

Resetting AULOTS

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What Is AULOTS?

For those who are not already familiar, AULOTS is the Australasian Union List of Serials in Theological Collections¹. This union list aims to encompass the complete periodical holdings of all ANZTLA member libraries. AULOTS was established in 1983², two years prior to the formation of ANZTLA as a separate entity from ANZATS³. AULOTS was originally produced as a printed union catalogue until the 4th edition, after which time it transitioned into an online database.

The Current State Of AULOTS

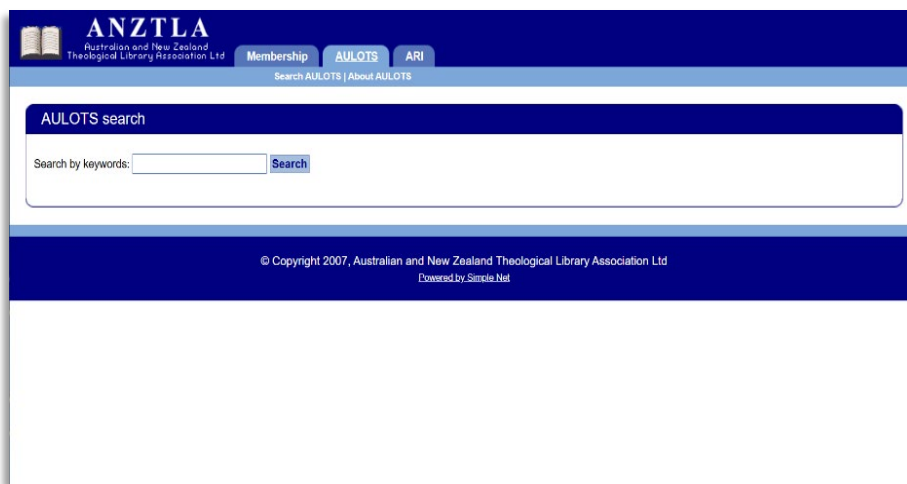


Figure 1: AULOTS search

The AULOTS interface (see fig. 1) will already be very familiar to many. It is simple, clean and straightforward. Searching is by keyword only and cannot be limited to specific fields. The website

¹ Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association, "About AULOTS."

² McCumstie and Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association, *Australasian Union List of Serials in Theological Collections*.

³ Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association, "About."



does not scale well to high-resolution monitors or mobile devices.

The *search results* (fig. 2) display has its own shortcomings. The results are alphabetical by serial title only and cannot be sorted in any other way. Searching is by keyword only, which seems to only index serial titles. This means that one cannot search or sort by library name.

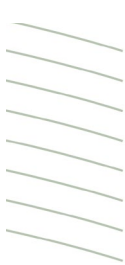


ANZTLA Australian and New Zealand Theological Library Association Ltd		
Membership	AULOTS	ARI
Search AULOTS About AULOTS		
AULOTS search		
Search by keywords: <input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Search"/>		
Title	Imprint	Run
A.A.Grapevine	New York : Alcoholics Anonymous	
A.B.M. Missionary Notes	Sydney : Australian Board of Missions	1-16(1895-1910)
A.B.M. Review	Sydney : Australian Board of Missions	1-64(1910-1974)
A.B.M. Review Annual Report	Sydney : Australian Board of Missions	
A.B.M. Review of Mission	Sydney : Australian Board of Missions	
A.C.C. News	Auckland : Auckland Council of Churches	1978-1981
A.C.L. News	Sydney : Anglican Church League	
A.C.L.S. Bibliography	Melbourne : Australian Christian Literature Society	1(1978)+
A.C.R. News	Sydney : Australian Catholic Relief	1-64(1982-1995)
A.C.S.J.C. Briefing	North Sydney, N.S.W. : Australian Catholic Social Justice Council	1(2000)+
A.C.S.J.C. Issues	Sydney : Australian Catholic Social Justice Council	1987+
A.C.S.J.C. Occasional Paper	North Blackburn, Vic. : Collins Dove	1(1988)+
A.C.T.S. Theological Journal	Seoul, Korea : Asian Center for Theological Studies and Mission	1(1984)+
A.D. 2000: a Journal of Religious Opinion	North Melbourne : AD2000	1 no. 1(Ap 1988)+
A.D. for Youth Leaders	Melbourne : Joint Board of Christian Education	1988-1991
A.D.: Journal of Christian Education	Melbourne : Joint Board of Christian Education	1(1988)+
A.D. News: the Newspaper of the Anglican Diocese of Auckland		1989-1997
A.D. Presbyterian Life Edition	Dayton, Ohio.	1(Ag 1972)+
A.D.R.I.S. Newsletter	Milwaukee : Association for the Development of Religious Information Systems	1(1971)+
A.E.T.E.I. Journal	Bangalore : Association of Evangelical Education in India	
1 2 3 4 5 6 next>		
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Figure 2: AULOTS search results

