



RVIB CENTRAL CONSULTANCY SERVICES

Mainstreaming Disability Services in Victorian Public Libraries – Report, Recommendations and Key Performance Indicators

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Contents

Project Overview	1
Project objectives	1
Context	2
Introduction	3
Summary of recommendations	3
Minimum branch standards	4
Library service standards	5
Inter-library service standards	5
Detail of recommendations	6
Policies and planning	6
Consultation	6
Funding	8
Staffing	9
Delivery of disability library services	9
Training	9
Systems	11
Physical access and layout	12
Physical access	12
Physical layout	13
Signage	14
Collections and resources	16
Information about disabilities	16
Large print collection	17
Audio collection	18
Electronic formats	19
Materials suitable for use by people with intellectual disabilities	20
Materials suitable for use by people with print disabilities	21
Materials suitable for use by people with a hearing impairment	22
Materials suitable for use by LOTE readers and LOTE readers with disabilities	23

Services	26
Production of library service information	27
Library orientation/user education	28
Internet and other electronic services	29
Home library services	30
Mobile library services	31
Equipment	32
Cooperation	34
Resource sharing	34
Consultation	35
Promotion	36
Evaluation	37
Conclusions	38
Bibliography	39
Appendix A Evaluation topics – service level	
Appendix B Evaluation worksheet – branch level	
Appendix C Statement of understanding	

Project Overview

As part of a series of Statewide Projects a working committee representing VICLINK (Victorian Public Library and Information Network) and the Library Network Unit at the State Library of Victoria initiated a Mainstreaming Disability Services Project. VICLINK also identified an urgent need in a variety of areas for a cohesive statewide context to guide funding and planning authorities in regard to access and delivery of public library services to and for people with disabilities. The general outcomes of this work are:

- Improved the provision of service and access availability to people with disabilities.
- Improved disability service cohesiveness throughout the Victorian Public Library Network.
- Raised awareness of disability issues in public libraries.

The original project was aimed at developing a coordinated strategy to introduce adaptive technology and other resources using a pilot group of four libraries. This has now been developed into a longer-term process to extend throughout the public library network. The project is being conducted in parallel with the Statewide *Voiceprint* project and training of public library staff.

It was the wish of the working committee that a needs analysis of public libraries be conducted in order to develop a report recommending strategies for improving service, resource and equipment requirements for people with disabilities. The needs analysis was conducted in a pilot group of four public libraries.

Project Objectives

1. Develop a recommended strategy for incorporating disability services into mainstream public library services.
2. Assist selected libraries to improve their level of service to people with disabilities.
3. Provide and install selected public libraries with adaptive technology and other resources identified as necessary to provide adequate services to people with disabilities.
4. Recommend a further strategy for implementation throughout Victorian public libraries.

Context

Current State and Federal legislation requires organisations such as libraries to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities. Given restricted resources in libraries, disability services cannot always be developed as a priority area. Similarly, little consistency of standard or approach exists between public libraries and as a consequence public expectations of access for people with disabilities are not high. Development of services for people with disabilities in public libraries has tended to be ad hoc with little apparent relationship between community needs and the provision of resources and facilities.

It is generally accepted that the population is ageing. Given this situation, it is expected that in the future an increasingly higher proportion of the population will be disabled to some degree, particularly in terms of sight, hearing and mobility.

This report is the culmination of three years work with people with disabilities, disability organisations and Victorian Public Libraries discussing and evaluating disability services, facilities and resources.

Introduction

In any evaluation or discussion of library services it is important to remember that libraries are places where people can expect to be helped. Libraries have a history of service culture. This means that when people visit their local libraries and ask for help, in the main, library staff will endeavour to provide users access to the information they want. There is a point at which, no matter how willing library staff may be to help, they may not have the resources, collections, equipment or services required to do so. This is especially the case when dealing with people with disabilities.

This project identified areas in which libraries can improve their services to people with disabilities. Another outcome of this work has been to raise awareness of disability issues in public libraries, so that staff can begin to be proactive in planning and resourcing disability services, not reactive to the needs of people with disabilities when and if they visit their public library.

It is important to bear in mind that many strategies implemented to improve services for people with disabilities can enhance services for other library users. For example improved access for users with physical disabilities can also benefit people with mobility difficulties such as the elderly or parents with prams. Many strategies to improve service for people with low vision can also enhance services for other users with less severe vision loss. Examples of this include enlarged print on information pamphlets and forms, and large screen Online Public Access Catalogues.

Summary of recommendations

Libraries are operating in environments of restricted resources. The resources available to develop new programs and services and to maintain existing collections and services are tight. In this context it is difficult for public libraries to give priority to disability services. It is, however an important area in which libraries need to be active. With this in mind this project has developed a strategy for implementing minimum disability service levels in public libraries.

The Mainstreaming Disability Services project recommends that a tiered approach to disability services be adopted in Victorian Public Libraries, initially in the pilot library services participating in this project. The recommended approach involves three levels of service.

1. Disability services provided at the branch level.
2. Disability services provided at the Library Service level.
3. Disability services provided across one or more Library Services.

Minimum branch standard

At the branch level people with disabilities should have:

- access to the building
- opportunity to move independently around the building
- independent access to services and resources
- access to a minimum level of collections and resources:
 - information about disabilities
 - large print collections
 - audio collections
 - materials suitable for use by people with intellectual disabilities
 - materials suitable for use by people with print disabilities
 - materials suitable for use by people with a hearing impairment
- a minimum level of services:
 - library service information in print alternative formats
 - library orientation/user education
- a minimum level of equipment:
 - photocopiers which can enlarge print
 - photocopiers suitable for use by people in wheelchairs, (height especially, needs to be considered)
 - magnifiers (hand held)
 - portable reading lamps
 - carry bags and/or trolleys to assist with book collection
 - book rests
 - facsimile for contact by people with hearing impairments
 - OPAC's and computers on desks which are wheelchair accessible
 - OPAC's with large screens, glare filters and colour schemes suitable for people with low vision
 - a mixture of tables and chairs suitable to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities, including mobility impairment and wheelchairs. In particular, high chairs with arms and adjustable height desks should be considered
 - telephones (where telephones are available for public use, alternatives should be available for people with a hearing impairment)

Library Service Standard

At the Library Service level, branches would be developed where the range of services, collections and resources and equipment above the minimum standard should include:

- access to additional collections and resources:
 - materials suitable for use by LOTE readers and LOTE readers with disabilities
- access to additional services:
 - Internet and other electronic services
 - Home Library Services
- access to additional equipment:
 - Internet with voice output and text enlargement software to provide access to Internet resources as well as local library service catalogue on the Internet
 - meeting rooms with audio loops
 - modified telephones e.g. volume controlled, TTY, hearing aid coupler
 - cassette players

In addition, at the Library Service level there should be a coordinated approach to:

- collections and resources, e.g. collection development policies for large print and audio, and a strategy for making this material available at all branches should be coordinated at the library service level
- services, e.g. policies governing production of library service information, etc. should be developed at this level

Inter-library Service Standard

At the inter-library service level, branches would be developed where the minimum range of equipment should include:

- reading machine/scanner which converts print into speech or electronic formats
- braille printer/embosser and appropriate translation software
- braille display for computer
- closed circuit television for magnification
- page turners
- televisions which receive closed captions

In addition, there could be further cooperation between library services in a number of areas. These include:

- training
- approaches to funding bodies and lobbying of Government, etc
- resource sharing

Detail of recommendations

Policies and Planning

Many library services fail to consider the needs of people with disabilities when planning and evaluating their services. It is often not necessary to write policies specifically for services to people with disabilities and in some cases this may marginalize these groups. However, it is important that consideration of the needs of library users with disabilities is made at the time of preparing policies and plans for library services in general. If this results in a decision not to write disability specific policies, but to integrate the needs of these users into all types of services provided, at least the issue has been raised and discussed.

Recommendations

- 1. Consideration of the needs of people with disabilities should be made during the development of general library policies such as Forward Plans, Corporate Plans and Business Plans, etc. In addition, consideration of this group of users should also be made when formulating more operational policies such the Collection Development Policy, Selection and Acquisition Policy, Loans Policy, etc.**
- 2. Consideration of the types and levels of provision of services and resources appropriate to the needs of people with disabilities should be made by all public library services.**
- 3. Policies and planning should consider the provision of independent access to services and resources by people with disabilities.**
- 4. Many councils are developing broad disability service policies to govern a range of council services available to the community. Libraries should give consideration to the disability policies of councils where available.**

Key Performance Indicators

Public Library Services should be able to clearly demonstrate that they have considered the needs of people with disabilities in all library policies.

Consultation

It is important that libraries consult with relevant groups when developing any policies that may affect that particular group. It is possible in some circumstances that services developed or introduced for a specific group of users may adversely affect another group of users. Consultation during planning and policy formulation can therefore be very important.

Recommendation

Library services should establish strategies for consultation with people with disabilities. Groups of users with disabilities can be invited to input into the planning of library services with a view to how these could improve services to people with disabilities. Consultation with specialist agencies and service providers may also be useful in determining how planning and policies may impact on services to people with disabilities. Specialist agencies and service providers (especially local groups) can be useful sources of information and assistance in the area of disability services.

Key Performance Indicators

Public Library Services must be able to clearly demonstrate that they have consulted with people with disabilities as well as relevant disability agencies and service providers.

Funding

Many libraries do not address the issues of funding for disability services. While large print, audio and other collections are allocated resources, usually on an annual basis, other services to people with disabilities are not considered and therefore not allocated resources either annually or as required.

In order to make public library services available to people with disabilities, library services and councils should consider these service requirements and budget accordingly. Equipment purchased will eventually have to be upgraded. Consideration of disability services should therefore be an ongoing responsibility of all library services, councils, the State Library and Government.

There are many ways to allocate funding to disability services. These include:

- allocation of resources as a percentage of the total budget
- allocation on the basis of a per capita amount based on the incidence of people with disabilities
- funding for particular programs, equipment purchase, etc.

Public libraries need to be aware of other possible funding sources for disability services. Other funding sources include:

- Office of Local Government
- Arts Victoria (managed by the State Library of Victoria, Network Services)
- Local Councils
- Special funding initiatives established by Federal and State Governments
- Trusts available for funding specific programs and services on a one-off basis.

