



ABC library closures

Key points

The ABC has decided to close sound and reference libraries in Adelaide, Hobart and Perth, to reduce the service in Sydney, and to make 10 specialist librarians redundant, as reported in *The Guardian* (Tuesday 30 January) "ABC dismantles sound libraries and axes staff to improve budgets" and *The Guardian* (Tuesday 6 February) "ABC plans to send entire book collection to Samoa to save money". This decision has caused deep concern among ABC staff, libraries and cultural institutions.

<https://www.theguardian.com/media/2018/jan/30/abc-dismantles-sound-libraries-and-axes-staff-to-improve-budget>

<https://www.theguardian.com/media/2018/feb/06/abc-plans-to-send-entire-book-collection-to-samoa-to-save-money>

The ABC's CDs and vinyl records, comprising more than half a million items, provide unparalleled collections of sound recordings, representing both Australian and overseas musicians and performers, in a variety of genres. Although all the items are commercially produced, many are now hard to find, and cannot be easily replaced.

Between them, the 10 specialist librarians (often combining library training with musical ability and broadcast talent) have more than 200 years' worth of skills, knowledge and experience. This corporate and collection knowledge is irreplaceable.

Additionally, the ABC's film, sound and print collections require an ongoing strategy; they are of national importance and must be preserved for future generations. Assurance is needed that the ABC has a carefully considered plan in place for the management of its collections, or that the ABC will work with experts from the cultural sector to develop such a document.

ALIA advocacy

ALIA has written to the Minister for the Arts, Chair of the ABC Board and ABC Managing Director. We have also been in touch with the Department of Communications and the Arts and sought support from ABC staff, cultural institutions and peak bodies, and people of influence.

How you can help

If you would like to add your voice to ours, please send a letter expressing your concerns to advocacy@alia.org.au, by close of business 19 February. This can be an individual letter or a letter signed by a number of people (not a petition). We will collate these expressions of support and forward them to the Minister and to the ABC.