Despite its limitations, the current iteration of AULOTS continues to serve a valuable purpose. The fact that it has seen continued use over many years is proof that it works, and there are real benefits to the way the system functions. Not least of these is that it is possible to view the holdings of all ANZTLA libraries in a single place for each resource. It is also very easy to access contact information for the member libraries with one click. This does, of course, rely on the member libraries regularly updating their details, but this is true of most databases of this nature.

The most significant challenge AULOTS currently faces is incomplete data. For many libraries, it can be months or even years between updates, if updates are made at all. The reality is that as



demands on our time rise, it becomes increasingly difficult to justify spending time on updating two catalogues for a single resource.

A Possible Future For AULOTS?

Around a year ago, OCLC was contacted about potential options for modernising AULOTS. There were discussions over several months about ways in which a system that would offer similar functionality to the current AULOTS, but with a richer feature set and a more modern interface could be implemented. WorldCat Discovery was proposed as a suitable replacement for the current system, offering additional useful tools and functions.

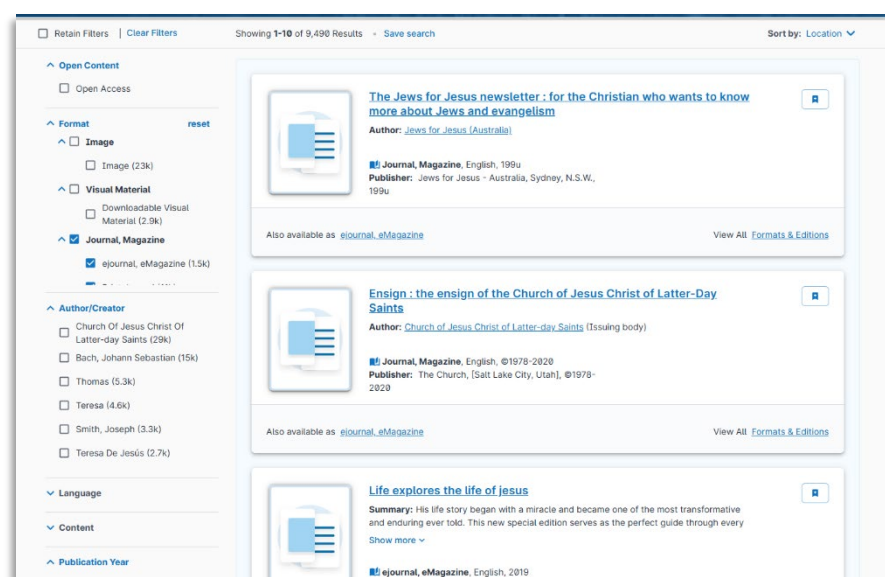


Figure 3: WorldCat search results

WorldCat Discovery features a clean, Google-like search interface. OCLC offer a search widget for WorldCat that can be embedded in most websites.

The search results (fig. 3) provide a good amount of detail at a glance, including the type of resource, language, and dates of publication. The facets on the left can be used to limit the search by certain fields, such as format, language and year of publication.



Further detail can be found in the bibliographic record by clicking on the title of the resource (fig. 4). As WorldCat is a shared interface used by libraries worldwide, there is a vast network of libraries that are constantly adding and improving records. As a results, the bibliographic records in WorldCat typically provide quite a bit more information that the records in our current AULOTS.

