

ALIA wins 'best practice' recognition

The Australian Library and Information Association has been ranked among Australia's best-practice organisations in the 2005 Work/Life Balance Survey conducted by MWLF International and CCH Australia.

Now in its eighth year, the survey is recognised as Australia's major analysis of what has become a vital labour market issue. Its methodology reviews business practices in selected organisations to establish those that are best assisting staff to create an effective balance between their professional and personal lives. The overall effect of these initiatives on business performance is then measured.

Demographic trends and public policy discourse are rapidly making management of work/life policies a critical issue for organisations and the economy. As efforts increase to build labour market participation and keep skilled people at work, this will become a critical yardstick in organisational performance. Enterprises able to demonstrate high standards in this area will gain tangible advantages by presenting themselves as attractive places in which to work.

For 2005, almost 400 enterprises were assessed. The top 25 per cent were designated 'best practice' organisations. The major criteria demonstrated by par-

ticipants judged best-practice performers were: a demonstrable commitment to work/life issues by the chief executive officer; leaders within the organisation who encourage and support employees to access programs and options that reduce conflict between work and lifestyle responsibilities; work/life issues regarded as a strategic business issue; policies that support a wide range of flexible work options; high use of family leave by both men and women; a workplace free of discrimination and bullying.

ALIA's adviser, industrial relations and employment, Phil Teece says the library and information sector needs to give high priority to work/life balance. He emphasises that the library and information sector has one of the oldest and most feminised workforces in Australian industry.

'We have a huge interest in retaining a skilled workforce — work/life balance will be critical,' he said.

Mr Teece says ALIA is delighted to have been rated so highly. 'We will be even more pleased if our success boosts interest in work/life balance across the sector,' he said.

Contact: Phil Teece, ph 02 6215 8228, phil.teece@alia.org.au. ■

AGLIN 2nd Annual Conference

The Innovative Information Professional

The second annual conference of the Australian Government Libraries Information Network (AGLIN) will be held at the National Library of Australia on 12–13 July.

Over the two days ten speakers will present on the broad themes of innovation and marketing, including two keynote speakers:

- Patrick Lambe, founder and principal consultant of Straits Knowledge, will talk about innovative practices in the National Library of Singapore;
- James Robertson, managing director of Step Two Design, recognised as an innovator in the fields of intranets and content management, will talk about how services can best be marketed using the intranet.

Issues to be covered include: employer expectations of information professionals; collaboration and cooperation through consortia; Indigenous knowledge; the importance of understanding client needs and terminology; and the need for libraries to market proactively.

Registration for the conference is \$550 or \$495 for ALIA members — this includes the conference dinner on 12 July at Old Parliament House.

Full details of the conference program and registration form are at <http://www.nla.gov.au/aglin/>. ■

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