Recommendation

Public Library Services should give serious consideration to how they will resource disability services on an ongoing basis.

Key Performance Indicators

- Public Library Services must be able to clearly demonstrate that they have considered funding services to people with disabilities.
- Public Libraries should allocate not less than the amount allocated per capita for service to the general (non-disabled) community. Total library expenditure divided by population.

Staffing

Delivery of disability library services

In the past many libraries have either not considered staffing in relation to disability services or adopted the model of designating a single position to be responsible for delivery of services to people with disabilities. This latter model can result in other staff declining responsibility in this area and referral of library users with disabilities to the "*Disability Librarian*" who may not always be available when required.

Recommendations

- 1. A person's ability to deal with people with disabilities should be assessed during the interview process for any position in a public library service. Library services should incorporate this consideration into their appointment process.**
- 2. Responsibility for the delivery of library services to people with disabilities should be the responsibility of all library staff; in particular customer services staff. This responsibility should be stated in position descriptions. Coordination of disability services for branches should be the responsibility of the Branch Manager. Further coordination of disability services at a library service level is also required. At this level coordination should be the responsibility of the *Adult Services, User Services or Special Services Librarian, etc.*, depending on the structure of the Library Service.**

Key Performance Indicators

- Public Library Services must be able to clearly demonstrate that they have included assessment criteria relating to services to people with disabilities in their staff appointment process.
- Public Library Services must be able to demonstrate (via position descriptions) that the responsibility for provision of services to people with disabilities is assumed and understood by all customer services staff.

Training

Many library services have no structured approach to training staff in the area of delivery of disability services. Combined with the lack of a structured approach in this area is the problem of identifying suitable training programs and trainers. The recent development and publication of the *Disability Awareness Kit* goes some way to addressing the lack of a training program but the need for identification of suitable trainers remains.

Recommendations

1. Libraries should offer an appropriate level of training to staff in order to promote awareness of the issues involved in providing library services to people with disabilities.
2. Libraries should develop a structured training program for staff in order for them to develop an awareness of disability issues and services. The program could simply be based on that outlined in the *Disability Awareness Kit*.
3. Training for staff about how to deal with people with psychiatric disabilities should be developed. This may be simply a program, which discusses a range of psychiatric illnesses, and trains staff to deal with situations that may arise with regard to this group of users.
4. At any one time at least 80% of user services staff should have completed the disability services training program adopted by the library service.
5. An overall introduction to disability issues and services should be part of the general induction program for library staff.
6. A suitable organisation or trainer to conduct disability training in a public library environment should be identified and contracted to provide all disability training in public libraries for a given period. Training could be provided for a number of library services simultaneously, where appropriate.
7. Training of staff in the use of adaptive technology, equipment and other specialised resources and services needs to be conducted.

Key Performance Indicators

- Public Library Services must be able to demonstrate that they have in place an ongoing training program in the area of disabilities, incorporating attitudes, services and technology.
- At any time, at least 80% of customer services staff should have completed the disability training program used by the Library Service.

Systems

It is often difficult and expensive to address disability access issues after a particular system has been implemented in a library service.

Recommendation

Libraries should consider disability access issues with regard to information technology and in particular library systems during the tender requirements and evaluation phase of system and software selection. This ensures the costs and amount of work required to make systems accessible by people with disabilities is kept to a minimum. In addition, this approach makes suppliers of systems aware of the needs of people with disabilities and encourages them to consider these issues during system and software development.

Key Performance Indicators

- All technology in public libraries available to the general public, including OPAC's and the Internet must be equally accessible to people with disabilities.

Physical access and layout

Physical access

Many physical access issues are difficult and expensive to address. The mainstreaming of disability services cannot, however, be discussed without some consideration of these issues. For example there is little point in making improvements inside a building or providing specialist services for people with physical disabilities, if the building is not accessible to this group. It is not the aim of this report to comprehensively address the issues of building design and access. This is a topic that needs to be addressed by individual public library services and their associated councils. The recommendations listed here are intended as a starting point for libraries to begin to assess their buildings and access for people with disabilities.

Recommendations

- 1. All branches of all library services should be physically accessible to people with disabilities. (This must be a long-term goal as many library buildings are not currently accessible and the resources to achieve accessibility are not immediately available in many cases. Consideration of access issues must be done at the time of new branches being established, new buildings being constructed and existing building undergoing refurbishment.)**
- 2. Branches are ideally located where they are easily accessible by a variety of public transport and if possible, serviced by a community bus.**
- 3. If the library is located in a position where library users are required to navigate a busy road, a pedestrian crossing fitted with audible signals should be available.**
- 4. Parking for people with disabilities should be available as close as possible to the library building. These parking spaces should meet the appropriate Australian Standard with regard to width, etc. A covered area is desirable.**
- 5. Level or almost level access is the ideal for people with mobility impairments. However, all buildings should be fitted with ramps where level access is unavailable. Where ramps are essential, long steps should be considered for older users of walking frames and sticks.**
- 6. Entrances to library building should be fitted with automatic sliding doors which should be wide enough to allow for wheelchair access.**
- 7. Strips of contrasting colour can be applied to step edges to assist people with low vision.**
- 8. Visual alarms and well sign posted exits should be fitted in library buildings to assist the safe evacuation of people with hearing impairments.**

9. The use of intercom systems at doors should be avoided and doorbells and buzzers should be wired to produce audible and visual signals simultaneously.
10. After hours book return chutes should be located where they are easily accessible by people with disabilities, in particular mobility impairments. Some consideration is also required with regard to the height of the chute.
11. Disabled toilet facilities should be provided within library buildings.

Physical layout

Libraries can generally improve physical layout more easily than improvements required for actual library buildings. It is important however, that library staff be aware of the issues concerning good interior design and layout before they develop plans for shelving layout or interior improvements. The recommendations listed here are intended as a starting point for libraries to begin assessing their interior design and layout for maximum access for people with disabilities.

Recommendations

1. The interior design and physical layout of libraries should be such that it enables the most independent use of library services and resources by people with disabilities.
2. There are many standards available for building interiors and these should be consulted before libraries begin the process of making internal changes. These standards include corridor and shelving aisle widths, specifications for stairs, the hanging of doors, etc.
3. Consistency in design can be an important element. Consistency of style and design should be considered with regard to colour, door and door furniture, benches, desk, chair and other furniture requirements, signage, etc.
4. Floors, stairs and other public areas should be finished with non-slip surfaces. Any rugs or other carpet/floor overlays should be secured in place. Carpeted surfaces can reduce distracting noise, which can cause problems for people with a hearing impairment.
5. All corridors and walkways open to the general public should be free of obstacles, including suspended signs, etc. An uninterrupted path of travel should be available within the building providing access to all required facilities.
6. A simple, straight forward layout based on right angle arrangements is easier for people with disabilities to negotiate than other less conventional layout designs.
7. Navigational aids such as different or contrasting floor covering can enhance navigation by people with low vision.

8. Fixtures such as circulation and reference desks with exposed space underneath them can be difficult for cane users as they cannot locate where the structure meets the floor.
9. Counters, bench and table tops should be free of sharp edges.
10. Important stations such as the reference and general enquiry desk should be clearly marked and centrally located. Ideally these should be located directly in front of the entry point of the building. Tactile markers can be useful for guiding people from the entry to the desk.
11. Large open plan areas should be avoided as these can be difficult for people with low vision to navigate and can also create sound problems for people with hearing impairments
12. Special consideration should be given to lighting. Libraries should ensure that glare is kept to a minimum. Overall lighting should avoid patches or sudden changes from brightly lit to dark areas. Careful positioning of lighting, especially in reception areas or at desks where face to face communication may occur, is important for people with a hearing impairment who need a clear unobstructed view of speaker's faces.

Key Performance Indicators

- All Public Library Service buildings must be fully accessible to people with disabilities.
- All relevant building standards must be followed with regard to library building design.

Signage

Library signage is an important aspect of providing independent access to library resources and collections by some groups of people with disabilities. For example a hearing impaired person can guide themselves around a well sign posted library without having to ask for simple directions.

In the past library signage has not been guided by any standards and as a result there is no consistency in signage either within services or in the Public Library Network as a whole. Signs in libraries range from very simple handwritten signs or computer generated, laminated signs to very glossy purchased signage.

Recommendations

1. A standard with regard to signage should be developed for the Victorian Public Library Network. The appropriate Australian Standard could be used as a starting point. Where possible graphics should be incorporated into library signage, e.g. the universally recognized information symbol.
2. Signage should be consistent in style and placement.
3. Exterior signs should be:
 - Located near the entrance
 - Between ground and eye level
 - Positioned where they will not cause injury
 - In an accessible place allowing close inspection
 - In clear, unobstructed view
 - Uncluttered with not too many messages in one place
4. Interior signs should be:
 - Placed at eye level
 - Near doorways or traffic areas
 - Clearly defined
 - Large print with good, bold text using clear contrast such as black on white
5. Major areas and facilities requiring signage include:
 - Auditoriums and meeting rooms
 - Car parks
 - Emergency exits
 - Catalogues and reference and information desks
 - Lifts
 - Public toilets
 - Public telephones
 - Fire extinguishers
 - Collections

Key Performance Indicators

- All Public Library Service buildings must have clear and consistent signage appropriate to the needs of people with disabilities.
- All major areas, services and facilities must be sign posted.
- The minimum standard with regard to consistency should be that all buildings within a service should have consistent and standard signage. A long term aim should be that signage is standard throughout the Victorian Public Library Network.

Collections and resources

A library's collection should cater for the needs of a representative proportion of its user population. In general the collection should include a suitable selection of material in print alternative formats, information about disabilities and disability issues.

Information about disabilities

Libraries are often one of the first places people visit to obtain information on any number of subjects. It is not surprising therefore that libraries would also be one of the places seen as being able to supply information about a range of disabilities and libraries do collect this type of information. For example a person could expect to find information on multiple sclerosis, blindness and autism in the local library. A parent or carer might look specifically for information about caring for someone with a particular condition or disability. Libraries must take care to include a strategy for keeping this type of information up to date and for ensuring staff are aware of other services users may need to know about.

