

The background of the cover is a faded, purple-tinted photograph of a city skyline, likely London, featuring several prominent buildings with spires and a large river in the foreground with a boat.

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Patrick Ryan

Information Services

Ministry Of Defence

Ground Floor 41

MoD Main Building

Whitehall

London SW1A 2HB

Tel: 0207 218 0266

Email: patrick.ryan893@mod.uk

All contributions should be addressed to the Editor

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Editorial

Welcome to the latest issue of the Government Libraries and Information Group journal.

Hopefully you have now seen the programme for Umbrella 2009 which was distributed to CILIP members with their personal copies of Gazette magazine on Friday 30 January. As mentioned in the last issue GLIG are involved in several interesting sessions. More details about these can be found on page 6. Also at Umbrella we will be announcing the winner of the 2009 GLIG Award – see page 5 for more details on how to nominate yourself or a colleague.

“Information Matters”, the government’s KIM strategy, was published in November 2008 (for further information see page 3). GLIG has taken on the policy development role of identifying how CILIP should respond in detail to this strategy and how it should engage to influence the implementation. An action plan will shortly be published on the GLIG website and comments etc are welcome on both Information Matters and what you think CILIP and GLIG should be doing. We will be reporting progress regularly in future issues of the journal.

Don’t forget the AGM on 11th March at CILIP HQ from 6.00pm. Peter Griffiths, CILIP President is our guest speaker and free refreshments will be available throughout the evening. A report on last year’s “Question Time” can be found on page 13.

Finally, as I head off on maternity leave, I would like to take this opportunity to wish my replacement all the best. Patrick Ryan will be taking over the reins as Editor from the next issue. His contact details can be found inside the front cover of this issue.

Nikki Myall
Editor

Have your say..... the Government KIM Specialist Skills Framework

Those of you working in the government information management community will no doubt be familiar with the KIRM (Knowledge Information & Records Management) Competency Framework produced by CDL (the Committee of Departmental Librarians).

Well, over the past few months, an exciting project has been under way to refresh the framework and bring it up to date to reflect the increasing range of IM roles undertaken by government KIM practitioners.

Following the publication of “Information Matters”¹, the government’s KIM strategy, in November 2008 the Knowledge Council² tasked its Government KIM Skills Working Group with taking forward work on “Building Capability “ within the profession and out of this came the work to refresh the KIRM Competency Framework.

A first draft of the revised Framework has been signed off by the Knowledge Council and the Working Group is now keen to capture the views of the wider government KIM community – people like you who will be using the Competency Framework in appraisals, recruitment and so on. A consultation exercise will begin around the end of February with the deadline for comments being the end of March 2009.

¹ **The government knowledge and information management strategy**, endorsed by Sir Gus O'Donnell, Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Home Civil Service, entitled, 'Information Matters: building government's capability in managing knowledge and information' is designed to help government departments meet the challenges of the digital era. Further information is available at <http://gkimn.nationalarchives.gov.uk/knowledge-council.htm>

² **The Knowledge Council** has been established to lead government in the better use and management of its knowledge and information, and to support government in ensuring that it has the capability to do so effectively. Further information is available at <http://gkimn.nationalarchives.gov.uk/gov-strategy.htm>.

To see the revised Framework and to post your comments go to the GKIMN wiki at <https://www.gkimnetwork.nationalarchives.gov.uk>. If you haven't yet registered for access to the GKIMN wiki, simply e-mail Deanne Mitchell (e-mail Deanne.Mitchell@ombudsman.gsi.gov.uk or Diane.Murgatroyd@fco.gov.uk) who will register you onto the system, and e-mail you with your username, password and the url for the wiki.

If you have any questions about the Framework, or the consultation exercise please contact your department's Knowledge Council representative or the Knowledge Council secretariat at gkimnetwork@nationalarchives.gov.uk. Alternatively, you could email Karen George, who is a GLIG Committee member and also acts as Home Office representative on the Government KIM Specialist Skills Working Group – email Karen.george@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Your views matter, so please make them heard!

