2013 ALIA National Advisory Congress
Regional Teleconference
03 September 2013

Attendance
Chair: Sue McKerracher
Minute Taker: Erin York
Attendance: 5 members, three ALIA staff

General notes:

- Google is trying to connect people with information in the same way that librarians have traditionally done. How do we compete?

Future of the Profession document

- The Future of the Profession document was very rosy, attendees not sure that the future will be quite as rosy. Also not sure about the technology changes outlined in the document.

	Challenges
Political	How do special libraries frame themselves? Should we be using the term 'industry' rather than 'special'? Coming from the SGS Economics survey.
	Copyright continues to be a challenge in libraries.
Economic	Ebooks and elending are huge economic costs with little known about how things will work out in the future.
	People are trying to do more work with less resources and staff leading to mediocre results.
	Funding is the biggest issue. Publishers pricing goes up 7-10% per year, my budget goes up 3% per year. Every year there has to be cuts and eventually I will end up with the bare minimum and eventually that is all we will have. Having to do more with less.
	It can be very hard to demonstrate the value of what we do.
	The role of libraries and librarians will have to change.
Technological	
Workforce and skills	Schools need to keep supplying resources and that won't change but the technology will change extensively. How do we support all devices and keep up with all of the devices?
	IT support can be difficult. In special libraries, the library

can be low on the priority list. This has lead to a preference for outsourcing everything.

With the changing technology, the training LIS professionals have received is sometimes obsolete.

There are less jobs available and the jobs that are available require significantly more skills that are more specialised

Lack of PD opportunities (employer based or problems with regional areas) in organizations and people not willing to participate on their own leading to a lack of knowledge.

Is library education so general that it isn't relevant? Should it be more specialised?

People are very comfortable in their roles, and sometimes don't want to change things. It is difficult to get rid of these employees. How do you change when you can't change these people?

Not having the skills to support the technology.

Need the confidence and business cases ready and say without us you won't get the quality information that is essential. The problem is we don't assert ourselves and say what we do well.

Opportunities

Political   Figuring out how to align the library with the strategic direction of organizations (if library is just a piece of the pie) is a huge opportunity.

Social	It is important that the library industry make the right connections and work more collaboratively with other organisations. Archivists have done this well by maintaining that they are the experts but helping people to understand how to do things themselves.
	LIS needs to have really strong leadership and people who model good behavior and best practices for PD.
	LIS has many enthusiastic people and we need to get more in .
	Technological change is not likely to slow down anytime soon. We have to figure out how to embrace change and treat it as a part of the job.
Workforce and skills	We can be the advocates to get information literacy side of devices and platforms built in. We can look at what is not working and lobby to make them more user friendly.

What should ALIA do?

- ALIA should have a stronger role in professional development so that people are up-skilling and feel a professional obligation to do so.
- ALIA should create a document or tour a workshop that discusses how to align the library within the strategic direction of the organisation.
- Figuring out how to deal with the 'bring your own device' phenomenon.
- ALIA should encourage a culture of sharing. In the LIS industry, people can be secretive. We should write and share our ideas so that we can all move forward.
- Without a workplace that is supportive of professional development it can be hard to participate. ALIA should lobby for more PD friendly workplaces.

- There are lots of great ideas coming out of ALIA Weekly, but they get lost in the issues. ALIA should figure out a way to catalogue the content so that it is easy to go back and find later.