

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
DELEGATED LEGISLATION**

**INQUIRY INTO ACCESS TO AUSTRALIAN STANDARDS  
ADOPTED IN DELEGATED LEGISLATION**

**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE  
TAKEN AT PERTH  
FRIDAY, 21 AUGUST 2015**

**SESSION THREE**

**Members**

**Mr P. Abetz (Chair)**  
**Hon Robin Chapple (Deputy Chair)**  
**Mr G.M. Castrilli**  
**Ms S.F. McGurk**  
**Mr P. Papalia**  
**Hon Martin Pritchard**

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**Hearing commenced at 11.27 am**

**Mrs DEBRA SUMMERS**

**President, Public Libraries Western Australia (Inc), sworn and examined:**

**Mrs ALISON SUTHERLAND**

**Acting Chief Executive Officer and State Librarian, State Library of Western Australia, sworn and examined:**

**Ms LIBBY CASS**

**Manager, NSLA eResources Consortium, National Library of Australia, sworn and examined:**

**The CHAIR:** On behalf of the committee, I would like to welcome you to the meeting, but before we begin, I need to ask each of you to take either the oath or the affirmation.

[Witnesses took the oath or affirmation.]

**The CHAIR:** You will have signed a document entitled “Information for Witnesses”. Have you read and understood that document?

**The Witnesses:** Yes.

**The CHAIR:** These proceedings are being reported by Hansard and a transcript of your evidence will be provided to you. To assist the committee and Hansard, please quote the full title of any document you refer to during the course of this hearing for the record and please be aware of the microphones and try to talk into them, and ensure you do not cover them with papers or make too much noise near them as it makes it more difficult for Hansard. I am sure that you will speak only one at a time, because it makes it difficult if you talk two at a time, and we will try to do the same up here as well. I remind you that your transcripts will become a matter for the public record. If for some reason you wish to make a confidential statement during today’s proceedings, you should request that the evidence be taken in closed session. If the committee grants your request, any public and media in attendance will be excluded from the hearing. Please note that until such time as the transcript of your public evidence is finalised, it should not be made public. I advise that the publication or disclosure of the uncorrected transcript of evidence may constitute a contempt of Parliament and may mean that the material published or disclosed is not subject to parliamentary privilege.

Thank you for appearing before us. Would any of you like to make an opening statement to set the scene for us?

**Ms Cass:** I think we all have something.

**Mrs Summers:** I think perhaps nationally first and then we can cascade down.

**Ms Cass:** For these purposes I will refer to National and State Libraries Australasia as NSLA; that is an acronym that is widely accepted and a bit easier to say repeatedly. I would, firstly, on behalf of NSLA like to congratulate the work of this joint standing committee in highlighting how important equitable access to Australian Standards is for the Australian community, and we really appreciate the opportunity to make a submission and to attend this hearing today to answer questions.

We also thank this inquiry for getting into the public domain information about the current state of public access to Australian Standards adopted in delegated legislation, and we acknowledge the submissions by Standards Australia, SAI Global, state, territory and commonwealth government

departments, colleagues from the library sector and other interested stakeholders. We hope that the inquiry and public hearings will provide an opportunity for us to not only support the important work of this committee, but to engage with Standards Australia and SAI Global and work towards a resolution that serves the interests of all. We acknowledge the current right of Standards Australia and SAI Global to generate revenue by selling access to Australian Standards, and we do not want to negatively impact on a successful model. However, SAI Global has an exclusive contract to sell and distribute Australian Standards, and over the years they have been reluctant to deal with the NSLA consortium, forcing our members to deal with them individually. There is no transparent pricing model, and their subscriptions come with a restrictive licence limiting the use of the resource and the return on NSLA's investment. Over the years, NSLA libraries have seen average annual price increases well above CPI, and due to the increasing cost, restrictive licence and tightening budgets, some NSLA members no longer subscribe. There is no access to Australian Standards in the Northern Territory Library or in libraries of the ACT.

There has been little investment in the platform used by SAI Global to provide access. The platform has been static for many years and needs to be updated in order to better facilitate access and provide a positive user experience. The usage statistics provided by SAI Global are low in detail and below the standard offered by many other vendors. SAI Global does not operate in a competitive commercial context and our experience is that their service and access arrangements are below other online publishers and the costs are higher than other online publishers.

Standards Australia, as the publisher of Australian content produced by the Australian community for the public good, has a responsibility to ensure that whoever holds the exclusive commercial licence provides paid access to the library sector that is fair and transparent and not unnecessarily restrictive. Access to Australian Standards in libraries provides opportunities to educate Australians about standards and the role that they play in ensuring products, services and systems are safe and reliable. We ask that Standards Australia and SAI Global acknowledge the important role that libraries play in providing access to Australian Standards to members of the public and that they provide a fair and transparent pricing model that improves our ability to provide access to all Australian library patrons, regardless of where they live.

**The CHAIR:** From what we have heard so far, we would concur with much of that. Would the others like to make an opening statement?

