

State Library of Queensland Intellectual Freedom Policy

[Approved by the Library Board of Queensland, 16 February 2006]

- Intellectual freedom – the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas - is widely recognised as a fundamental human right and is enshrined in international human rights instruments to which Australia is a signatory.
- The Intellectual Freedom Policy is based on the premise that a key responsibility for libraries is opposing the infringement of intellectual freedom, including infringement by *omission* – neglect of the needs of individuals and communities – and infringement by *commission* – exclusion, the violation of privacy and censorship.

Equitable access

- Through its own services, and through its leadership and advocacy role, the State Library is committed to ensuring that access to library services that empower, stimulate and enrich is available to all people in Queensland. Priorities integral to this commitment are:
 - alleviating the impact that remoteness, disability, poverty and other forms of disadvantage have on access to information and ideas, and opportunities to exchange information and ideas;
 - the development of inclusive library services, which effectively address the distinct needs of different social and cultural groups, serving to strengthen individual identities and foster tolerance and appreciation of difference.

Protection of privacy

- The right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas free from surveillance is fundamental to intellectual freedom. Subject to exceptional requirements under law, the State Library does not permit surveillance of the information and ideas that clients seek, receive and communicate.
- Surveillance of public areas undertaken or initiated by the State Library is strictly limited to monitoring the security of those areas.
- The State Library gathers and retains personal information solely for the purposes of delivering services. Personal information is not used for any purpose other than the purpose for which it was gathered except if:
 - the person the information is about consents to the disclosure or use;
 - the disclosure or use is necessary to protect against a serious and imminent threat to a person's life or health;
 - the disclosure or use is authorised or required by or under law;
 - the disclosure or use is reasonably necessary to enforce the law.

Censorship

- Subject to requirements under law, the State Library acquires and provides access to material in order to ensure that the range of needs and interests within the community are equitably addressed, and to ensure representation of a diversity of perspectives on any particular subject. Personal views or values, or any perception of the potential of material to offend or cause controversy, do not limit what materials the State Library acquires and makes accessible.
- As part of its commitment to equitable access to information and ideas, the State Library provides access to the Internet. The State Library does not filter content retrieved to its public access Internet terminals, recognising that automatic content filtering is a form of censorship. However, the State Library places conditions on children's access to the Internet required under law.
- Without resorting to censorship the State Library protects its clients from risk of offence by:
 - empowering clients to search for information effectively;
 - requiring all clients to be mindful of the possible sensitivities of others.

Supporting documents

International human rights treaties

"Universal Declaration of Human Rights" General Assembly of the United Nations. 1948.
<http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html> (Accessed 15 November, 2005)

"International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights" Assembly of the United Nations.
1966. http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/a_ccpr.htm (Accessed 13 January, 2005)

Intellectual freedom statements

"Statement on free access to information" Australian Library and Information Association.
2001. <http://www.alia.org.au/policies/free.access.html> (Accessed 15 November, 2005)

"Statement on Libraries and Intellectual Freedom." International Federation of Library
Associations. 2003. <http://www.ifla.org/faife/policy/iflastat/iflastat.htm> (Accessed 15
November, 2005)

"Freedom to Read Statement." American Library Association. 2004.
<http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/freeread.html> (Accessed 15 November, 2005)

Privacy

"Information Standard 42, Information privacy" Queensland Government, 2001.
http://www.governmentict.qld.gov.au/02_infostand/standards/is42.pdf (Accessed 15
November, 2005)

"Libraries and Privacy Guidelines" Australian Library and Information Association, 2005
<http://www.alia.org.au/policies/privacy.html>. (Accessed November 2005)

"IFLA Council resolution on National Security Legislation. 2003.
<http://www.ifla.org/faife/policy/iflastat/resolution03.htm> (Accessed 15 November 2005)

"Policy on Confidentiality of Library Records." American Library Association. 2004.
<http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/statementspols/otherpolicies/policyconfidentiality.htm> (Accessed
15 November, 2005)

Internet filtering

"Statement on online content regulation" Australian Library and Information Association.
2002.
<http://www.alia.org.au/policies/content.regulation.html> (Accessed 15 November 2005)

"The IFLA Internet Manifesto" International Federation of Library Associations. 2002.
<http://www.ifla.org/III/misc/im-e.htm>(Accessed 15 November 2005)

"Statement on Library Use of Filtering Software." American Library Association. 2004.
<http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/statementspols/ifresolutions/statementlibrary.htm> (Accessed 15
November 2005)

Related State Library policies

Equitable access

*Collection Development Policy, Indigenous Library Services Strategy, Multicultural
Services Strategy, Service Level Agreements (with Local Governments) and Responsible
Conduct Policy*

Privacy

State Library Privacy plan and Responsible Conduct Policy.

Censorship

*Collection Development Policy, Responsible Conduct Policy, Client Service Standards
and Public Access Internet Policy*