Recommendations

- 1. Public libraries should endeavour to develop collections which include:**
 - **information about various disabilities including medical, cultural, educational and legal information**
 - **information to support independent living**
 - **information/publications on available services including government services and local service providers**
 - **information/directories of local and national self-help groups**
- 2. A strategy for the collection of information about disabilities should be included in the library service's collection development, acquisition and selection policies.**
- 3. Booklists can be compiled by staff to assist carers, families and people with disabilities to identify resources available in the collection.**
- 4. Directories of disability services and community services compiled by local councils should be made available in the library.**

Key Performance Indicators

- The written Collection Development Policy must include a section on the development of resources in the area of disabilities and related topics.

Large print collection

Most library services provide collections of large print materials. These collections are not always as well located, sign posted or labeled, as they could be in order to facilitate use.

Recommendations

- 1. A range of materials should be provided in large print depending on the individual needs of the library service. In general these should include fiction, non-fiction, magazines and newspapers for junior, adolescent and adult readers.**
- 2. A strategy for the development of a large print collection should be included in the library service's collection development, acquisition and selection policies.**
- 3. Selection criteria for large print should include consideration of issues such as:**
 - no print visible through the pages**
 - good contrast**
 - even and legible print**
 - uncluttered page layout and clear, sans serif fonts**
- 4. The large print collection should be clearly sign posted in large print, easily accessible and well lit.**
- 5. Shelving of large print should be suitable for the needs of people with limited sight and mobility. Ideally, all large print materials should be located on shelves the lowest around mid thigh to hip height and the highest around shoulder height to facilitate access to the elderly, who are the largest users of these collections.**
- 6. Access to trolleys and/or baskets for book collection can help to facilitate use to these collections by people with mobility impairments.**

Key Performance Indicators

- The written Collection Development, Acquisition and Selection Policies must include a section on the development of large print resources. Particular attention should be paid to providing a range of materials in this area, for example fiction and nonfiction.**
- Libraries must have appropriate selection criteria in place for large print materials.**
- Large print collections must be appropriately located and sign posted. Lighting should be bright but without glare. Shelving below 2' and above 5' should be avoided. Equipment appropriate to facilitating use of the collection should be provided.**
- Large print must be provided at the same item to population ratios as for the general collection. The items per capita ratio set by ALIA in 1990 is 2:1 (long term target). For every borrower using the large print collection there should be 2 items available.**

Audio collection

Most library services provide collections of audio materials. These collections are not always as well located, sign posted or labeled, as they could be to facilitate use.

Recommendations

1. **A range of materials should be provided in audio depending on the individual needs of the library service. In general these should include fiction, non-fiction, magazines and newspapers for junior, adolescent and adult readers.**
2. **A strategy for the development of an audio collection should be included in the library service's collection development, acquisition and selection policies.**
3. **Selection criteria for audio should include consideration of issues such as:**
 - **Degree of abridgement**
 - **Presence of audio announcements**
 - **Packaging**
 - **Labeling**
 - **Availability of replacement cassettes**
 - **Narration quality**
 - **Sound quality**
4. **The audio collection should be clearly sign posted in large print, easily accessible and well lit.**
5. **Shelving of audio should be suitable for the needs of people with limited sight and mobility. Ideally, all audio materials should be located on shelves the lowest around mid thigh to hip height and the highest around shoulder height to facilitate access to the elderly and people with a vision impairment.**
6. **Access to trolleys and/or baskets for book collection can help to facilitate use to these collections by people with mobility impairments.**

Key Performance Indicators

- **The written Collection Development, Acquisition and Selection Policies must include a section on the development of audio resources. Particular attention should be paid to providing a range of materials in this area, for example fiction and nonfiction.**
- **Libraries must have in place appropriate selection criteria for audio materials.**
- **Audio book collections must be appropriately located and sign posted. Lighting should be bright but without glare. Shelving below 2' and above 5' should be avoided. Equipment appropriate to facilitating use of the collection should be provided.**

- Audio books must be provided at the same item to population ratios as for the general collection. The items per capita ratio set by ALIA in 1990 is 2:1 (long term target). For every borrower using the large print collection there should be 2 items available.

Electronic Formats

Most library services provide information in electronic formats. Available electronic information includes CD-ROM services, Internet, electronic text file books, etc. This information while generally available for public access can be inaccessible by people with disabilities because of a lack of adaptive technology or because the computers are physically not accessible by wheelchairs, etc. Where this type of material can be accessed, especially by people with vision impairment it can prove an important source of information.

Recommendations

1. **A range of materials should be provided in electronic format depending on the individual needs of the library service.**
2. **A strategy for the development of electronic information should be included in the library service's collection development, acquisition and selection policies.**
3. **Selection criteria for electronic information, especially electronic books should include consideration of issues such as:**
 - **Formatting e.g. ASCII – guidelines for standards for formatting electronic text files for books are currently under development, once these are in place a consistent approach to the formatting of this information will facilitate use**
 - **Compatibility with adaptive technology such as voice output and screen enlargement software.**

Key Performance Indicators

- The written Collection Development, Acquisition and Selection Policies must include a section on the development of electronic resources. Particular attention should be paid to information and material suitable for this format.
- Libraries must have in place appropriate selection criteria for audio materials.
- Equipment appropriate to facilitating use of this information by people with disabilities must be provided.

Materials suitable for use by people with intellectual disabilities

Some library services collect and provide access to materials specifically designed to meet the needs of people with intellectual disabilities. These materials include low vocabulary/high interest materials and tape and text kits. It is not always necessary to develop special collections and in some cases these collections can be restrictive (if staff limit people with intellectual disabilities to these collections). It may be possible to prevent some of these problems by inter-shelving this material where possible. Staff who are trained in dealing with people with intellectual disabilities, can usually find materials within the collections of a public library suitable for use by a person with an intellectual disability.

The Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind Library and Information Services have been funded to develop a collection of materials suitable for use by people with intellectual disabilities. This collection has been developed not to provide a direct service to people with intellectual disabilities but to supplement public library collections in this area. Materials from this collection are available as bulk loans to public library services.

Recommendations

- 1. It is recommended that in order to meet the needs of people with intellectual disabilities, staff be trained in dealing with this group of library users. Training should include not only how to deal with people with intellectual disabilities, but also what resources are available to meet their needs.**
- 2. Special collections need not be developed especially to meet the needs of people with intellectual disabilities. Materials already held by the library which may be suitable for this group of users include:**
 - Well illustrated materials
 - Music collections
 - Books in enlarged print (particularly junior books)
 - Video collections
 - Audio materials
- 3. Libraries should where appropriate provide specific programs and services for people with intellectual disabilities.**
- 4. Library's Collection Development, Loans, and other policies should, where appropriate, make provisions to cater to the special needs of people with intellectual disabilities.**

Key Performance Indicators

- Public Library Services must be able to clearly demonstrate that consideration of the needs of people with intellectual disabilities has been made in the training program adopted by the service and that at least 80% of customer services staff have undergone this training.
- Public Library Services must be able to clearly demonstrate that they have considered the needs of people with intellectual disabilities in all library policies.
- Public Library Services must be able to demonstrate they have in place programs and services specific to the needs of people with intellectual disabilities.

Materials suitable for use by people with print disabilities

Many libraries collect materials which are suitable for use by people who are unable to read standard print. A person may be unable to read standard print for a number of reasons. These include: low vision, reading problems such as dyslexia, literacy related problems or a physical disability which means that they cannot hold or turn the pages of a print book. Materials collected by libraries, which may assist people in this area, include large print and audio materials, music and spoken word recordings.

While public libraries can assist people who are unable to read standard print books, where appropriate they can also refer these people to the specialist libraries developed specifically for these needs of this group of people. Specialist libraries working in this area can provide a much broader range of information than that able to be provided by a public library service. In many instances it is not possible or cost effective for a public library service to try to build collections to entirely meet the needs of this group, particularly for braille and spoken word materials. It is more effective for this service to be provided at a State level by one or more agencies with this particular objective.

Recommendations

1. **It is recommended that in order to meet the needs of people who are unable to read standard print books, staff be trained in dealing with this group of library users. Training should include not only how to deal with people unable to read standard print books but also what resources are available to meet their needs.**

2. **Materials held by the library which may be suitable for this group of users include:**
 - **Large print**
 - **Audio materials (spoken word)**
 - **Music collections**
 - **Electronic format materials used with adaptive technology**
3. **Libraries should where appropriate provide specific programs and services for people with print disabilities.**
4. **Library's Collection Development, Loans, and other policies should, where appropriate, make provisions to cater to the special needs of people with print disabilities.**
5. **Public libraries should utilize where possible the resources and services of specialist libraries and also where appropriate refer people on to the specialist services.**

Key Performance Indicators

- Public Library Services must be able to clearly demonstrate that consideration of the needs of people with print disabilities has been made in the training program adopted by the service and that at least 80% of customer services staff have undergone this training.
- Public Library Services must be able to clearly demonstrate that they have considered the needs of people with print disabilities in all library policies.
- Public Library Services must be able to demonstrate they have in place programs and services specific to the needs of people with print disabilities.

Materials suitable for use by people with a hearing impairment

Many libraries collect materials, which are suitable for use by people who are deaf or hearing impaired. While public libraries have large amounts of materials available for people who are deaf or hearing impaired, where appropriate they can also refer these people to the specialist libraries developed specifically for these needs of this group of people. Specialist libraries working in this area can provide a much broader range of material developed specifically for people who are deaf or hearing impaired. In many instances it is not possible or cost effective for a public library service to try to build collections to entirely meet the needs of this group, particularly with regard to captioned video collections. It is more effective for this service to be provided at a State level by one or more agencies with this particular objective. For example, Cinemedia, a specialist library provides captioned videos for people with a hearing impairment.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that in order to meet the needs of people with a hearing impairment, staff be trained in dealing with this group of library users. Training should include not only how to deal with people with a hearing impairment, but also what resources are available to meet their needs. Staff should be aware of procedures to obtain the services of a sign language interpreter when required.
2. Libraries should where appropriate provide specific programs and services for people with hearing impairments.
3. Library's Collection Development, Loans, and other policies should, where appropriate, make provisions to cater to the special needs of people with hearing impairments.
4. Public libraries should, where possible utilize the resources and services of specialist libraries, and where appropriate refer people on to the specialist services.