**Mrs Sutherland:** Yes, I would.

As well as treasuring the stories of Western Australia, the State Library of Western Australia champions literacy and learning, cultivates creative ideas, and leads the development of the Western Australian public library network. We partner with public libraries to ensure libraries are connected, well resourced and free, serving hubs of community life. The State Library is responsible for the legal deposit of Western Australian published items, but Australian Standards are not published in Western Australia so cannot be included in legal deposit for us.

The impact of apparently free and accessible information through the internet continues to change libraries' worlds. Many new business models have been created that are seeing a significant profit while also providing a product that is reasonably priced and provides universal access. There are many individual databases that State Library members may use from home, wherever that home may be—Karratha to Albany to Esperance. Databases such as Ancestry; Britannica Library, which is Encyclopaedia Britannica Online; and the Cochrane Library, which is a collection of evidence-based medicine, are just some of the databases available through paid subscriptions, funded either by the State Library or as consortia from the public library sector. All those things really started their lives as paper based—and I am making that clear distinction. I have provided a list of other databases—it is not a full list; it is just a snapshot of other relevant databases, and you can see that they are available either on site, which means that you can only access them within a library, or remotely, which means you can access it from home, and there are costs there. They are supplied as

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well. None of these databases have restrictions on printing or access, other than normal copyright regulations. Realistically, of course, whatever people do in their own homes is up to them, but over the past 10 years, even though this information has been publicly available, the business model still stands. The publishers are still making a profit; everybody is reasonably happy. Of course, libraries always want cheaper things and they always want more expensive things, but in essence it is okay.

The restrictive nature of the business model of SAI Global in relation to the publication and availability of Australian Standards is now starting to see alternative models come into vogue. I was thinking particularly of the National Construction Code. I think the value of Australian Standards is going to decline because of the unavailability of Australian Standards, because people are going to try and work around it. I heard recently—just then—a reference to a similar thing. Australian Standards are really important, I think. I think it is a shame if that value gets diluted just because of the access.

I would like to draw a parallel between scholarly communication/academic publishing and Standards Australia. Both see publicly funded organisations such as government departments, public organisations and universities who pay and support their employees to research, write and create and provide valuable information in the shape of journal articles, books or standards. Those very things that have been created, funded by those organisations, are then put into the public field and they are published, and then libraries characteristically have to pay a lot of money to get access to them.

I would like to draw the committee's attention to the changes that have been occurring in relation to open access. Publicly funded research undertaken within universities and grant-funded partnerships are now required as a condition of the research grant to be published publicly, including the raw data. I have provided some information about open access to you. Open access initiatives have allowed university libraries to provide digital repositories of information, which is freely available to anyone who wishes to view and print it. Open access is making research results freely available to anyone with an internet connection, rather than keeping those results hidden behind a subscription paywall.

In summary, State Library is very concerned about the high levels of restrictions SAI Global places on the access and availability of Australian Standards, despite the fact that those standards are created by committees with significant and long-term input of experts who are often paid employees of private companies, government and universities across Australia.

[11.40 am]

**Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE:** You have just written a preamble to our report!

**Mrs Summers:** My statement is in support of my national and state colleagues, because obviously public libraries are the commons that everyday citizens access into all of this information. My colleagues are very concerned that even though we are a trusted form of easily accessible information to citizens who have to comply with this information, the Australian Standards are locked out of that realm. Public libraries are also paid for by local government authorities, who are obviously the arm of government that enacts the delegated legislation, to which the standards are referenced. So, our citizens have to comply with the standards, because our local government develops policies and procedures that support that, yet there is very limited access for those citizens to actually understand the background behind what they need to do. Public libraries cannot access the State Library database. Our citizens have to actually travel into the State Library, yet under our consortia arrangements that my colleagues have mentioned, public libraries become that common, on-the-street access to that information. Our previous submission talked about people in Port Hedland. I used to manage the library in Port Hedland; there is absolutely no access for a resident who lives in Port Hedland, whereas at least I can say to a resident who comes into my city library, "Off you go to State Library." Our local governments, our public libraries often purchase standards that are particularly relevant to our constituents. The example from City of

Swan is a recent standard that was released about building construction in fire-prone areas. We purchased six copies, put one in each library; they were \$111 each. We were not allowed to photocopy one page for one resident who wanted to actually access that information. The colleagues who we support in public libraries who are local government officers are themselves relying on us to provide that access, which they cannot provide because the City of Swan or the City of Stirling may subscribe to the standards through SAI Global, but their access is very limited. Indeed, if they try and provide the kind of guideline that a previous speaker talked about interpreting the standards, they are actually prohibited from doing that. So, Public Libraries Western Australia would very much like to see equitable access for citizens to information that they must comply with, and we feel that providing reasonable access through public library, state and national consortia, that is reasonable, is the way to do that.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you.

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** I was just sort of interested in what Alison had to say. I am sorry, Alison, if I missed a little bit of it, but you talked about universities and IP—university staff and that developing that intellectual property. Now, did I hear you right in saying that some of that can be transferred over and then incorporated? Could you explain that bit again for me, if you do not mind?