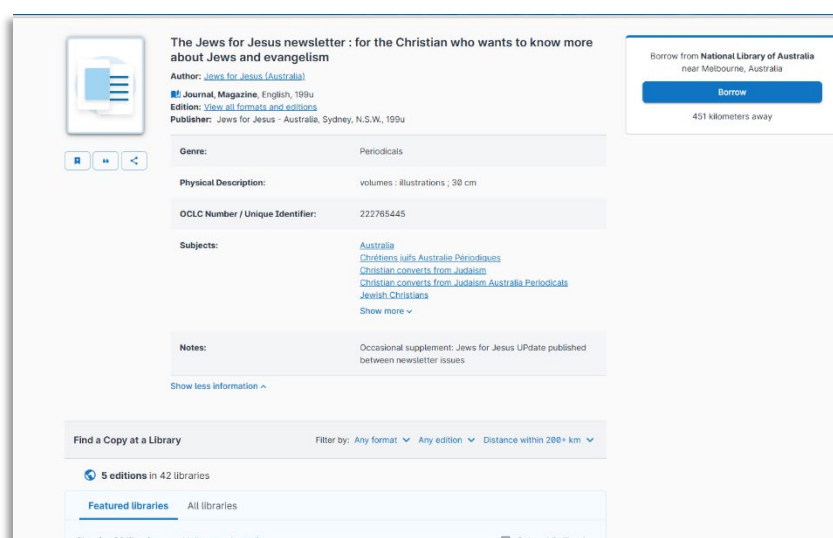


Figure 4: WorldCat bibliographic record

Holdings are not added directly to WorldCat but are instead harvested by either Trove Collaborative Services or Te Puna and then transfer automatically to WorldCat. If a member library is not already contributing to these services, there may be some initial setup involved. After that, the library will only need to update its own catalogue, and the rest will happen automatically. There will be no need to remember to update AULOTS, and there will be no need to take time out to add holdings once they are added to the library's catalogue.

Once added to WorldCat, holdings will appear at the bottom of the bibliographic record and are listed in descending order by distance from your location (fig. 5). Results can be limited to only AULOTS, or all libraries worldwide.

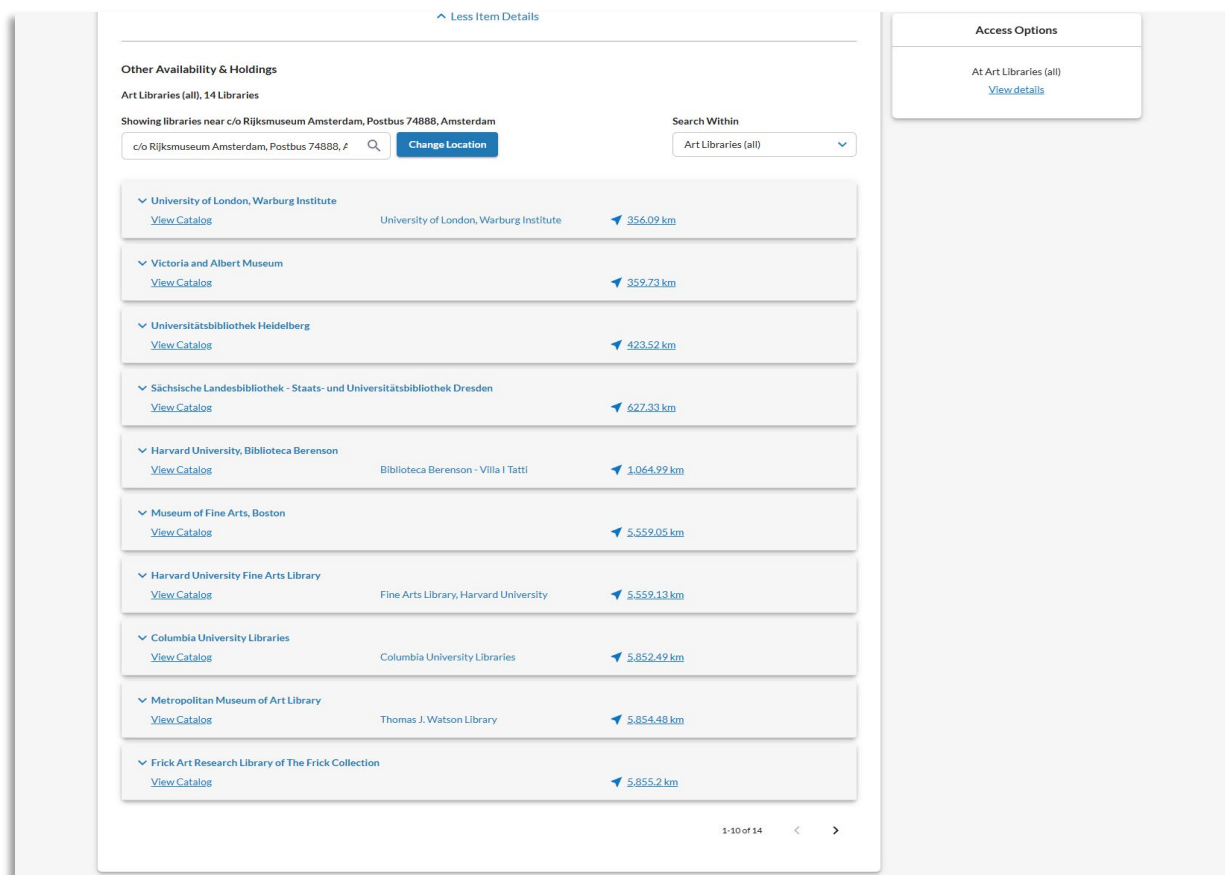
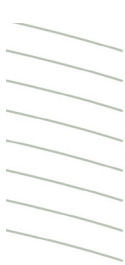