GLIG Award 2009

**Recognition and a £100 prize – how can you resist?
+ a lifetime achievement award, if any appropriate nominations are
received.**

Have you done something, either individually or as part of a team, that makes a real contribution to the work of government information? If you work in any aspect of information – libraries, records management, knowledge management, web publishing, information rights – and have used your professional skills to good effect in a project or piece of work which has applications outside the immediate context of your job, then nominate yourself.

Or perhaps you'd like to nominate a colleague? Describe what you or they have done, on a single side of A4 and send it (with any supporting documentation) to GLIG's Secretary, Anya Somerville (details below), for consideration by the judging panel.

The GLIG award was established in 1998 to mark the Group's 20th birthday. Since then we have had a worthy selection of winners. Last year we decided to institute a specific category of award, for lifetime achievement, so please indicate which category of award you are interested in when submitting your nomination.

So if you are a member of GLIG, or if you work in library or information-related areas of government, and have a candidate or candidates to submit, we would like to hear from you. Entries need to be in by **16 May 2009** and we will announce the winner(s) at Umbrella on **14-15 July 2009**. The winner will have the opportunity to give a brief presentation at the event.

To submit entries (preferably in electronic format) or discuss any queries, please contact:

Anya Somerville
GLIG Secretary
Library Executive
IDMS, House of Commons Library
LG04, 1 Derby Gate
London SW1A 2DG

Phone: 020 7219 6559 or **E Mail:** somervillea@parliament.uk

Making connections: the power of people, partnerships and services – GLIG sessions at Umbrella 2009

Set to be The Library Event of the Year, Umbrella 2009 has an upgraded format to meet the changing needs of the CILIP community:

- Two full days means delegates need less time away from work
- A move to mid-week ensures delegates do not have to give up their weekend
- The conference programme still delivers a choice of 56 sessions as in 2007
- Increased opening hours for the exhibition - venue for all refreshments - allows more networking opportunities for delegates

There are 9 separate strands forming the basis of the conference programme with a total of 56 sessions on offer, and GLIG are organising five sessions in two of the strands: **Professional values:** Evidence, Diversity, Ethics & the Research Base and **Only Collect:** Management of print & electronic collections materials.

Tuesday 11.45 – 13.00: *Digitising government collections –the Department of Work & Pensions experience How and why DWP is moving from print to electronic.* Speaker: Angela Tailby, Department of Work & Pensions

This session will look at a DWP project moving from print to electronic for future policy making: how, why and lessons learnt from the project.

This is a joint session with Health Libraries Group who will be presenting: NLH e-learning repository. Providing a search and discovery platform for e-learning objects – Speakers: Bertha Low & Angie Clark National Library for Health

Tuesday 14: 15 – 15:30: *Government information in the Google age Archiving, the legal framework and the market for government information.* Speaker: Edward Wood, House of Commons

This session will feature speakers talking around issues such as archiving, the legal framework and the market for government information.

This is a joint session with Information Services Group who will be presenting: Making MAGIC: a virtual reference desk for UK Government Information Online - Speaker: Jennie Grimshaw British Library
The Managing Access to Government Information Collaboratively service will deliver documents to researchers' desks.

Tuesday 16:00 – 17:15: *Is there a future for the UK Legal Deposit system?* Speaker: Simon Barlow, Ministry of Defence.

This session will discuss issues raised in a dissertation written by Simon Barlow, a civil servant who current works as an Archive Manager in a major Government Department.

Wednesday 11.15-12.30: *Information Assurance: one year on from the Hannigan and Poynter Reviews.* Speaker: David Critchley and Karen George, Home Office, plus a speaker from Ministry of Defence tbc.

This session will look at what opportunities have arisen for the government information management community and whether or not we have risen to the challenge by applying our skills in a new area.

