

# Cheaper books and computer software

Australian consumers and small businesses can expect lower prices for books, periodical publications, printed music and computer software products as a result of legislation introduced into Federal Parliament earlier this year.

Monitoring by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) over the last ten years shows that Australian businesses have had to pay an average of 27 per cent more for packaged business software than their overseas competitors. Australia's small businesses also have to wait longer than their overseas counterparts for software.

Analysis by the ACCC found that consumers often pay too much for books and software. This legislation will help consumers, small business and the education sector by producing lower prices and greater opportunity to source and sell stock.

The Copyright Amendment (Parallel Importation) Bill 2001, currently before the Parliament, will remove existing restrictions on the parallel importation of computer software products (including popular applications for word processing, database management and graphical analysis, popular console and PC games, video arcade games and CD-ROMs).

It will also allow the importation of books, periodical publications such as journals and magazines, sheet music and electronic versions of these products. This means that Australian businesses will be able to import for commercial purposes copies of these products produced legitimately overseas, without obtaining the permission of the Australian copyright owner.

Contrary to claims made by opponents of the legislation, the removal of parallel import restrictions will not lead to an increase in piracy. Australian-produced software will still be fully protected under the Digital Copyright regime. Parallel imports are not pirated goods. They are genuine goods legally sold in the country of export with the permission of the copyright owner. Allowing parallel importation does not mean that it will be legal to import pirated products. ■

## National Centre for Vocational Education Research

### Forum: Australian apprenticeships: facts, fiction and future

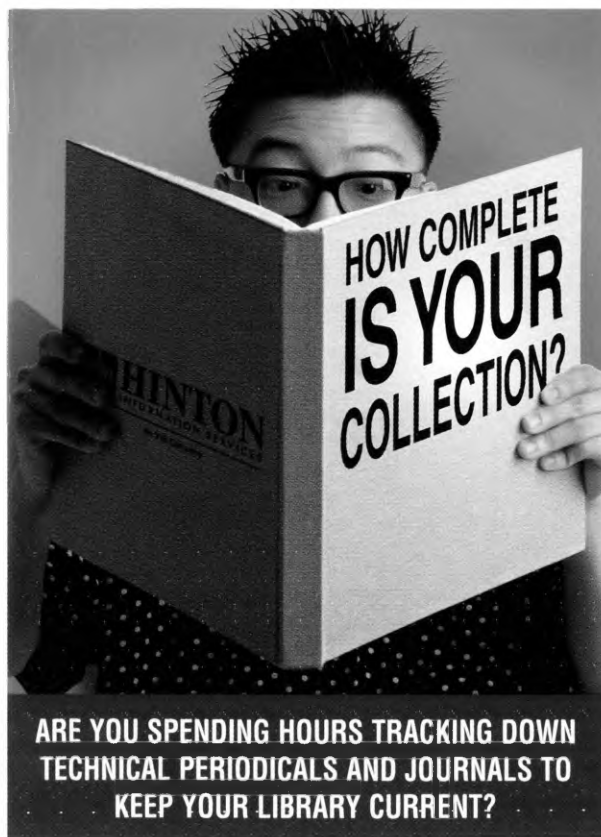
Don't miss this presentation of the key findings from the most comprehensive analysis of the Australian apprenticeship system ever completed.

Eminent researchers will share their findings and discuss what the future may bring. Discuss, comment and question but, above all, participate in an exciting interactive format.

Facilitated by Mark McCrindle

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|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| 16 May    | Adelaide — Hyatt Regency          |
| 23 May    | Melbourne — Eden on the Park      |
| 4 June    | Sydney — Sydney Hilton            |
| 13 June   | Darwin — Carlton Darwin           |
| 26 June   | Perth — Sheraton Perth Hotel      |
| 5 July    | Hobart — Hadleys                  |
| 27 July   | Canberra — Chifley on Northbourne |
| 10 August | Brisbane — Novotel Brisbane       |

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