Key Performance Indicators

- Public Library Services must be able to clearly demonstrate that consideration of the needs of people with hearing impairments has been made in the training program adopted by the service and that at least 80% of customer services staff have undergone this training.
- Public Library Services must be able to clearly demonstrate that they have considered the needs of people with hearing impairments in all library policies.
- Public Library Services must be able to demonstrate they have in place programs and services specific to the needs of people with hearing impairments.

Materials suitable for use by LOTE readers and LOTE readers with disabilities

Many libraries now make provision for the needs of users who speak English as a second language or whose sole language is a language other than English and some services consider this group, while not disabled, certainly disadvantaged. In many areas this group of library patrons is ageing in line with the general population and so their needs with regard to library services are changing.

While acquiring print alternative information in English can be difficult, (for example nonfiction information in audio or large print), acquisition in these formats for LOTE materials can be extremely difficult. One solution to this problem is to promote some of the equipment designed for access to print to speakers of languages other than English. This equipment can be used with further adaptation to read LOTE materials and in some instances may be used by people who while not being able to read English, may be able to understand spoken English.

Recommendations

1. A range of LOTE materials should be provided in print alternative formats where available and depending on the individual needs of the library service. In general these should include fiction, non-fiction, magazines and newspapers for junior, adolescent and adult readers.
2. A strategy for the development of print alternative formats of LOTE materials should be included in the library service's Collection Development, Acquisition and Selection Policies.
3. Libraries should where appropriate provide specific programs and services for LOTE users with disabilities.
5. Library's Collection Development, Loans, and other policies should, where appropriate, make provisions to cater to the special needs of LOTE users with disabilities.
6. Selection criteria for print alternatives of LOTE materials should include consideration of the same issues as discussed for audio, large print and other formats in English.
7. Print alternative LOTE materials should be clearly sign posted in large print, easily accessible and well lit.
8. Shelving of these materials should be suitable for the needs of people with limited sight and mobility. Ideally, all print alternative materials should be located on shelves the lowest around mid thigh to hip height and the highest around shoulder height to facilitate access to the elderly and people with a vision impairment.
9. Access to trolleys and/or baskets for book collection can help to facilitate use to these collections by people with mobility impairments.
10. Equipment available for other purposes may be suitable for promotion to LOTE users with disabilities, for example reading machines, closed circuit televisions for text enlargement, etc.

Key Performance Indicators

- Public Library Services must be able to clearly demonstrate that consideration of the needs of LOTE users with disabilities has been made in the training program adopted by the service and that at least 80% of customer services staff have undergone this training.

- Public Library Services must be able to clearly demonstrate that they have considered the needs of LOTE users with disabilities in all library policies.
- Public Library Services must be able to demonstrate they have in place programs and services specific to the needs of LOTE users with disabilities.
- The written Collection Development, Acquisition and Selection Policies must include a section on the development of audio resources. Particular attention should be paid to providing a range of materials in this area, for example fiction and nonfiction.
- Libraries must have in place appropriate selection criteria for print alternative LOTE materials.
- Print alternative LOTE collections must be appropriately located and sign posted. Lighting should be bright but without glare. Shelving below 2' and above 5' should be avoided. Equipment appropriate to facilitating use of the collection should be provided.
- Print alternative LOTE materials must be provided at the same item to population ratios as for the general collection. The items per capita ratio set by ALIA in 1990 is 2:1 (long term target). For every borrower using the large print collection there should be 2 items available.

Services

In general, libraries provide certain core services which are considered essential to any library service. When planning disability library services, libraries should aim to ensure that those core services expected by all library users are also provided to people with disabilities. According to the Victorian State Committee of the Australian Council of Libraries and Information Services (ACLIS) and the Victorian Public Library and Information Network (VICLINK), there is a need for all individuals to have access to information which will satisfy their personal needs. In addition, ACLIS and VICLINK believe that local government authorities and the State Government have an obligation to provide basic public library services free of charge. People with disabilities cannot be denied access to these services because of their disabilities.

Basic public library services are those which:

- *Provide free entrance to the library;*
- *Provide access to the library collection, regardless of the format in which material is held, and including print, tape, disk, electronic or other resources held by the library, or to which the right of access has been acquired by the library;*
- *Provide assistance with the use of the collection and with reference enquiries;*
- *Provide training in the use of public access catalogues;*
- *Lend items from the collection to members of the public for specific periods of time;*
- *Educate the public in the effective use of libraries;*
- *Provide special activities such as story-telling;*
- *Provide any additional service, which enables access to other basic services (for example books on wheels and bulk loans).*

Other services

Services which provide greater ease of access, convenience or private benefit, and which may attract additional costs to the library service provider, are sometimes charged for by libraries. These services are distinguished from the basic services listed above. They may have a higher level of value added by the library. They include:

- *Use of remote online resources where access is only obtainable by payment of a specific per use charge, but excluding use of online resources which are paid for by subscriptions, site licenses or other non-use based charges;*
- *Providing access to loans from collections outside the public/State library network, such as academic, government or special libraries;*

- *Reserving specific items in library collections;*
- *Providing printed or electronic copies of materials held or accessed by the library;*
- *Providing for public use, standard office software, such as word processing and database software;*
- *Requiring staff to undertake research, to write reports and to provide other high level support;*
- *Providing any service which attracts an external service charge: e.g. online database searching, speakers, theatre performances.*

(Approved as Council policy by the Director Social Development on 10 October 1997.)

The Disabilities Interest Group (DIG) of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) believe that libraries should offer the following services for people with disabilities. In the main the points raised here support those general provisions made by ACLIS and VICLINK.

The following services should be regarded as core library services for people with disabilities:

- Appropriate collections
- Information provision with the assistance of appropriately trained staff
- Access to appropriate collections through a catalogue
- Willingness to provide additional services which may facilitate equitable access to information for people with disabilities.

Other services which libraries should also consider providing for people who difficulty, or are unable to visit the library include:

- Facilitating access to other resources not held by the library
- Access to catalogues via a modem, including access to catalogues of other resource providers such as the State Library, the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind Library and Information Services and the Vision Australia Foundation Library.

Production of library service information

Many public library services produce a considerable amount of information, forms, etc. A substantial amount of this is produced in-house. The cost of making this information available to a wider range of users is often negligible if consideration is undertaken at the beginning of production.

Considering the ageing population, it is reasonable to expect that in the future greater numbers of people, including library users will experience age-related sight problems. As well as considering alternatives to print information for people with a vision impairment, consideration should be

given to providing an alternative to audio information for people with a hearing impairment.

Recommendations

- 1. All forms produced for use in public libraries should be produced in a format suitable for use by people with low vision. This approach ensures that these are accessible by the greatest range of users possible.**
- 2. All information about the library service, including reading lists, etc. should be produced in a format suitable for use by people with low vision.**
- 3. The guidelines developed by the Roundtable on Reading Materials for People with Print Disabilities for production of large print materials should be adopted as the standard for production of library information by the Victorian Public Library Network.**
- 4. Where appropriate library information should be made available in print alternative formats, such as audio.**
- 5. When the information is being made available in audio format consideration should be given to a print alternative for people with a hearing impairment.**

Key Performance Indicator

All information, reading lists, forms, etc. produced by Public Libraries must be available in standard print alternative formats. The minimum standard to be achieved is that all publications, etc are available in large print. Other formats, which may be required, should be assessed based on the content of the publication, form, etc.

Library orientation/User education

Library orientation and user education programs are especially important for people with disabilities. Many people with disabilities may not be aware of the services that they could access via their public library service and so it is important for public libraries to promote these services through a number of channels, not least library orientation and user education programs.

Recommendations

Library orientation programs for users with disabilities should be conducted. This can either be at the time of joining or alternatively special weekly new user meetings could be established for all new users including those with disabilities or other programs may also be considered or developed to suit the needs of a particular library service.

Key Performance Indicator

All Public Libraries must have in place library orientation and user education programs suited to the particular needs of people with disabilities.

Internet and other online and electronic services

The Internet is a very useful source of information and contacts for people with disabilities. The Internet enables people with rarer conditions and disabilities to be put in touch with each other, without the difficulties of arranging face to face contact. It also a way of obtaining up to date information about research and other issues of interest. All public library services in Victoria and most public library branches provide Internet access for the general public.

Recommendations

1. Libraries should make the Internet available to people with disabilities by incorporating some computers with appropriate adaptive technology into their networks of available Internet computers.
2. Libraries should make a range of electronic and other online information available to users with disabilities by making the computers used for providing these services able to be accessed by people with disabilities. This can be achieved with suitable adaptive technology.
3. Libraries should make their own and other libraries catalogues available via the Internet on computers with adaptive technology.
4. Libraries should provide access to the PLANET project and the Australian Braille Library Service via the Internet to people with print disabilities. The objectives of the PLANET project are:
 - to provide Internet access to the catalogues of Victorian Public Libraries with alternative to print collections for people with print disabilities.
 - to enable people with print disabilities to access these catalogues independently either via an enlarged screen or synthesized speech.
5. Libraries should allow remote connection to their catalogues via the Internet by people with disabilities.
6. Public Library Services should ensure that their web sites and home pages are accessible by people with disabilities.
<http://www.vicnet.net.au/disability/access.htm> has a range of information available for making your information on the Internet more accessible to people with disabilities.
7. Where libraries provide Internet training for the public it may be necessary to develop specific programs to incorporate adaptive technology use. In addition, where libraries provide Internet training courses, it may be suitable to develop specific disability and the Internet courses. These could be promoted more widely than in a single public library service.

Key Performance Indicators

- Where Internet access is publicly available to library users, Internet access must be available to people with disabilities. This will usually be achieved using adaptive technology.
- Where there are electronic sources of information available to library users, access to this information must be provided for people with disabilities.
- Internet training programs where they are provided for the general community must be available to people with disabilities. It may be necessary to adapt some training programs to incorporate the specific needs of people with disabilities.
- Public Libraries must provide access to their catalogues via the Internet, as well as providing access to other library's catalogues and resources via the Internet.
- Public Libraries must ensure that their home pages are accessible by people with disabilities, in particular home pages must be accessible by people using adaptive technology.