Wednesday 15.45 – 17.00: *Central government Information Question Time* Chaired by Sue Westcott

This session will be a lively and interesting question time style debate focussing on issues such as Freedom of Information, Data Protection and ethics. Panel members will include: John Quinn, Chief Knowledge Officer, Department of Children, Schools and Families, Graham Monk, Head of Library and Information Services, Department of work and Pensions and David Smith, Head of Information management Division, Communities and Local Government.

For more information visit the conference website at http://communities.cilip.org.uk/blogs/umbrella_2009/default.aspx for all the latest news.

E-book provision, promotion and use: how do government libraries compare with academic libraries?

By Steven K Hearn, MOD Whitehall Information Centre

“Government libraries don’t do e-books!”

I suspect, just by simply reading the title of this article, that some cynics may have already drawn their own conclusions that “Government libraries don’t do e-books!” As will be discovered, this is not strictly true and the findings are not as negative as may be thought!

To complete my BScEcon in Information and Library Studies at Aberystwyth University, I submitted a dissertation on the above subject. I have always been very interested in technology and the role it plays in the library and information services context. We cannot, therefore discount electronic books – or e-books, as they are better known. In fact, there has been much discussion in the media about them of late. Having used e-books myself, I quite like what they have to offer – I have found them very useful, and I decided a whole year before I actually submitted my proposal that I really wanted to write a dissertation about them (fortunately, my proposal was accepted without a hitch, because my second choice of topic simply revolved around the phrase “...something to do with censorship...” – and without any idea how to approach it!)

This article is a much-abridged and somewhat less formal version of my dissertation - what I read about e-books, the research methodology I used and, importantly, exactly what my findings were. Compared with what academic librarians have written, there seems to be a dearth of literature out there from government librarians. So, why not comment on the e-book situation from the latter’s perspective, I thought? If I don’t, then someone else soon will.....won’t they?

What are e-books, how long have they been around and what are the issues?

A large part of my dissertation’s literature review was occupied by arguments and counter-arguments from various academics simply trying to make their minds up over what exactly an e-book is. I will spare you the details, as it gave me a headache just putting them all together! The best definition, in my opinion, is that supplied by Armstrong, Edwards and Lonsdale (2002). According to them, an e-book is:

“...any piece of electronic text regardless of size or composition (a digital object), but excluding journal publications, made available electronically (or optically) for any device (handheld or desk-bound) that includes a screen.”

E-books are not quite as recent an innovation as might first be thought: their history can be traced back to hypertext document software run on IBM mainframe computer systems in the 1960s, or to the development of a portable e-book reader called Dynabook in 1968. But, despite this, Chu (2003) notes that: “...the public as well as the market did not experience the e-book surge until the turn of last century (*sic*).” Technology too, has continued to march on: some hand-held e-book readers were already declared obsolete as recently as 2005. E-book technology can basically be divided into hardware-based (e.g. Amazon’s Kindle) or software based (e.g. Adobe Reader PDFs).

E-books also bring with them many advantages, e.g. 24/7 availability; the quick ability to search for keywords in the text; old editions of a text can be dynamically updated with new editions and historic or out of print texts can be easily downloaded (e.g. Project Gutenberg). Although technology has come a long way, there are still many issues and doubts surrounding e-books, and they can be briefly summarised as follows:

- Publishers are reluctant to make their “best” titles available, for fear of loss of revenues on traditional, printed books;
- Printed books have been around for centuries, and many people are not keen to embrace new technology and much prefer the look and feel of a traditional book, rather than reading a PDF on screen or from an e-book reader’s LCD display;
- Licensing and copyright issues are currently very complex – and, in some cases, only one page of an e-book can be printed out at a time.

With those issues in mind, how do libraries in two different sectors, government and academic, compare? Or is there no comparison at all?

Dissertation research questions and methodology

The research questions were easy enough: why have e-books not apparently been as widely used and accepted in government libraries as they have been in academic libraries? What similarities or differences are there in terms of collection provision, promotion and use?