Figure 5: WorldCat holdings list

WorldCat is not built specifically with ANZTLA’s use case in mind, and while it offers numerous advantages, certain limitations must be considered. While it is possible to view who holds each resource within WorldCat, it is necessary to click through to the individual library’s catalogue to see their holdings. This means that the “at a glance” functionality of the current system would be lost and also means that each library would need to ensure that deep linking from WorldCat is set up so that the *View Catalog* link goes directly to the correct record in their catalogue. It would also mean that it would be more difficult to find contact details via WorldCat, as it would be necessary to seek out the details on the library’s website rather than being able to find it within AULOTS.



Case Study – The Art Discovery Group Catalogue

The Art Discovery Group was formed in 1999 as the Virtual Catalogue of Art History. This was a joint venture between a number of European institutions, including the Kubikat Consortium, the Kunsthistorisches Institut, the Max Planck Institut, and Zentralinstitut fur Kunstgeschichte. In the 2000s, more libraries began to join this “Virtual Catalogue,” including the Florentine IRIS consortium, the union catalogue of the libraries of the French National Museums, the Rijksmuseums in Amsterdam, and the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles. In 2012, this catalogue was developed into the Art Discovery Group Catalogue. At that stage, 30 art libraries were part of this union catalogue. There are now over 60 libraries taking part in this group, with millions of records made accessible through this catalogue⁴.

The Art Discovery Group website does not have any search functionality, only containing a link to their instance of the WorldCat Discovery Service on the home page. Proceeding from there, the user encounters a simple Google-like search interface (fig. 6).

