

FAIR FIGHTS

PROPOSED CUTS TO STATE LIBRARY OF WA

FAIR

Freedom of
Access to
Information and
Resources

ALIA's FAIR campaign swept into high gear in early March, with the news that the State Government of Western Australia planned significant cuts to the State Library of WA budget which would not only impact the State Library but also have significant negative consequences for the state's 232 public libraries.

ALIA immediately issued a media release and sent a letter to Culture and Arts Minister, John Day, to protest the cuts, which were reported to have the potential to result in drastic reductions to the State Library's opening hours, and cuts to public libraries' support services, including training, online services, and ordering and delivery of materials.

The FAIR campaign action resulted in ABC TV interviews for ALIA CEO Sue McKerracher and Michelle Brennand (Public Libraries WA). Retired LIS educator Dr Kerry Smith also appeared on TV, enabling the Association and experienced practitioners to speak against the cuts.

ALIA also activated the FAIR supporter network, resulting in over 300 emails to the Minister from FAIR supporters at the time INCITE went to press.

In response, the Minister told the ABC on 4 March that no firm decisions had been made, and that current discussions were 'theoretical'. He stated the WA Government 'had no intention of reducing the number of opening hours at the State Library or changing regional library resourcing'.

He also said, 'any decision that would result in the closure of public libraries around Western Australia would be strongly opposed by me and it's not going to happen,' although he did not include that assurance in a subsequent statement to the media.

ALIA continues to monitor the issue as the State Government prepares its next budget. To follow the progress of this campaign and other FAIR campaigns, go to fair.alia.org.au.

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ALIA's weekly employment & careers newsletter



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ALIA's Employment Listing webpage is updated many times each week to keep you up to date with the latest employment vacancies. Visit www.alia.org.au/jobs.