As this was an undergraduate dissertation, I had significantly fewer words to write than would be expected of a Master’s candidate. This meant that the population sample had to be practical, and I interviewed three

government librarians and three academic librarians. An interview schedule was drawn up, based on themes I uncovered in the literature search (e.g. How do you catalogue your e-books? What has user reaction been like? Have you experienced any technical difficulties in using e-books? How do you market e-books to your customers?)

The findings

Having carried out the interviews, I found that there were differences between the two sectors, but there are also similarities as well. The Government libraries surveyed had far smaller collections of e-books than academic libraries, but this was to be expected – for instance, our customer bases are different, we don't have to provide multiple copies of tutor-set texts, we don't have short loan collections.

Licensing complaints were common in both sectors: one government librarian was put off by the 15-page length of one provider's terms and conditions! Another said that the licenses were geared towards academic libraries, particularly when it came to the terminology (e.g. "full-time equivalents").

Academic libraries are currently involved in a JISC (Joint Information Systems Committee) project to increase awareness of e-books in academic libraries. A selection of texts have been funded and provided by JISC, but they are not necessarily the best texts, and one academic librarian noted considerable difficulty in trying to make JISC realise this fact. Another called it a "missed opportunity".

Government libraries do not have a direct equivalent of JISC: the closest we probably have is the Committee of Departmental Librarians (CDL). Some government librarians commented that if anyone could drive forward a government department-wide e-books strategy, it would be CDL, but nothing has yet been established. One government librarian trying to develop an e-books collection accessible to customers throughout the world distinctly mentioned a "thou shalt not", bureaucratic approach to driving forward initiatives, and that the Civil Service did not share the same "joined up approach" as academic libraries.

Computer networks in academic libraries were generally far less restrictive than those in government libraries. In the latter, difficulties were encountered with downloading vendor-supplied catalogue records, to the extent that one library didn't bother as they knew what the outcome would be! All interviewees found that e-book usage statistics could be hard to decipher, depending on the vendor.

Not surprisingly, time and staff resources were also an issue – government and academic librarians alike noted that not all of their e-books had yet been fully catalogued.

Promotion of e-book collections in both sectors was pleasing, but there was an admission among government librarians that more needed to be done in this respect. One of the academic librarians was working with an e-book supplier to loan from them a set of professionally-created promotional materials, as she admitted that “marketing doesn’t come naturally to librarians.”

It was pleasing to note that it was not just academic libraries that were digitising old books and making it available in electronic form: one government department was doing just that, and making an e-archive available of documentation from the 1940s onwards on its corporate intranet.

Conclusion

Yes, government libraries DO do e-books, or would like to - at least the small number I surveyed did!

I did notice a slightly negative feeling among government librarians when it comes to e-books, but that is not to suggest that everything is just fine in the academic sector. That sector has problems too: getting JISC to listen to suggestions is one, the complexities of the user licences is another. But the academic sector has been more willing to contribute to the professional literature its experiences, bad or good, of using e-books. Government librarians, I feel, should not be shy about doing the same. I was very impressed with one project that was under way in one of the libraries in our sector and I felt it deserved a mention in my findings. This, I feel, is a positive step in the development and provision of e-content, and, I hope, further collections and increased recognition of e-books in the government libraries sector.

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Visit to CILT – 15th July 2008

CILT, the National Centre for Languages is the UK Government's recognised centre of expertise on languages. It sets standards for languages, interpreting and translation and is the recognised expert body for language and cultural skills for the UK-wide Skills for Business Network. CILT's mission is to promote a greater capability in languages in the UK.