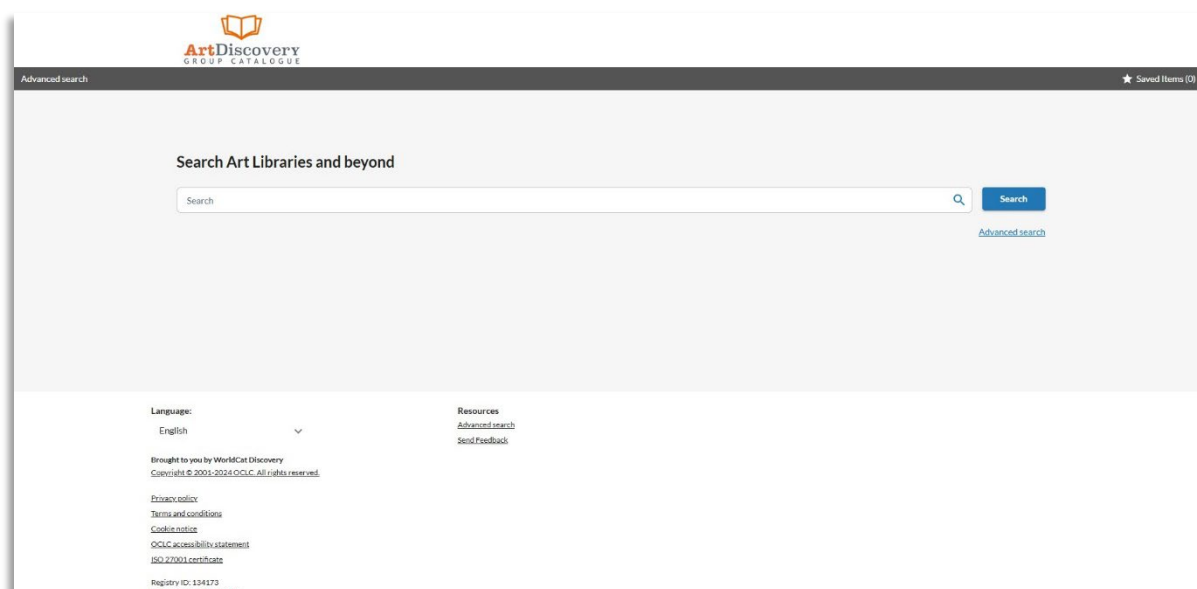


Figure 6: The Art Discovery Group catalogue interface

⁴ Art Discovery Group, “About Us.”



The results display in the Art Discovery Group Catalogue is very similar to the more general example mentioned earlier. The most significant difference between that and the Art Discovery Group catalogue is found in the left most pane of the page – under the *Held By* facet, there are three options: *Libraries Worldwide*, *Art Libraries (all)*, and *Art Libraries (exclude Universities)*. These options enable the user to limit their search to only those groups, enabling to search across only those libraries that are part of the group (fig. 7).

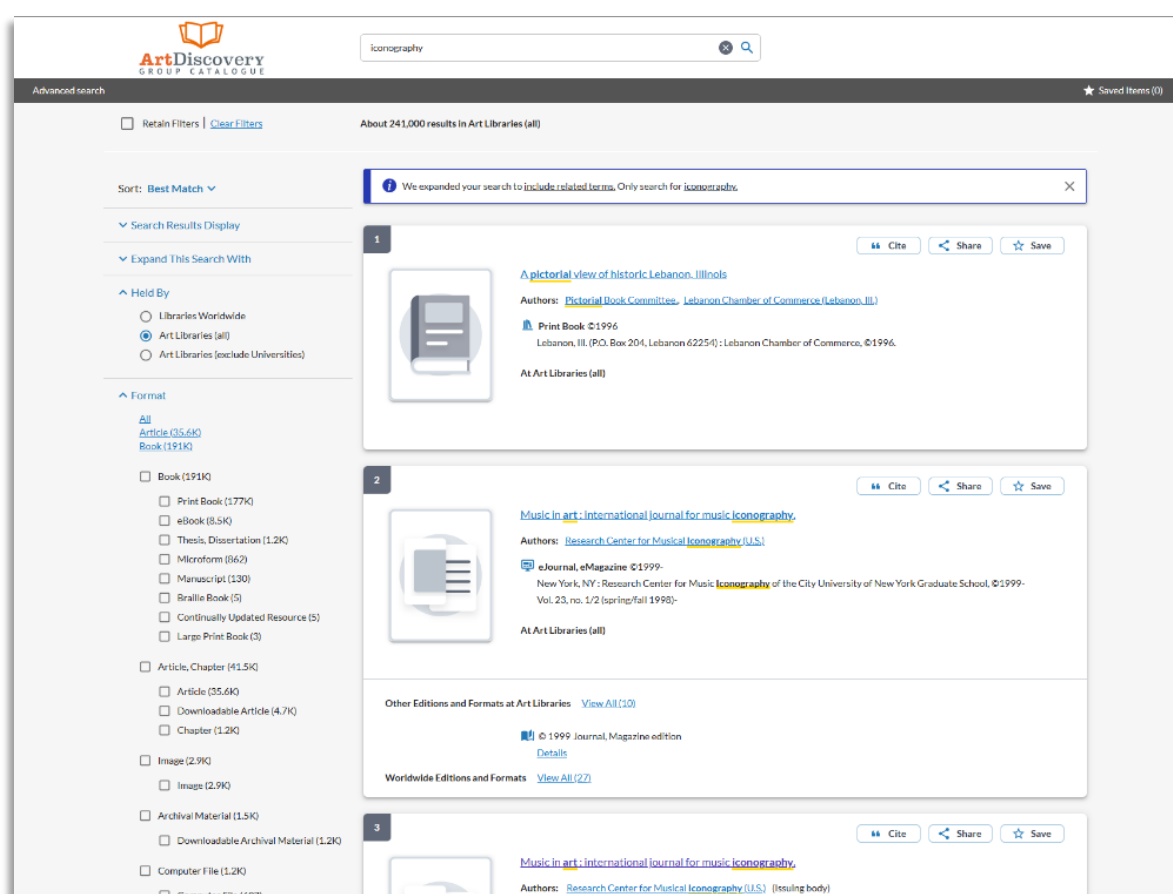
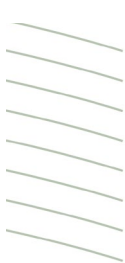