Home library services

It is essential that libraries provide home library services. The main requirement of these services is that home library service patrons have the same access to materials and information services as those users who are able to visit the library. Most public library services provide home library services for the housebound. In many services these include visits to individuals as well as to nursing homes and hostels in the area. Some library services provide home library services themselves, while others rely entirely on volunteer services. Others use a combination of staff and volunteers in order to provide this service.

Recommendations

1. **Public libraries should where possible adopt the Guidelines for provision of home library services formulated by the Home Library Services Group of ALIA and endorsed by the General Council of ALIA.**
2. **Home Library Services should offer an equivalent standard of library service to that which is available to those users who are able to visit the library.**

Key Performance Indicator

The service provided to Home Library Service users must be equal to that provided to library users who are able to visit a library branch.

Mobile library services

In general, mobile library services are offered by those public library services that for whatever reason cannot provide an adequate service to their communities through established branch libraries. In Victoria, these library services tend to be those situated in country and rural areas.

Recommendations

- 1. Mobile library services should offer an equivalent standard of library service to that which is available at branch libraries.**
- 2. Mains power should be provided at all mobile library stops to enable online access to public access catalogues and other online services generally available in branch libraries.**
- 3. Mobile library services should be accessible by people with disabilities where this is the only service available to them.**

Key Performance Indicator

The service provided to Mobile Library Service users must be equal to that provided to library users who are able to visit a library branch.

Libraries should be aware of other services, which may be of benefit to people with disabilities. These include:

- personal reader services (services where a volunteer reader is assigned to a person who cannot for some reason read standard print and the volunteer reader reads what is requested by the person unable to read print.)
- production of materials in print alternative formats
- sign interpreters and or staff proficient in sign language
- signed story telling programs
- toy collections.

Equipment

There is a large range of equipment available, which can be used to assist people with disabilities to access the collections of public libraries and therefore as full a range of library services as possible.

Recommendation

Due to the large range of equipment available, the levels of use of some equipment, the costs involved and the limited resources of public library services it is recommended that a three tiered approach be adopted for putting equipment into branches. The three levels would mean a minimum standard for branches, services, and inter-service arrangements. In effect each branch would hold basic equipment, branches within library services would be established as disability service points and finally branches in strategic locations would be developed with specialised equipment and offer these services for one or more library services users with disabilities.

At the branch level the minimum range of equipment should include:

- photocopiers which can enlarge print
- photocopiers suitable for use by people in wheelchairs. Height especially, needs to be considered
- magnifiers - hand held
- portable reading lamps
- carry bags and/or trolleys to assist with book collection
- book rests
- facsimile for contact by people with hearing impairments
- OPAC's and computers on desks which are wheelchair accessible
- OPAC's with large screens, glare filters and colour schemes suitable for people with low vision
- a mixture of tables and chairs suitable to accommodate the needs of people with disabilities, including mobility impairment and wheelchairs. In particular, high chairs with arms and adjustable height desks should be considered
- telephones (where telephones are available for public use, alternatives should be available for people with a hearing impairment)

At the library service level, branches would be developed where the range of equipment above the minimum standard should include:

- Internet with voice output and text enlargement software to provide access to Internet resources as well as local library service catalogue on the Internet
- meeting rooms with audio loops
- modified telephones e.g. volume controlled, TTY, hearing aid coupler

- cassette players

At the inter-library service level, branches would be developed where the minimum range of equipment should include:

- reading machine/scanner which converts print into speech or electronic formats
- braille printer/embosser with appropriate translation software
- braille display for computer
- closed circuit television for magnification
- page turners
- televisions which receive closed captions

Key Performance Indicator

All Public Library Services must develop branches within the service to either the level A or B standard in order to facilitate and support other disability services through equipment.

Cooperation

Resource sharing

Resource sharing should be regarded as a fundamental aspect of providing services to people with disabilities – particularly for people requiring print alternative and other special format materials.

Recommendations

1. Every library with holdings of alternative format materials should participate in the National Union Catalogue of Materials for People with Print Disabilities (NUC:D).
2. Every library should actively participate in inter-library lending both for materials and technical aids.
3. Contacting colleagues and networking with people and organizations working with people with disabilities is a means of identifying resources and information. There are many disability groups which libraries can join and as many disability meetings which libraries can attend. Of particular interest are the DINA (Disability Information Network Australia (Vic.)), this group publishes a directory of members which can be a useful reference and ALIA DIG (Australian Library and Information Association Disabilities Interest Group.)
4. Access to specialist collections overseas is available via the Internet.
5. The 1999 Directory of Public Library Services has included information about specialized equipment and adaptive technology available in Victorian public libraries and the branches at which the equipment may be accessed.
6. Council services should be encouraged to produce directories of disability services available in their areas. State bodies should also be encouraged to produce and keep up to date statewide directories of disability services.
7. Public Library Services should cooperate by sharing resources, planning cooperative promotion of services and by cooperative lobbying for State and Federal Government funding and initiatives. This can be between one or two services, as well as across the entire Library Network.

Key Performance Indicators

- All Public Library Services must contribute, where appropriate, to the National Union Catalogue for People with Print Disabilities.
- Interlibrary lending for resources and equipment required by people with disabilities must be available.
- Public Libraries must participate and encourage participation in formal and informal networks.
- Public Libraries must contribute and encourage contributions to resource guides and directories where appropriate.

Consultation

It is important that libraries consult with relevant groups when developing any policies that may affect that particular group. It is possible in some circumstances that services developed or introduced for a specific group of users may adversely affect another group of users. Consultation during planning and policy formulation can therefore be very important.

Recommendations

- 1. Library services should establish strategies for consultation with people with disabilities. Groups of users with disabilities can be invited to input into the planning of library services with a view to improving services to people with disabilities. Consultation with specialist agencies and service providers may also be useful in determining how planning and policies may impact on services to people with disabilities. Specialist agencies and service providers (especially local groups) can be useful sources of information and assistance in the area of disability services.**
- 2. Some councils have Disability Advisory Committees to assist with planning and implementation of council policies, buildings, etc. Libraries should utilize these Committees where possible.**

Key Performance Indicator

Public Library Services must be able to clearly demonstrate that they have consulted with people with disabilities as well as relevant disability agencies and service providers.

Promotion

Currently, promotion is undertaken by each library service in isolation. The disability groups and individuals with disabilities in the community are sometimes difficult to reach. In addition, the numbers of individuals needing to be reached in any public library service area is generally small.

Recommendation

- 1. A structured plan for promotion and marketing is developed and adopted for the pilot library group.**
- 2. Promotion should be approached in two ways:**
 - At the local community level**
 - At a statewide level**
- 3. Promotion at the local level should be conducted using mechanisms currently in place and traditionally utilized by public library services. These include local media, newspapers, radio and TV where available, talks to local community groups including elderly citizens clubs, council information bulletins and newsletters, in-house library promotion, library web sites, displays at local organizations, shopping centers, immunization days, mail outs, etc.**
- 4. Promotion at the statewide level should be conducted via disability organizations, which are able to promote the services of all the pilot library services to large groups of people with disabilities. Some promotion can also be conducted via the specialist library services and this should be the model for promotion via other disability services. For example the services available at public libraries for people with vision impairments can be promoted directly to this group via the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind and Vision Australia Foundation. This method will reach large numbers of individuals who may not otherwise be aware of the services they could access in public libraries.**
- 5. Specialist libraries need to promote themselves and their services to public library services.**
- 6. Disability agencies need to promote their services to people with disabilities.**

Key Performance Indicator

Public Library Services must develop written plans for promotion and marketing of disability services. This may be managed in conjunction with other service providers and libraries to develop more cooperative approaches.

Evaluation

Evaluation must be conducted in order to facilitate future decision making in the area of public library services to people with disabilities. This is also important so that expenditure and funding can be justified, both now and in the future. In addition it is important that evaluation provide an insight into the quality of services being delivered. This is required to provide an overview of the pilot project, as well as to provide for future service delivery improvements. Finally, in this context it is important that services be evaluated to identify differing or contradictory needs. Some services introduced or developed for a particular group of users may inadvertently disadvantage another group.

Recommendations

Evaluation will be based on:

- **Monitoring the levels of usage of services and equipment**
- **Personal anecdotes and records of communication**
- **Reviews and comments from staff**
- **Interaction with community agencies, professionals and individuals in the community**
- **Evaluation against appropriate standards.**

Key Performance Indicator

Public Library Services must be able to clearly demonstrate that they have mechanisms in place for evaluation of disability services.

Conclusions

Public library services operate in an environment of restricted resources. In addition, information technology is rapidly changing the way libraries can and do provide information. Staff are constantly being asked to do more in less time and with fewer resources. With regard to disability services it is sometimes difficult to see this area as a priority for development when so much else requires work. It is important, however, that this area is given some priority. Not only do libraries have a history of providing free services to everyone, but they are now required by law to give equal access to all users.

There are many ways in which libraries can improve or develop disability services, not all of which require large financial resourcing. Many improvements can be made if staff are aware of the issues surrounding disability services. In fact a better service will be provided if staff are aware of the importance of disability services and feel comfortable and positive about providing these services.

Paul Scully wrote recently with regard to the Internet and library services that "How well public libraries provide access to information rather than the size of their collections and the number of items circulated will become the key measure of a library's performance in the future."¹ This is of particular significance in the area of disability services. Even currently libraries cannot be judged on the size of their collections or resources available to this group of users, but on how well they can satisfy the needs of people with disabilities.

¹ Scully, Paul. *The Internet: A core or Value Added Service?* Australian Public Libraries and Information Services, v.11 (1) March 1998: 37.

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Appendix A Library Service Evaluation Summary

Evaluation topics – service level

Name of library service:

Name of contact person:

Contact details:

Statistics

Is the library aware of any statistics or demographics related to disability in their area – types of disability, size and characteristics of population?