The librarian, Emma Woods, welcomed the GLIG visitors and explained how CILT was set up. Established in 1966, as the Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research, it merged with the Languages National Training Organisation in 2003. CILT relocated from Covent Garden in the autumn of 2007. CILT exists to promote and support language learning and teaching. It has several websites, publishes books, has Regional Support Networks, offers professional development opportunities for teachers, measures trends, and provides a reference library. CILT is involved with several projects, for example:

1. www.ourlanguages.org.uk (supplementary schools and community languages)
2. 14-19 www.cilt.org/14to19
3. NACELL www.nacell.org.uk (early language learning)
4. Languages Work www.languageswork.org.uk (careers options)

The library, at CILT's London office on Westminster Bridge Road, has PCs for customers to try out language learning software, satellite TV, and collections of textbooks, audio and video recordings. There is a range of books and periodicals on language teaching methodology, linguistics, past exam papers, ideas for the classroom and for assessment, and the NACELL collection for primary language teaching materials. The CILT collection includes little on English as a foreign language (EFL) as that is not in its remit. It separated from the British Council some years ago; the Central London ELT library is located in St Giles College, Holborn.

Library services are free and the catalogue is available online at www.cilt.org.uk/libcat. The library uses a classification scheme based on an old Education Scheme. The information team also provide an enquiry service and information sheets.

After a tour of the library and time for browsing, Emma provided some welcome refreshments and answered our questions.

The CILT Resources Library can be contacted on library@cilt.org.uk To find out more about the Library, please visit <http://www.cilt.org.uk/irs>

Any Questions? GLIG 2008 AGM Podcast Review

By Steven K Hearn, MOD Whitehall Information Centre

A featured part of the 2008 GLIG Annual General Meeting, which took place on Wednesday 11th June, was an “Any Questions”-style panel discussion, chaired not by one of the Dimpleby Brothers, but by David Smith, GLIG Vice-Chair. The panel on the day was comprised of: Patrick Ryan, the MOD’s Chief Librarian, on secondment at the time to the Land Registry; Sue Westcott (Head of ICT Services, Communities and Local Government); Ben Chan (MOD Library Intranet Editor); and Carol Gokce (Chief Librarian, Communities and Local Government/Department for Transport).

The discussion was recorded for posterity as a podcast, available for download from the GLIG website, by what David Smith described as a “MOD Death Ray” (in reality, a microphone-cum-digital sound recorder supplied by Ben Chan!). The “Death Ray” actually produced a very clear recording: it was sensitive enough to pick up the sound of an aeroplane flying over CILIP HQ, as well as a lorry going past, and a few doors being opened and closed! Fortunately, these extraneous rumblings did not detract too much from the discussion, although it was necessary at one or two points to turn up the volume of the speakers to hear some points raised from members of the audience.

Synergy

The panel was asked a number of thought-provoking questions on issues concerning government librarians. The first question concerned the grouping together of records managers and librarians, and would senior managers be willing to appoint one or the other to a senior role. Patrick felt that there needed to be synergy between the two groups, and that librarians needed to play a greater part in records management. Sue considered that the most important thing is getting the right person for the job, with the right competencies. It is difficult for the customer to make a distinction between a librarian and a records manager – customers don’t care who provides the information and what their job titles are, as long as they get the information! Carol backed up this view. Ben mentioned that gaining records management skills would be good for information professionals in the library field to broaden their knowledge and skills for career development opportunities - especially as professional librarian posts in government are decreasing.

Too Precious?

The discussion then moved on to qualifications. It was felt by some panellists that achieving chartered status was just as important as gaining an initial professional qualification. For instance, Sue stressed the need for librarians not to become “pigeon-holed” – we need to embrace a broad range of skills to augment our academic qualifications. On the other hand, Patrick reckoned that perhaps the information profession can be “too precious” about being qualified. He believed that “We need to lose that preciousness...and embrace more people.”

Further to Patrick’s point, an interesting question raised was whether or not CILIP was far too vehement about defending against de-professionalisation. How can we demonstrate our professional input to other posts across all sectors, without coming across as being too “precious”? There was a general consensus that librarians definitely need to market themselves better – Patrick pointed out that we talk about marketing a lot, but actually need to do it! Carol stressed that we need to make time to market ourselves as individuals – people need to know better what information professionals have to offer. Sue thought we needed to improve our communication with CILIP – ask them for support and tell them the situation!