Figure 7: The Art Discovery Group Catalogue search results

Within each record, there is a list of holdings, which can be limited to *Libraries Worldwide*, *Art Libraries (all)*, or *Art Libraries (exclude Universities)*. Much like the *Held By* facet in the results view, this enables users to narrow their results to only those libraries that participate in the Art



Discovery Group. The holdings list is sorted by geographical location based on distance from the current location. Users can change their location by entering their address into the interface.

Pricing

There are a number of considerations that need to be taken into account when looking at the price of a system like this. One major complicating factor is who would bear the cost. There are two potential approaches to this:

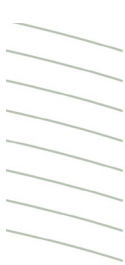
1. All ANZTLA libraries would share the cost:

- It is likely that membership fees would increase to cover the higher subscription cost for WorldCat Discovery Service.
- To participate in the shared service, all ANZTLA libraries would need to contribute to Trove Collaborative Services or Te Puna.
- All ANZTLA libraries would need to provide statistics, such as FTE student enrolment numbers, in order to be able to determine the subscription cost per year.

2. ANZTLA member libraries would be able to opt-in to the service and pay a portion of the overall cost:

- Only libraries that wish to participate in sharing their holdings on the shared instance of WorldCat Discovery Service would need to contribute to the cost of the service.
- Only participating libraries would need to contribute their holdings information to Trove Collaborative Services/Te Puna.
- Only participating libraries would need to provide their statistical information.

Option two raises another important question – what happens to the libraries that choose not to take part? Shutting down the current AULOTS system would cut them off from being able to



contribute altogether, and maintaining the current system for their benefit creates unnecessary redundancy.

The one question that looms largest over this proposal is the most important – how much will all of this cost? It is also the most difficult to answer. The short answer is that we don't quite know. Based on preliminary discussions with OCLC, it could be as much as AU\$2,000 per site, but we would be working down from there based on the statistical data gathered from the member libraries.

To be able to determine a final subscription cost, we would need to be able to provide the following information:

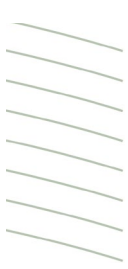
- The total number of sites
- The number of FTE students per site
- The total size of the collection

As there may be some hurdles to overcome for some ANZTLA libraries to provide this information, it would be best to ensure that this proposal has at least in principle support from the members before we begin gathering data.

A Third Option?

Previously, I mentioned two possible outcomes, wherein either all member libraries, or only a portion thereof, participate in the union catalogue. But there is a third option, which is to not move forward with this proposal at all. There is considerable merit to considering this option, and it may in fact be the only viable one.

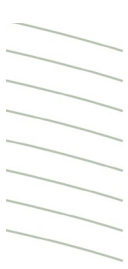
This simple fact is that we cannot all afford to pay AU\$2,000 per site. Even if the subscription fee is reduced significantly, there will be libraries that are either unwilling or unable to pay.



Furthermore, despite the obvious benefits of WorldCat, there are some downsides to the system, such as not being able to see holdings data withing the system itself.

If we choose not to move our union catalogue to WorldCat, there will be other decisions that need to be made. It would be possible to continue with the current system, but it is already quite dated, and the current hosting company has proven difficult to communicate with. The question, then, is: if not OCLC, then who? Do we investigate a bespoke system, or find something more generic that will tick most of the boxes? What kind of system would provide the most benefit? The best value for money?

Determining the best path forward will require further discussion and input from all ANZTLA members. In the near future, we will invite members to contribute their perspectives to help shape the next steps.



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