

Rapid Return : Current Inter-Library Loan Practices in Australia and New Zealand

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We will always be seeking print materials from other libraries. The voucher system for inter-library loans has been the regulated means for a couple of decades in Australia and continues as an effective form of transaction. At the same time there is no longer a fixed procedure for inter-library loans. This especially became the case with the introduction of the GST; many libraries decided to go with their own system in order to have more effective delivery at cheaper rates. This matter of choice is indicated in the scope statement of the Australian Interlibrary Resource Sharing Code: "Although the ILRS Code is voluntary all libraries participating in resource sharing are encouraged to operate under the principles and implement the service level standards specified ensuring an efficient and effective system. The core service is mandatory. Libraries are encouraged to offer all four service levels. Core and priority levels must be provided before offering the higher levels. Maximum prices are recommended for each service level. The charge drops to the service level delivered when a supplying library fails to meet the turnaround time."

Here are the basic requirements for present-day inter-library loans.

Requesting

Requesters are expected to provide sufficient, accurate bibliographic details for all requests wherever possible. The following details are essential on any request slip:

1. Identification of the item. This must include title, author and date for monographs; article title, article author, publication title, volume number, pagination, and date for journal and monograph articles.
2. The copyright statement. The wording of this

statement in Australia ought to be something like "Request complies with Australian Copyright Act, Section 49." Further information about reproduction and communication of works by librarians and archivists can be found in the Commonwealth's Copyright Act 1968, Section 49. Online at: http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/ca1968133/s49.html

3. The shipping address. This is presented in full, preferably with the name of the ILL officer in the notice.
4. Verification of the source of information. This is very useful if anyone needs to check the references.

Supplying

Within Australia the three most common forms of inter-library loan are via Kinetica Document Delivery, the voucher system or via an invoice system.

Whichever system you choose, the following information is essential:

1. On an invoice, the institution's ABN number (i.e. in Australia) and preferred method of payment.
2. The payment due.
3. The terms of the loan, most especially the due return date.

Reciprocal and cooperative systems are in operation within some library networks where

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there is a common interest. Within ANZTLA, the New South Wales Chapter forged an agreement (there is no written arrangement) in which member libraries of the Chapter only charge each other half the regular national price for ILL loans. The following is an excerpt from the minutes of the NSW Chapter meeting on 15 August, 1997: "Inter-library loan costs were discussed drawing attention to the fact that charges had been raised by State and National Libraries. Jocelyn Morris moved that the following charges be established for the ANZTLA (NSW) chapter beginning on 1 September, 1997.

Journal articles up to 30 pp. \$ 6.00 (each additional 30 pp. \$6.00)
Loan of monographs \$6.00
Urgent fax \$12.00 (+ \$3.00 for each 10 pages faxed)

The motion was seconded and carried."

These amounts were raised again to cover half of the GST costs when GST came in, so that NSW libraries would still be charging half of the normal ILL rates (e.g. \$6.60 instead of \$6.00) The arrangement only concerned the issue of the cost of such loans. Chapter members still require the appropriate request forms as this fulfills legal requirements.

Here are three websites that provide further useful information on inter-library loans:

1. The National Resource Sharing Working Group (<http://www.nla.gov.au/initiatives/nrswg/>), which includes links to the Interlibrary Resource Sharing (ILRS) Code.
2. ALIA : Interlibrary Loans (<http://www.alia.org.au/interlibrary.lending/>), which includes links to the ALIA Voucher System and to the Interlibrary Resource Sharing (ILRS) Code.
3. LIANZA : Interlibrary Loans (http://www.lianza.org.nz/interloans_handbook.shtml)

New Zealand

In New Zealand requesters are encouraged to use electronic request systems e.g. Te Puna Interloan, wherever possible. Supplying libraries may either: (i) accept manual and non-compliant electronic requests and proceed as usual; or (ii) accept manual or non-compliant electronic requests but negotiate a price differential for them; or (iii) refuse to accept manual or non-compliant electronic requests.

Supplying Libraries may either: (i) accept incomplete requests and proceed as usual; or (ii) negotiate a higher charge for any extra bibliographic work required; or (iii) reserve the right to give incomplete requests lower priority; or (iv) refuse to accept requests with incomplete bibliographic details and return them to the requester.

Supplying libraries may refuse to supply items to libraries which fail to make payments on time. Interlibrary loan operates as a charged system with each library free to set its own charges, including a zero charge. The average cost per interloan established in 1997 and recommended as the standard charge is \$14.00 per loan. This cost is a guide only, for libraries to adopt if they wish. A surcharge may be applied for urgent or fast-track services. Each library may set different levels of charges for different categories of requester, for example, a higher rate to Non-Charter libraries which do not report holdings, to reflect their lack of contribution to the Interloan infrastructure. Each library will be free to enter into formal or informal arrangements on a regional, sector or other basis, and to negotiate charges with these groups accordingly, including discounting or waiving charges. It is up to each library to determine whether charges are passed on to the end-user or met by the library or shared between the two. LIANZA and the National Library have jointly established a billing agency, the Interloan Billing System (IBS), to handle all interloan charging. The IBS is operated by Grant Thornton for the JSCI, and is designed to provide a low-cost, cooperative approach to billing and crediting of interloan charges. It takes billing information electronically from Te Puna and other sources, or manually. Use of the IBS for billing purposes is optional. However all libraries requesting items by Interloan may receive IBS invoices and are required to abide by the rules of the IBS, for example by paying invoices on time.

If Australian libraries wish to place a request, I suggest they contact the relevant holding library in New Zealand. Many will accept ALIA vouchers in payment for requests and/or will negotiate a means of payment.

Other things to keep in mind

If all the detail is spelt out properly then the transaction should be clean and efficient. In the nature of things though, problems can arise and it is easier sometimes to make a simple phone call or email for clarification