

# PUBLISHERS LIAISON COLUMN

**Kerrie Millgate**

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Members of the National Publishers' Liaison Committee in Melbourne for the Inaugural Law Symposium took the opportunity to meet over lunch on Friday 4 October. Fay O'Grady attended as an honoured ex-Convenor. There was much discussion, while balancing rolls and orange juice, about electronic publishing. Issues raised included pricing structures, support, disk security and training. We thought it would be interesting to look at some comparative costings of hard copy, CD-ROM and on-line sources as well as other issues raised, over the next year. We would like to hear your views on these important topics as there is no doubt they will assume even greater importance over the next few years. Please contact your State Committee member in the first instance.

## ***LBC Information Services - Postage and Handling Charges***

High volume subscribers to LBC Information Services were very pleased recently to receive letters from LBC Managing Director, Eddie Costigan, waiving postage and handling charges from October 1996. This column commends Mr Costigan and LBC on this initiative. LBC has heard the concerns of its customers and responded accordingly and thanks is deserved. However our delight in this decision was somewhat dampened on learning the reprieve applied only to those organisations spending over \$12,000 a year with the company.

Sue Green wrote to Mr Costigan on behalf of the smaller libraries associated with the ALLG Queensland Branch. This letter and Mr Costigan's response are reproduced below.

Dear Eddie,

**Re: LBC Postage and Handling Charges**  
**You ref: Letter of 1 October 1996**

Thank you for your response to the problems associated with the increases in postage and handling for the LBC services. However, as the Publishers' Liaison spokesperson for ALLG (Qld Div), I would like to voice my concerns at the outcome and handling of this matter.

Whilst the larger institutions and law firms are obviously pleased with the final outcome, this does not address the concerns felt by the smaller subscribers.

The small subscribers are unable to reap the benefits of discounted costs, available to those who subscribe to a total annual subscription greater than \$12,000. This cut off figure would obviously only apply to a few national law firms and other large institutions.

I feel that LBC should look seriously at their handling of this whole matter. The rhetoric of your letter of 1 October 1996, did not negate the damage done by the events of the last few months.

On behalf of the smaller libraries associated with the ALLG (Qld) Division. I would like to voice my concern at the implementation of this policy. Once again it is the smaller firms/libraries which are unable to take advantage of the savings offered to the larger subscribers.

Yours faithfully,

**Sue Green**

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**Ms Sue Green**

Library Manager

Mallesons Stephen Jaques

632 Roma Street

Brisbane Qld 4003

**Re your letter 22 October 1996 Postage and Handling**

With regard to the issues discussed in your most recent letter, LBC fully appreciates the concerns that you have raised on behalf of the smaller libraries associated with the ALLG.

As mentioned previously in my letter to you, the basis for our decision on the postage and handling charge waiver is related to volume trading and we have set up individual agreements with those of our customers spending in excess of \$12,000 per year.

While some of our customers will miss out on this waiver on the charge this is not intended so much as a disadvantage to the smaller firms but rather as an incentive for those of our customers that spend above the average with the company. As you know, providing an incentive or return on investment for top customers is a familiar practice amongst many large corporations.

I hope this further clarifies our situation. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any further concerns.

Yours sincerely,

**Eddie Costigan**

Managing Director, LBC

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