Are there any geographic characteristics relevant to this project? For example are any branches particularly remote, not accessible except by car, etc.

Are there any issues relating to accessibility and configuration of the population serviced? For example, are there any pockets of elderly, towns/areas where the population is predominately aged, young families, etc?

Are any particular services centralized, decentralized, regionalized, outsourced or independent? For example technical services.

Policies/Planning

Many library services fail to consider the needs of people with disabilities when planning and evaluating their services. It is often not necessary to write policies specifically for services to people with disabilities and in some cases this may marginalize these groups. However, it is important that consideration of the needs of library users with disabilities is made at the time of preparing policies and plans for library services in general. If this results in a decision not to write disability specific policies but to integrate the needs of these users into all types of services provided, at least the issue has been raised and discussed.

Council

Does the council have/or are they developing a policy relating to disabilities? If yes, please briefly describe the policies being developed.

Many councils are developing broad disability service policies to govern a range of council services available to the community. Sometimes the customer service policies cover this area. Libraries should give consideration to the disability policies of councils where available.

Corporation

Is there a service wide policy for people with disabilities?

Has consideration of the needs of people with disabilities been made during the development of general library policies such as Forward Plans, Corporate Plans and Business Plans, etc.?

Has consideration of users also been made when formulating more operational policies such the Collection Development Policy, Selection and Acquisition Policy, Loans Policy, etc.?

Do the Selection/Acquisition/Collection Development/Loan policies consider the following:

Yes No

Types and levels of provision of resources appropriate to the needs of people with disabilities

Resource sharing and inter-library loan arrangements

Repair and maintenance of resources (esp. AV materials and adaptive technology)

Provision of independent access to resources

Branch

Are there any relevant policies at the branch level?

Do you think your policies make consideration of the types and levels of provision of services and resources appropriate to the needs of people with disabilities?

Policies and planning should consider the provision of independent access to services and resources by people with disabilities – do your policies do this?

Consultation

It is important that libraries consult with relevant groups when developing any policies that may affect that particular group. It is possible in some circumstances that services developed or introduced for a specific group of

users may adversely affect another group of users. Consultation during planning and policy formulation can therefore be very important.

Library services should establish strategies for consultation with people with disabilities. Groups of users with disabilities can be invited to input into the planning of library services with a view to how these could improve services to people with disabilities. Consultation with specialist agencies and service providers may also be useful in determining how planning and policies may impact on services to people with disabilities. Specialist agencies and service providers (especially local groups) can be useful sources of information and assistance in the area of disability services.

Some councils have Disability Advisory Committees to assist with planning and implementation of council policies, buildings, etc. Libraries should utilize these Committees where possible. Does your council have any committees like these? If so, does the library make use of these?

Does the library involve people with disabilities in the planning of library services and facilities for that client group? Does it consult with appropriate specialist agencies and service providers to gather information and assistance as required?

Funding

Many libraries do not address the issues of funding for disability services. While large print, audio and other collections are allocated resources, usually on an annual basis, other services to people with disabilities are not considered and are therefore not allocated resources either annually or as required.

In order to make public library services available to people with disabilities, library services and councils must consider these service requirements and budget accordingly. Equipment purchased will eventually have to be upgraded so, consideration of disability services must be an ongoing responsibility of all library services, councils, the State Library and Government.

Does the library service make consideration of funding for equipment, programs, etc for people with disabilities?

There are many ways to allocate funding to disability services and these include:

- allocation of resources as a percentage of the total budget
- allocation on the basis of a per capita amount based on the incidence of people with disabilities
- funding for particular programs, equipment purchase, etc.

How does the library allocate funding to disability services?

Public libraries need to be aware of other possible funding sources for disability services. Funding sources include:

- Office of Local Government
- State Library of Victoria
- Local Councils
- Trusts available for funding specific programs and services on a once off basis.

Public Library Services should give serious consideration to how they will resource disability services on an ongoing basis. Is the library aware of funding sources? Which funding sources is the library aware of/which do they use?

Staffing

In the past many libraries have either not considered staffing in relation to disability services or adopted the model of designating a single position to be responsible for delivery of services to people with disabilities. This latter model can result in other staff declining responsibility in this area and referral of library users with disabilities to the "*Disability Librarian*" who may not always be available when required.

Does the library assess a person's ability to deal with people with disabilities during the interview process for any position in a public library service? Library services should incorporate consideration of this criterion into their appointment process.

Is the responsibility for the delivery of library services to people with disabilities the responsibility of all library staff; in particular customer services staff?

Is this responsibility stated in the position description of staff?

Is co-ordination of disability services for branches the responsibility of the Branch Manager?

Has further co-ordination of disability services at a library service level also been considered? At this level who has responsibility for this co-ordination, the *Adult Services, User Services or Special Services Librarian, etc.?*

Training

Many library services have no structured approach to training staff in the area of delivery of disability services. Combined with the lack of a structured approach in this area is the problem of identifying suitable training programs and trainers. The recent development and publication of the *Disability Awareness Kit* goes some way to addressing the lack of a training program but the need for identification of suitable trainers remains.

Does the library offer an appropriate level of training to staff in order to promote awareness of the issues involved in providing library services to people with disabilities? Please describe any disability training which has been conducted by the library service for staff in the last two years.

Does the library have a structured training program for staff in order for them to develop an awareness of disability issues and services? The program could simply be based on that outlined in the *Disability Awareness Kit*. Please briefly describe the program you have in place.

Is an overall introduction to disability issues and services part of the general induction program for library staff?

Does the library train staff in the use of adaptive technology, equipment and other specialized resources and services?

If the library offers training, then what type of training is offered?

Who runs the program?

How often?

How many staff attend?

What are the aims of the training?

How do you evaluate the program?

Systems

It is often difficult and expensive to address disability access issues after a particular system has been implemented in a library service.

Does the library consider disability access issues with regard to information technology and in particular library systems during the tender requirements and evaluation phase of system and software selection? This ensures that the costs and amount of work required to make systems accessible by people with disabilities is kept to a minimum. In addition, this approach makes suppliers of systems aware of the needs of people with disabilities and encourages them to consider these issues during system and software development.

Please briefly describe any considerations you have made of people with disabilities during the evaluation, development or implementation of IT in your library.

What library system is used?

What operating platform is used?

What networks?

What software packages are in use?

Does the library have a web based catalogue?

Does the library currently have any disability equipment? If so, what equipment?

Cooperation

Resource sharing should be regarded as a fundamental aspect of providing services to people with disabilities – particularly for people requiring print alternative and other special format materials.

Does the library resource share to provide a range of resources to people with disabilities? Please describe the way this is done.

Does the library if it has alternative format materials participate in the National Union Catalogue of Materials for People with Print Disabilities (NUC:D)?

Does the library actively participate in inter-library lending both for materials and technical aids?

Contacting colleagues and networking with people and organizations working with people with disabilities is a means of identifying resources and information. There are many disability groups which libraries can join and as many disability meetings which libraries can attend. Of particular interest are the DINA (Disability Information Network Australia (Vic.)), this group publishes a directory of members which can be a useful reference and ALIA DIG (Australian Library and Information Association Disabilities Interest Group.)

Does the library participate/is the library a member of any of these groups or has it established any networks of this type with relevant organizations? Please list organizations/groups with which you liaise/cooperate.

Does the library access specialist collections overseas via the Internet?

The 1997 Directory of Public Library Services has included information about specialized equipment and adaptive technology available in Victorian public libraries and the branches at which the equipment may be accessed. Does the library use this information at all? If so how?

Does the council produce directories of disability services available in this area?

Public Library Services can cooperate by sharing resources, planning cooperative promotion of services and by cooperative lobbying for State and Federal Government funding and initiatives. This can be between one or two services, as well as across the entire Library Network. Has the library participated in any initiatives like this?

Promotion

Does the library have a structured plan for promotion and marketing? If so, please briefly describe this plan.

Which of the following mechanisms if any does the library use in promotion of disability services? These include local media, newspapers, radio and TV where available, talks to local community groups including elderly citizens clubs, council information bulletins and newsletters, in-house library promotion, library web sites, displays at local organizations, shopping centers, immunization days, mail outs, etc.

Does the library do any promotion via disability organizations, which are able to promote the library's disability services to large groups of people with disabilities?

Does the library do any promotion via the specialist library services? For example the services available at public libraries for people with vision impairments can be promoted directly to this group via the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind and Vision Australia Foundation. This method can reach large numbers of individuals who may not otherwise be aware of the services they could access in public libraries.

Evaluation

Evaluation must be conducted in order to facilitate future decision making in the area of public library services to people with disabilities. This is also important so that expenditure and funding can be justified, both now and in the future. In addition, it is important that evaluation provide an insight into the quality of services being delivered. This is required to provide an overview of the pilot project as well as to provide for future service delivery improvements. Finally, in this context it is important that services be evaluated to identify differing or contradictory needs. That is some services introduced or developed for a particular group of users may inadvertently disadvantage another group.

Evaluation should be based on:

- User and non-user input
- Monitoring the levels of usage of services and equipment
- Periodic surveys of active and potential users
- Personal anecdotes and records of communication from users
- Reviews and comments from staff
- Interaction with community agencies, professionals and individuals in the community (especially for non-user input)
- Meetings with organized advisory groups / individuals
- Evaluation against appropriate standards and legislation

Does the library conduct any evaluation of disability services, resources, etc.? If so, how is this done?

Appendix B Evaluation worksheet – branch level

Evaluation worksheet

Name of library service:

Name of branch:

Name of contact person:

Use this document to assess your branch. Tick either yes or no depending on how you comply with the question. If you feel you are more compliant than not then tick the yes box and use the space provided to make a note. If you feel you are less compliant than more then tick the no box and use the space to make a note. For example if there is a pedestrian crossing outside the library you might tick yes for question 2 below but make a note that audible indicators are not available.

Physical access and the environment

Physical access

Yes No

 Is there readily accessible public transport within the immediate vicinity of the library?

 If visitors to the library need to navigate a main road to access the building is there a pedestrian crossing in close proximity and is it fitted with audible indicators?

 Does your car parking comply with the appropriate standards – 3.8m minimum width is required for a driver with a disability to unload a wheelchair and alight.

