7.2 Impact of Copyright Legislation

Effective copyright legislation supports the use and reuse of information, and is a critical component underpinning societal innovation. It is important to get the balance right, ensuring that rights-holders / creators are rewarded for their work, while still enabling the innovation that arises from building on others' ideas. Where a regime is too restrictive innovation is stifled, however, where a regime is too permissive rights holders are not incentivised to create.

Aotearoa New Zealand was scheduled to hold a copyright review in 2013, however, this was delayed due to the TPP negotiations, and the review process began in July of this year. This review will be critical to restoring a balance between the rights of copyright holders with those of users of copyright materials. We recommend that a “Fair Use” regime be implemented as part of this review, ensuring that this balance is restored.

7.3 Support to Public Libraries

The public library sector, while facing funding challenges due to constraints at Local Government Level, is going from strength to strength.

While the core function of the library remains unchanged – ensuring equitable access to information and reading materials at a community level – the methods of delivery are undergoing change at pace. This is in part a response to the changing digital environment and in part due to the changing nature of society and the demands now being placed on individuals due to increasing economic hardship. As a result many public libraries are now co-designing their services with the communities they serve to ensure they are meeting community needs. Current service delivery includes everything from homework programmes, to CV support, to books by prescription, to supporting civic participation. Libraries are filling a range of unmet social needs.

National library already provides significant support in this area managing (on a cost recovery basis) APNK and Kōtui programmes. These provide internet access for library patrons, and a shared library management system for libraries.

However, there are significant gains that could be realised. The National Library strategy goes some way to articulating these potential gains with the aspirational description of a single knowledge network, but the reality at present is that there is extreme inequity between the quality and delivery of information services especially in rural areas. We believe that National Library could lead transformative change in this area through a collaborative strategy but will need additional resourcing to do so.

7.4 Developing School Librarians

From a policy perspective the Ministry of Education has not understood the significant contribution that school librarians can offer with regard to improved literacy outcomes and test scores for students. Because of this school libraries are perceived as an optional nice to have, paid for out of the operational budget, and like school librarians, competing with toilet paper and sports equipment for funding. This means that those individuals working as school librarians are often unqualified and unable to deliver real benefit to their institution and students. Professional school librarians can offer curriculum support to teachers, literacy support and reading advice to students, and tertiary preparation training including key information literacy skills. They can also partner with public libraries to ensure that students engage with reading material over school breaks reducing summer reading loss and supporting students to maintain literacy levels.

We believe that National Library could expand its current services to schools, and that a partnership should be developed with the Ministry of Education in order to cement the value of this important role within the education ecosystem.

7.5 Prison Libraries

The Department of Corrections has implemented a strategy to improve the literacy levels of inmates, with the goal that increased literacy will support employment outcomes for offenders. However, they have missed one critical strand – they are not ensuring that inmates have access to regular reading material to support these outcomes. Prison libraries are currently under-resourced, often

working out of inadequate space, and in some cases manned by volunteers. There is also no consistent remuneration or staff development across libraries.

A robust library system with a strong Reader's Advisory component, and best practice collection management, would be able to provide reading material that engages prisoners. This will support literacy outcomes, and in addition reduce boredom and negative prisoner behaviour.

We believe that the National Library could play a role in supporting prison libraries by partnering with the Department of Corrections to provide a national library management system, and collection support, in the way that they currently do for school libraries.

7.6 Remuneration

Remuneration is an area of particular concern to the sector. Given the focus of the current government on pay equity we are hoping to see the remuneration of the profession improve. 82% of the Library and Information profession in New Zealand is comprised of women, and while the gender pay gap is not visible within the profession it becomes glaringly obvious when librarian pay rates are compared with the general market.

Based on Strategic Pay data purchased by LIANZA at a national level, we see librarians in entry level roles being paid 1.5% less than other local government and 6.7% less than the general market. This gap increases as librarians move into more senior roles with those at the top of the pay scale seeing a gap of up to 18% with similarly graded roles on the general market.

And this assumes that position grading is correct – a tendency by decision makers to devalue the librarian skill set means often the position descriptions are not graded at a level that correctly reflects the complexities of the role. This means the actual pay gap is much larger than that indicated by our data.

For school librarians, the picture is even worse. School librarians are classified as support staff by the Ministry of Education which means that they are paid on the same scale as handymen and cleaners. In many cases this doesn't recognise the qualifications that many librarians bring to their roles, nor does it recognise the significant contribution that a qualified librarian can make to the literacy levels and educational achievements of students. In addition when the salary is calculated with unpaid school holidays included the hourly rate often drops below minimum wage.

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