

COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION (CSIRO) AND CONSORTIA IN AUSTRALIA

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Introduction

Geographically isolated from other parts of the world, and with a user population that has a tradition of embracing information technologies, CSIRO and other organisations in Australia have always been early adopters of online resources. This paper provides an overview of CSIRO research, and the organisation's library service, which has a long history of cooperative consortium purchasing, being the largest consumer of scientific information in Australia. The paper also covers other major consortia supporting the Australian academic and research library sectors.

About CSIRO

The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) is Australia's national research agency. CSIRO's vision is to use science to make a profound and positive impact for the future of Australia and the global community. Through great science, CSIRO delivers innovative solutions for industry, society and the environment.

The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) was established in 1926 with primary research orientated towards agriculture. In the late 1930's, research was expanded to industrial research and the organisation was reconstituted as the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) under the Science and Industry Research Act 1949. Over the decades, research activities of the organisation gradually expanded and now cover almost every field of primary, secondary and tertiary industry in Australia.

Today, CSIRO is one of the largest and most diverse scientific research organisations in the world, ranking in the top one percent of the world's scientific institutions in fourteen out of twenty-two research areas. With a total budget of \$1.2 billion, CSIRO researchers produce over 4,000 publications annually with an average citation rate of 13.09. The organisation encourages strong international connections with partners in over eighty countries including foreign governments, small to large companies, international foundations, and leading scientific institutions.

The CSIRO Board is responsible for the efficient performance of the organisation and for developing policy direction. The Board also provides direction to the Chief Executive. To function as an efficient organisation, CSIRO is structured into five areas which are the business units of CSIRO. Within these areas are research divisions, National Research Flagships, as well as core research portfolios. The organisation is also charged with managing three national research facilities and eight national biological collections.

CSIRO has approximately 5,800 staff located at fifty-seven sites across Australia, the sixth largest country in the world in terms of land mass. The geographically dispersed nature of research has always been a challenge in delivering library services effectively.

CSIRO Library History

Upon inception of the organisation in 1926, one librarian was employed in Melbourne to manage a collection of two hundred donated serial titles. In 1929 CSIR's Executive determined that each of the organisations geographically dispersed research divisions should establish their own library, and libraries quickly became integral parts of their research division, with library staff responsible to divisional chiefs. It was at this time that the autonomous divisional libraries, each with their own staff and budget, established a consortium of CSIRO libraries. By 1984, CSIRO had established eighty libraries across the country. The CSIRO Central Library, still based in Melbourne, managed the consortium, including the maintenance of a union catalogue and the ordering of materials on behalf of each library. In addition, the CSIRO Central Library also produced world leading indexing services as well as managing a large gifts and exchange program, and translation service. In 1973, the CSIRO library collection consisted of over one million print volumes and 27,000 serial titles. By 1984, the print collection had expanded to over 1.5 million volumes. By 1993, print subscriptions were in the order of 12,000.

In 1997, a major review of CSIRO libraries recommended that the organisation place a high priority on consortia purchasing of quality electronic information resources, and, in 1999, the CSIRO Electronic Journal Collection (EJC) was launched using the in-house ScienceServer platform. Access was initially provided to 1,200 Elsevier titles and 13 titles from CSIRO Publishing. By 2004, access had increased to 4,500 titles from 15 major publishers, plus major online databases from Thomson and ProQuest. This early unified discovery platform, able to ingest data and search across content from multiple publishers, was extremely popular among researchers and remained in production until 2011.

To provide strategic direction to the CSIRO consortium, known as the CSIRO Library Network, a Library and Information Access Group (LIAG) was formed, chaired by a senior divisional chief and one library representative from each state. Previous print spend by each division was used as a basis for annual eJournal contributions, with voluntary contributions sought from Network members for new products. CSIRO Central Library provided administrative support for the consortium, including contract management and negotiation. However, funding and priorities of the consortium developed into major issues and hindered expansion of new services and online resources. Issues included the diverse research priorities of the organisation, inconsistent service levels and funding across divisional libraries, and large variations in contributions. A lack of consensus on a new, sustainable funding model ensued, which hindered the development and expansion of access to online information across CSIRO.