 Is there a roof over the car parking space?

 Is there an accessible path of travel from the street frontage car parking area or drop off point? As a minimum this accessible path should comply with Australian Standard 1428.1 (that is about 1:40 without handrails or with handrails if below 1:40 and be continuous, slip resistant and hard surfaced and should not incorporate any step, stairway or impediment which could prevent it from being safely negotiated by people with a disability.

 Is the approach to the library reasonably level? Level or almost level access is definitely an advantage for people with a mobility impairment.

Yes No

Are there lights at exterior entrances and pathways? These can be switched on by automatic sensors, this also enhances security.

Do you have steps at the entrance?

Do steps have a contrasting colour on their edge? People with a sight impairment benefit from a strip of contrasting colour applied to the edge of the step.

Does the library run a library orientation program for patrons or for patrons with disabilities?

Physical layout

General principles

Are floors, stairs and other public areas finished with non-slip surfaces?

Can all corridors and walkways open to the general public be used safely?

Is the door easy to open?

Does the main site entrance have self opening doors?

Do floors have non slip surfaces?

Are rugs or other carpet/floor overlays firmly in place and anchored?

Can after-hours book return chutes be easily accessed by people with disabilities? In particular is it accessible at street level or do stairs or raised platforms need to be navigated to reach it?

Are counters and bench tops free of sharp edges and glass tops?

Are important stations such as the reference and general enquiry desk clearly marked and centrally located?

Are the approaches to the reference and other desks obstruction free?

Could a person on crutches, a wheelchair user or even a pram move about freely?

Print disability

Yes No

Is the design of your library simple and straight forward? Layout should be based on right-angle arrangements, which are easier to negotiate than diagonal or circular patterns.

Does your library avoid potential obstructions or physical hazards in circulation areas such as the foyer or corridors?

Does your library avoid low hanging signs or other potential hazards such as plants or suspended lighting which could pose problems. Hanging objects or obstacles which protrude or are not clearly designated may pose a hazard.

Does your library use navigational aids such as tactile floor indicators which can help map out areas and be used to aid orientation, such as from the entrance to the reception desk? Major circulation areas like corridors can be indicated by the use of hard floor surfaces and also provide an acoustic orientation cue.

Does your library have large open plan areas? These may be confusing and difficult to navigate. Spaces like these can be divided into manageable capsules through the use of tactile features such as portable screens or partitions.

Is a tactile map of major library areas available at a centrally accessible point such as the reception or reference desk?

Are alternative format collections such as large print or talking books placed at a clearly designated and accessible location close to the library entrance or the reference desk? This can also benefit patrons with mobility difficulties.

Do fixtures or structures leave space exposed underneath them? Cane users can experience difficulty if unable to locate where an object or structure meets the floor.

Are stairs centrally located, well lit and safe to use?

Are steps fully enclosed to prevent tripping and cane tips catching between steps?

Are handrails placed on either side of the staircase and continue uninterrupted to provide consistent orientation guides?

Yes No

Are doors placed so as to open inwards and not out into open traffic areas. Ideally the resting position of the door (if it were to be left ajar) is such that it would make contact with the closest wall, rather than protruding into the room.

Are doors of the same type and consistent throughout the building with handles and signage in the same places?

Reception desks are ideally located directly in front of the entry point to the building. Tactile markers can be useful in leading the person from the front door to the desk.

Is an uninterrupted path of travel available to and within the building providing access to all required facilities?

Are corridors and public walkways free of obstructions and potential hazards?

Are handrails fitted at the main site entrance and in major traffic areas?

Hearing impairment

Are there large open spaces throughout the library? Large open spaces can be difficult to hear in as sound often reverberates. Breaking spaces up onto smaller capsules by use of portable screens in sound absorbent materials may prove helpful as this isolates sounds and reduces distracting background noise and interference.

Are there many hard floor surfaces in the library? The use of hard surfaces should be avoided, especially on floors as sound bounces off them making it difficult to hear. Footsteps and sounds such as tables and chairs being moved can all be distracting. Use of carpet in walkways helps to reduce reverberation.

Does your library use intercoms, doorbells or buzzers? The use of intercom systems at doors should be avoided. Doorbells and buzzers should be wired to produce an audible and visual signal simultaneously.

Yes No

Are special collections, such as captioned videos placed at a clearly designated and accessible location?

Is there an unobstructed view of speakers' faces in all areas where verbal visual communication may take place?

Is there good general lighting as well as lighting on the faces of speakers?

Are desks and counters placed so that light falls on the faces of speakers and does not come from behind?

Is background noise reduced as far as possible?

Are alternatives to sound recorded information readily available?

Are there printed information sheets or signs giving information which would otherwise be relayed by voice?

Can deaf and hearing impaired library users find their way around the building and access different areas without having to rely on asking for spoken directions?

Fixtures and equipment

Physical disability

If the catalogue is accessed via computerised OPAC, can terminals be operated easily and without obstruction?

Print disability

Are computer terminal screens equipped with text enlargement software; voice output software; filters to reduce glare?

Is the photocopy machine easily accessed? Does it enlarge print?

Are desks, tables and work surfaces finished in light colours which offer good background contrast and not high gloss which is highly reflective?

- Is shelving which houses material for people with print disabilities clearly identified – with raised letters and or large print?

Hearing impairment

Yes No

- Are there systems in place to visually alert people with hearing disabilities to emergency situations?
- Can deaf and hearing impaired people get help in emergency situations such as in lifts and toilets and will they know that others are aware of their situation?
- Are staff aware of the availability of alternative listening devices (such as audio loops, FM and infra red systems) and do they know how to operate them?
- Is the library accessible by telephone, fax and TTY?
- Where telephones are provided for public use, are there also TTY's available for hearing impaired users who are unable to use telephones?
- Are telephones hearing aid compatible?
- Are staff aware of procedures to obtain the services of a sign language interpreter as required?

Lighting and glare

Print disability

- Is glare a problem in your library? Glare can be a major problem. As a general principle surfaces which are highly reflective or can generate a lot of glare should be avoided. These include highly polished floors, large expanses of glass and laminated, glossy posters and displays.
- Is overhead lighting installed so as to reduce glare? To minimize glare overhead lighting should be recessed wherever possible and light sources should be placed so as not to shine directly into the eyes.
- Is patchy lighting a problem in your library? Overall lighting should avoid patches or sudden changes from brightly lit to dark areas.

Entrances and foyer areas may require a slight adjustment in light levels to aid the transition from natural light to an artificially lit environment indoors.

Are portable reading lamps available?

Yes No

Are light switches and similar controls able to be clearly distinguished from walls and background surfaces (for example, by use of a white switch on a black background)?

Are public areas adequately lit for safety but free from glare or dazzle which can present difficulties for people with epilepsy, the elderly and people with some kinds of vision impairment?

Are curtains and/or blinds available in public areas and can they be adjusted to control levels of glare and illumination? Sources of natural daylight such as large windows can supply useful levels of illumination but can also radiate high levels of glare. Adjustable blinds or curtains may be useful in controlling light levels.

Hearing impairment

Has care been taken to ensure that the faces of library staff are well lit and that hearing impaired users have an unobstructed view of speakers' faces at all times? Avoid the use of grilles and glass screens as these block vision and impede the passage of sound.

Has artificial lighting been carefully positioned, especially in reception areas or at desks where face to face communication may occur?

Has attention been given to the positioning of reception desks and information counters to ensure light from windows does not come from behind speakers?

Signage

Print disability

Signage should be consistent with regards to style and placement, etc.

Are the exterior signs:

Located near the entrance?

Between the ground and eye level?

- Positioned where they will not cause injury?
- In an accessible place allowing close inspection?
- In clear, unobstructed view?
- Uncluttered, not too many messages in one place?

Yes No

Are the interior signs:

- Placed at eye level?
- Near doorways or traffic areas?
- Clearly defined?
- In large print with good, bold text and clear contrast such as black on white?

Signs on glass panels or doors can be difficult to read and should generally be avoided.

Are all major library areas and facilities marked with tactile and/or large print lettering:

- Auditoriums, meeting rooms?
- Car park?
- Emergency exits?
- Catalogues and information desk?
- Lifts?
- Public toilets?
- Public telephones?
- Reference desk?
- Fire extinguishers?

Are signs of consistent style and placement? (Sans serif typefaces have been found most suitable for people with a print disability).

Do they display good background contrast and avoid glossy reflective finishes?

If the library produces and distributes information about its services to the public is the information produced in large print or in other accessible formats such as on cassette?

Hearing impairment

People with a hearing impairment benefit from having information presented as visual displays. Location of signs is as important as the lettering.

Safety

Hearing impairment

Buildings should include flashing light alarms to warn people of fire danger or the possible need to evacuate for other reasons.

- Yes No Are exits clearly shown using flashing red lights?
- Are torches or alternative lighting readily available?
- Are emergency and evacuation procedures clearly displayed on appropriate signage?
- Do smoke detectors incorporate flashing strobe lights positioned so that they can be seen from all areas of the building – especially toilets or other secluded areas?
- Has the library avoided reliance on audible clues in areas such as lifts?

Services

Core Services

Which of the following core services are available at your library for people with disabilities:

Yes No

- Appropriate collections?

- Information provision with the assistance of appropriately trained staff?

- Access to collections through a catalogue?

- Willingness to provide additional services which may facilitate equitable access to information for people with disabilities?

Other services which libraries should also consider providing for people who have difficulty, or are unable, to visit the library include:

- Facilitating access to other resources not held by the library?

- Access to catalogues via a modem, including access to catalogues of other resource providers such as the State Library, RVIB, BTBL?

- Services provided through the mail for people with print disabilities?

Expansion Services

Libraries should be aware of other services which will benefit people with disabilities. Do you offer any of the following services:

- Personal reader services?

- Photo-enlarging facilities?

- Production of materials in alternate formats, for example library information in large print?

- Staff proficient in sign language?

- Sign interpreters?

- Signed storytelling programs?

Yes No

Toy Collections?

Print Disabilities

Does the library's collection cater for the needs of a representative proportion of its borrowing population?