“Make Noises”

What, the Chairman then asked, is the one action panellists would take if they were Chief Executive of “CILIP Plc”, to increase its profile in the political area? Ben felt that we should be more proactive: we should engage with experts and decision-makers and make sure our voices as information professionals are heard and respected. Patrick advocated approaching people who “make noises”, such as Sir Richard Branson and Dennis Skinner MP. Patrick believed that CILIP is “serenading the wrong people” – it spends too much time approaching those who, in his opinion, are its “normal advocates”. Sue agreed with this point – CILIP needs to be more “controversial” and less “shameless”. She compared CILIP to the American Library Association, who invite high-profile names such as Laura Bush to speak at their conferences, and adopt a more proactive approach. We are, in Sue’s opinion, “too precious about what kind of bandwagons we jump on” and too much of a “shrinking violet”.

Common Sense Policies

The next question concerned a very recent hot topic in government, data loss and the Hannigan Review. What opportunities will arise for

information professionals in terms of data protection and insurance? Sue (who has been involved in briefing her own senior colleagues on these very issues) mentioned that information professionals know what questions to ask, create “common sense policies” and change the general culture of the organisation, e.g. “don’t stick a staff report on the shared drive!” Ben felt that users had become “blasé” in handling sensitive information – information professionals have the skills to educate the user in mitigating and managing these risks. Carol saw this as a “big opportunity” for information professionals to get involved.

Orwellian Implications

With Web 2.0 rapidly maturing, the Chairman then asked: “What is the next best thing?” Ben highlighted the social aspects of the web, such as Google Connect. He viewed the web as being a more social, and less individual, activity. Carol saw a big opportunity for information professionals to be more involved in future developments in technology used in national security. Patrick thought that databases would become more intelligent – rather scarily like a “man in the box”, with Orwellian implications! Sue, however, thought that government departments are struggling to get to grips with Web 2.0, and observing them doing so is “a bit like watching your dad dancing!”

Where Do We Go Now?

Have government information professionals reached a crossroads in terms of professional development, and where should we go now? Carol advised widening the “yellow brick road” – we should take whatever opportunities we can find to broaden our skills and experience. Sue’s view was “If it interests you, then do it!”, and Patrick felt that pursuing your interest involves escaping the “comfort blanket” of libraries, then so be it. Ben said that information professionals should adapt and change, and collaborate more with other teams.

Competency Overload?

The penultimate question asked if we have too many competency frameworks? Patrick agreed that perhaps there were; although he is interested in making sure people are competent for the job, there needs to be some “equal measure” applied to competencies. Sue regarded them as having a practical use for recruitment and development purposes, but it can be difficult to base a job interview around 20 competencies – she agreed with Patrick that there needs to be more measure and clearer definition. Carol said that an applicant needs a lot of skill when giving

evidence against the competencies on, for example, electronic job application forms – not to mention needing editorial skills and bolding text in the right places!

And finally.....a word from the janitor

The final question posed by the Chairman came from the CILIP janitor – “Ain’t you got homes to go to?” No-one present would, of course, dare to delay the janitor, so here was where the questions ceased.

On the whole, this was an enjoyable session and David Smith definitely approached the role with humour and enthusiasm...and the panellists had some interesting points to make too!!

The podcast may be downloaded from:
<http://www.cilip.org.uk/specialinterestgroups/bysubject/government/events> Accessed on 13 Jan 09)

The Government Libraries & Information Group

Annual General Meeting 2009

will take place on

Wednesday 11th March

at

The Ewart Room, CILIP, 7 Ridgmount Street. London, WC1E 7AE

Proceedings start at **6:00pm**

Free refreshments will be available throughout the evening

Guest Speaker: Peter Griffiths

Items for inclusion on the **Agenda and Motions for the AGM** should be sent to the GLIG Secretary, Anya Sommerville, at least 2 WEEKS prior to the AGM. Email somervillea@parliament.uk or phone: 020 7219 6559