CSIRO Library Services

A major restructure of support services across CSIRO in 2006, combined all CSIRO Central Library and divisional library staff under a single combined budget. Under the direction of an Executive Manager, library service teams were formed into three streams - Information Specialists, Information Support and Library Collection. In 2011, to support CSIRO strategic directions, a fourth team, Research Data Services, was formed to develop a support service to manage the organisation's data assets.

The new model provided significant advantages, including a single management structure for decision making capability. Significant savings were also realised through decreased resource duplication and administrative overheads, compared to autonomous libraries. In addition, consistent service levels to researchers were now provided across the organisation, with the ability to fill service gaps more effectively. Staff were deployed as experts in services, with an improved capability for the Library to support high priority services including publications and data management.

Currently, the strategic directions of CSIRO Library Services include providing access to information resources in electronic format, across a broad range of eJournals and eBooks and associated backfiles, development of Information Commons allowing a redirection of professional skills to client services, reduction of the print collection, and creation of a dedicated CSIRO Document Supply Centre to improve access to print resources.

Enterprise library technical services are provided to all CSIRO libraries by an Information Support team, which manages cataloguing, acquisitions, the Document Delivery Service, library systems and the library budget. The acquisitions team manages all print and electronic acquisition including licence negotiation and management, online access management, accounts payable, and liaison with external library consortia. Professional negotiation for high value and complex agreements is provided by CSIRO's Procurement group.

Since the formation of CSIRO Library Services, access to online information resources has increased rapidly. CSIRO researchers now have access to over 34,000 eJournal titles and 90,000 eBooks with enterprise collection agreements in place for almost all multi-disciplinary and large subject specific scientific publishers. The organisation also continues to invest heavily in access to backfiles to eJournals, eBooks and online databases.

CAUL : Council of Australian University Librarians

The higher education sector in Australia includes forty-one universities, including two private institutions. Most are multi-campus, and many with campuses overseas. The leading research intensive universities are classified as the "Group of 8" universities, an incorporated network that has operated since 1994. Two of Australia's universities are currently ranked in the top forty worldwide. The majority of public funding for the university sector is received from the Australian government. International students form a significant part of the university population with over twenty percent from overseas countries, contributing over \$16 billion in export income to the Australian economy.

The Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL) provides a common voice and representation for all university libraries. The first meeting of university librarians was in 1928, followed by the formation of the Committee of Australian University Librarians in 1965. An unincorporated association, CAUL membership is open to each University Librarian, or equivalent. In 1995, the CAUL office was opened in Canberra staffed by the Executive Officer and support staff. Providing direction to CAUL is the elected Executive Committee consisting of the President, Deputy President, three committee members and the Executive Officer, as ex officio. Seven advisory committees monitor the environment and report emerging issues and trends, as well as providing representation to CAUL on relevant external bodies.

Established in 1998, the CAUL Electronic Information Resources Consortium (CEIRC) is the peak Australian university library consortium. The CAUL Electronic Information Resources Advisory Committee (CEIRAC) is the advisory committee providing recommendations and advice to CAUL on matters relating to electronic information resources, such as cooperative purchasing, IT infrastructure, mirroring, archiving, publishers' pricing models and licence agreements. Membership of CEIRC consists of all CAUL and CONZUL (New Zealand) members, CSIRO and twenty-one external members, mostly government departments and agencies. Following a recent review, further external membership was closed.

Meeting five times annually, in person and by teleconference, CEIRAC consists of three CAUL members, two datasets coordinators and the CAUL Executive Office, as ex officio. The consortium provides information to participants on purchasing proposals and advises publishers and vendors on acceptable terms and conditions. Each member nominates a Datasets Coordinator as the prime liaison between the institution and the CAUL Office. Where possible all members are included in offers; however, some exclude non-university participants such as CSIRO, or offer alternative pricing. Each year, CAUL holds a one day annual forum of Datasets Coordinators, in conjunction with a major national library conference.