Does it include a suitable selection of materials in alternative to print formats?

Is the library's large print collection clearly designated and accessible?

Are the library's audio books on clear display?

Are these collections located close to the entrance for easy access?

Does the library provide any programs or services for people with print disabilities?

Are people with print disabilities able to access the library remotely?

Does the library borrow from or refer to specialist services such as RVIB Library and Information Services or Arts Access as appropriate?

Does the library offer an appropriate level of training to staff to promote awareness of the issues involved in providing library services to people with disabilities?

Do the library collection development and loans policies offer any provisions which cater for the needs of people with print disabilities?

Does the library employ people with disabilities?

Hearing Impairment

Is the library's collection of material on deafness and hearing impairment clearly designated and accessible?

- Are the library's captioned videos on clear display?

Yes No

Are people with hearing disabilities able to access the library remotely?

Does the library borrow from or refer to specialist services such as Better Hearing Australia, the Victorian Deaf Society or other information and support services as appropriate? Cinemedia and Australian Caption Centre for caption videos.

Do the library collection development and loan policies offer any provisions which cater for the needs of people with hearing disabilities?

Are interpreters, staff who know sign language available?

Does the library provide any programs or services for people with hearing disabilities?

Physical Disability

Does your library offer homebound services for people who are unable to visit the library?

Are the home library services offered by trained library staff?

Are mobile libraries (if they are part of your service) accessible by people with physical disabilities?

Equipment

Print Disabilities

Does the library have any of the following equipment available to assist people with print disabilities to access the collection and as full a range of library services as possible:

Yes No

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Reading machine, such as Kurzweil or a scanner which converts print into speech or electronic formats? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Braille typewriter/printer/embosser? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Magnifiers – hand held; illuminated; closed circuit television (CCT)? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Microfiche enlargers? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Typewriters? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Audio cassette players 2-track and 4-track? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Large format computer screen/display? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Speech output computer? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Talking calculator? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Computers with braille displays? |

Hearing Impairment

Does your library have any of the following equipment available to assist people with hearing disabilities to access the collection and as full a range of library services as possible:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Audio loop? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | FM or infra red assistive listening devices? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | TTY telephone typewriter with printer or interpreter access? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Amplified telephones? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Listening devices? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | TV's which receive closed captions? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Typewriter with printer? |

Physical Disability

Does the library have any of the following equipment available to assist people with physical disabilities to access the collection and as full a range of library services as possible:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Page turners? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Book rests? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Shopping trolleys? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Carry bags? |

Collections and resources

Reference materials on disabilities

Does your library offer any of the following resources regarding disabilities:

Yes No

- Current information on various disabilities including medical, educational, and legal information?
- Information to support independent living?
- Information/publications on government services?
- Information/directories about local service providers?
- Information/directories of local and national self-help groups?
- Information on equipment which can be used to assist people with disabilities?

Print Disabilities

Does your library service collect any of the following audio materials:

- Books?
- Magazines?
- Newspapers?
- For adults?
- For juniors?

Does your library consider any of the following selection criteria when acquiring audio materials:

- Degree of abridgement?
- Presence of audio announcements?
- Packaging?
- Labelling?
- Availability of replacement cassettes?
- Narration quality?
- Sound quality?

Does your library service collect any of the following large print materials:

Yes No

- Books?
- Magazines?
- Newspapers?
- For adults?
- For juniors?

Does your library consider any of the following selection criteria when acquiring audio materials:

- No print through?
- Good contrast?
- Even and legible print?
- Page layout uncluttered and clear, sans serif fonts?

- When acquiring materials in electronic formats – e.g. disk or CD-ROM do you consider its appropriateness for use with voice output or other adaptive equipment?

Intellectual Disabilities

Does your library collect any of the following resources suitable for use by people with intellectual disabilities:

- High interest/low vocabulary materials?
- Tape-and-text kits?
- Well illustrated materials?
- Music collections?
- Audio materials?

Hearing Impairment

Consideration should be given to language levels of Deaf and other users from non English speaking backgrounds when providing materials. Does your library provide any of the following resources for use by this group:

- Current information on deafness and hearing impairment?
- Materials on all aspects of deafness, including legal rights, deaf culture and heritage?
- Information about organizations, institutions and individuals providing services for deaf and hearing impaired people?
- Books and pamphlets on sign language, dictionaries of signs, etc?
- High interest/low vocabulary reading materials?
- Well illustrated materials?

- Films/videos including captioned and non-captioned materials?
Resources already in library collections, but not previously identified as being useful to people with disabilities.

The following resources can be used for some people with disabilities. Does your library have any of the following resources available:

Yes No

- High interest/low vocabulary materials including English as Second Language materials (ESL)?
- Music Collections?
- Spoken word collections?
- Picture Books
- Books in enlarged print (particularly junior books)?
- Internet resources

Cooperation

Yes No

 Do any of your staff attend disability groups such as ALIA DIG, DINA?

 Does your library cooperate with disability groups in the community?

Promotion

 Does your library currently promote any specific disability services?

 Does your library currently promote existing services specifically to people with disabilities?

Evaluation

 Does your library conduct any surveys of people with disabilities in your community, community agencies, professionals and individuals (either user or non-user)?

If yes, please describe what it that you do.

 Do you solicit reviews and comments from staff in this area?

 Has your library branch been evaluated against appropriate standards and legislation?

Appendix C Statement of Understanding

Statement of Understanding

BETWEEN

[insert public library name]

And

STATE LIBRARY OF VICTORIA, 328 Swanston Street Melbourne (“the SLV”)

This document clarifies the responsibilities of all those co-operating in this project.

Project outline

- A. The SLV has agreed to provide funds to a cooperative group of public libraries to conduct a Statewide Disability Project entitled *Mainstreaming Disability Services* (the Project) on behalf of Victorian public libraries.
- B. The Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind Central Consultancy Services (“RVIB”) is the agency undertaking the Project.
- C. Libraries Online (Vicnet) and the Statewide Disability Project are combining a number of projects to maximise the benefits to public libraries. The technology element of the Mainstreaming Project will be rolled out across the State by Libraries Online to those libraries participating in the Mainstreaming Project. This will be combined with another workstations project from Libraries Online.
- D. The objectives of the Project are:
 - To improve the provision of service and access availability to people with disabilities.
 - To improve disability service cohesiveness throughout the Victorian Public Library Network.
 - Raise awareness of disability issues in public libraries.

- D. The Project is managed by the Statewide Disability Steering Committee.

Equipment

The equipment being used in the Project has been selected and approved by the Statewide Disability Steering Committee on the advice of RVIB.

The following items of equipment are currently used in the Project:

[to be inserted once final decisions on equipment are made]

Responsibilities of Disability Steering Committee

To implement the project according to the documented proposal which has been accepted for funding, and where necessary advise on the need for any significant change in the proposal by:

- Determining timeframes for implementation.
- Meeting regularly and making decisions regarding the implementation of the project.
- Applying relevant guidelines and protocols, such as any particular requirements for public launch of projects and development of publicity. The Steering Committees will be informed of these guidelines and protocols by the State Library of Victoria representative on the Committee.
- Ensuring that a current record of expenditure and planned expenditure is maintained.
- Reporting regularly to VICLINK on progress to date.
- Making recommendations to the State Library of Victoria (Library Network Unit Manager) where a variation to the proposal is needed or sought.

Responsibilities of RVIB and Libraries Online

Purchase and ownership

RVIB understands that the funds supplied by the State Government for the purchase of equipment for the Project will be used specifically for the provision of equipment required by the Library Service.

RVIB will arrange for purchase and delivery of non-technology equipment. Libraries Online will arrange for the purchase and delivery of the technology element of the project.

Timeframes

As far as practical all parties will be expected to adhere to stated timeframes.

Installation

RVIB will work with Library Services to arrange for installation. Libraries Online will work with library services to arrange installation of the technology components of the Project.

Training

RVIB will where it deems necessary provide training in the use of equipment provided. Libraries Online will provide training in the use of adaptive technology.

Placement of equipment

It is the responsibility of the Library Service working in conjunction with RVIB to identify how many branches will participate in the project (up to two per library service) and which branches will participate.

Maintenance

RVIB will supply with the equipment being provided to the Library Service any paperwork, packaging, etc. relating to warranties, servicing, etc. where this exists. Where this does not exist contact details of suppliers will be provided.

Promotion

Any publicity relating to the project must contain the following acknowledgement: Viclink, State Library of Victoria, RVIB and the participating library services.

All promotion at the Statewide level will be co-ordinated with any relevant LibrariesVictoria promotion/marketing.

Responsibilities of [insert name of Library Service]**Purchase and ownership**

All equipment is owned by the Library Service and not the SLV or the RVIB.

Timeframes

As far as practical all parties will be expected to adhere to stated timeframes.

Installation

The Library Service will undertake to have equipment installed and functional within four weeks of receipt of equipment at the Library.

The Library Service will be responsible for any once off or ongoing costs associated with the installation or provision of any furniture, physical security or internal cabling that may be required.

Training

The Library Service will undertake to complete training on identified equipment and software packages within six weeks of installation.

Placement of equipment

It is the responsibility of the Library Service working in conjunction with RVIB to identify how many branches will participate in the project (up to two per library service) and which branches will participate.

The equipment will remain in those branches designated by the Library Service in conjunction with RVIB until the final evaluation of the Project is complete.

Insurance

All equipment is insured by the Library Service as it deems necessary.

Maintenance

The Library Service is responsible for the service and repair of equipment provided as part of the Project.

Replacement

It is the responsibility of the Library Service to budget for upgrading equipment which has reached the end of its normal life should the Library Service deem this necessary.

It is the responsibility of the Library Service to budget for replacement of equipment which is broken or lost should the Library Service deem this necessary.

Evaluation and continuance of services

The Library agrees to provide Mainstream Disability Services (as outlined in the document (Mainstreaming Disability Services Report) to eligible clients until June 30 2002. The Library will also use its best endeavours to continue to provide those services after June 30 2002.

The Library agrees to monitor use of the equipment used in the Project and report problems to RVIB when appropriate.

in the presence of

SIGNED for and on behalf of

[insert name of Library Service]

in the presence of