The CEIRC program is supported through an annual fee levied to each member. In 2011, over 150 offers were published to members on an opt-in op-out model, with the cost of the resource paid by the member. Some products are invoiced through CAUL, with others invoiced direct to members from publishers or agents.

Electronic Resources Australia (ERA)

Established in response to the government's report on Libraries in the Online Environment, Electronic Resources Australia (ERA) is a consortium for Australian libraries for collaborative purchasing of electronic resources. The consortium is the first to cover all Australian library sectors and aims to provide Australians with easy access to a variety of trusted online sources through their library. A range of products are available through ERA, selected through a competitive tender process.

Administered by the National Library of Australia as a not-for-profit Australian consortium, membership to ERA is free and open to all Australian libraries, library related entities, or organisations. An executive committee represents the interests of each library sector, with the National Library of Australia appointing an officer to the position of Consortium Executive Officer, ex officio. Libraries that elect to subscribe to products offered by ERA pay the agreed subscription fee offered by the participating vendor.

Seventeen products are currently available through ERA covering a range of subject areas including Australian news and business information, general reference, health information, humanities and social sciences, and science and technology.

Subscription terms agreed to in the deed as part of the tender and selection process include unlimited use on site at the subscribing organisation, remote use by registered staff and patrons using a range of authentication systems, use with virtual services, inter-library loan, and options for two annual billing cycles.

National and State Libraries Australasia (NSLA)

National and State Libraries Australasia (NSLA) represents the national libraries of Australia and New Zealand, and the state and territory libraries of Australia. Members of NSLA are the chief executives of the ten member libraries with

the objectives of the organisation being collaboration, a unified voice to governments, stakeholders and the cultural and education sectors, and enabling people to access, use and share local and global knowledge and ideas.

A key activity of NSLA is the e-Resources consortium, the purpose of which is to secure access to commercial electronic information resources for its member organisations. The consortium aims to simplify licensing agreements, improve cost-benefit to libraries, and explore opportunities to make electronic products more widely available to Australians. With representatives on the NSLA E-Resources Consortium from each membership institution, each with responsibility for recommending and evaluating products, the consortium is monitored, evaluated and reviewed by the NSLA Executive. The secretariat works out of the National Library of Australia, and the National Library negotiates and signs agreements on behalf of members.

A products list details over thirty resources available to each member including major databases such as Ancestry Library Edition, Australia/New Zealand Reference Centre, Health and Wellness Resource Centre, JSTOR and Pressdisplay. Patrons of member organisations can use the products on-site with some allowing registered users remote access.

Clinicians Health Channel (CHC)

Funded entirely by the Victorian Department of Health, the Clinicians Health Channel (CHC) is an online information portal providing free access to current, accurate and reliable sources of information for all health professionals working in the Victorian public health sector. CHC aims to provide access to critical clinical knowledge to clinicians in the Victorian public health system, ensure that online information is available whenever and wherever required, and to integrate evidence-based practice into the health care system.

Supplementing the resources and services available in state health libraries, EBSCO is currently contracted to provide the CHC service sourcing and maintaining content from a wide range of Australian and international publishers as well as providing search and usage tools. Athens is used for authentication, with mobile access available for selected resources. Regular training is provided and an email/telephone helpdesk is available.

CHC provides online access to a broad range of resources including CINAHL, Embase.com, MEDLINE, PsycINFO, drug and point of care resources, as well as full-text eJournals and eBooks.

Summary

CSIRO's information resources are an essential element of CSIRO's research effort, as well as an important national resource. Following the most significant change in library services in CSIRO's history, the organisation is now able to provide cost-effective, efficient and equitable access to an extensive range of online information resources. CSIRO Library Services supports research work across the organisation, as well as providing information to Australian and overseas scientific communities.

As a consequence of our remote location from the rest of the world, Australian libraries have been early adopters of online information, with a diverse range of consortia now supporting different library sectors to provide access to online information resources.