**Mrs Sutherland:** Of course. So what happens typically within a university is you are required as an academic to provide research. You are required to publish it in peer-reviewed journals and your funding for the university relies on that. The status of the university relies on that. So, you spend some of your time, which is supported by the university, writing good research. It goes out in the public domain because in order for it to be published, it has to be published publicly. The only way to do that is through a paid journal. So you have got all these scholarly journals that are created beautifully by academics submitting their work, but those very publications then have to be purchased by the libraries of the universities who supported the work of the people who wrote the articles, if you see what I mean. It really is quite a vicious circle. But, in all of my reading about Australian Standards, it struck me very much as a similar situation, where the technical committees, who are basically staffed by non-Standards Australia staff, are writing and coordinating the content of the standard, which is then handed over to the non-profit making Standards Australia, who then pass on the publication to SAI Global.

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** Who then make the money.

**Mrs Sutherland:** Yes. Although I do acknowledge you do get one free copy if you are on the committee.

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** That is good. Which you are not allowed to say.

**Mrs Sutherland:** You may say that, I could not possibly!

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** I could not possibly comment. So, basically, there are people doing the research, like the technical committees—who do a lot of work for nothing, if you like—who then do it for nothing, but then their work, whilst it was done for nothing, somebody down the line gets charged for by somebody else.

**Mrs Sutherland:** That's right. What has happened is as a consequence of that—obviously, this has been going on some years—there is quite a head of steam now, because open access repositories are so easily made. What is happening is, in fact, the scholarly journals will be lost if they do not get their research. So even though the articles and information are still freely available, it is not actually affecting the economics too much of the publishing industry. You can have open access and a commercial model. From my perspective, I can see that profits may be reduced, but not to an —

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** So the intellectual property is not being fully acknowledged or realised by the people; it has not been taken into consideration, with the fee that is being charged, basically.

**Mrs Sutherland:** Yes.

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**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Standards Australia is already in dispute with SAI with regard to the extent of royalties they paid for intellectual property—it is 10 per cent or something. That is not high enough.

**The CHAIR:** The current State Library online subscription, I understand, costs \$22 000 a year. This amounts to approximately \$64 per login in 2014. Could you give your views on the cost, given the limitations contained in the licence regarding concurrent viewing, limited printing and so on?

**Mrs Sutherland:** I refer the committee to the list that I have provided of other database information providers. There are two; there is one that is really quite dense and this is the shorter one. That includes the costs and logins, so you can see the average cost per login is quite low compared to—you can really see, essentially, the online subscription to Standards Australia is extremely expensive, and it is very limited in its availability. Only two users may access the database at any one time and that is from within the State Library building. I could be sitting at my desk and access a standard. Someone could be sitting in the public area and access the database, but that is it—no more.

**The CHAIR:** How do you manage that? Is there another computer? If somebody logs on, do they get kicked off?

**Mrs Sutherland:** Yes, you just cannot get in. And we would call those a denial, I think—there is a particular term for it. When you find the standard you want, you can only print one page at a time, and you cannot print a range of pages, so that would be within your copyright. A normal copyright arrangement would be that you could take 10 per cent at least, but in fact you cannot do that, and in fact, obviously, you cannot print an entire standard because that would contravene copyright—no, it would not contravene copyright; it would contravene the conditions of use. The conditions of use, which I have also supplied to you—it is a very restrictive agreement. It does not allow interlibrary loans to any public library in either printed hard copy or electronic form, nor does it allow the state library to retain a hard copy or electronic copy for archival purposes, or for future use. Access by the general public to Australian Standards outside of the Perth metropolitan area, either through the State Library or through a WA public library, is not available unless a member of the public travels, and we have already talked about that. It is unclear how many WA public libraries have their own subscription that they have purchased, and then it would be unclear perhaps whether it is for the local government or for the public library, but it would be an expensive business. So, basically, the State Library is the only available access point at the present time that I was aware of. Since 2007, SAI Global has refused to discuss the option of a consortium, either for state libraries at a national level or public libraries at a statewide level. SAI are only prepared to talk to one library, one to one. I should also point out that through our membership—so the State Library has membership to the National and State Libraries Australasia, NSLA, eResources Consortium—we subscribe to 55 databases per year through that. It is not an unusual thing. What is unusual is the people do not talk to you.

[11.50 am]

**Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE:** I notice, if I may, just on your chart here, that there are different prices per login.

**Mrs Sutherland:** Yes.

**Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE:** Can you explain where that comes from? Is that to do with the price of the standard that sets that or —

**Mrs Sutherland:** The price per login refers to the different databases that I have listed. So, for example, if you look at Ancestry at the top, we pay \$69 000 per year for that database. However, 22 000 people accessed it. These are about the individual databases, so you have some sense of comparison about a database and what would be normal.

**Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE:** So when it actually comes to SAI Global, you have got three sets of figures there. That is just the year, is it?

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**Mrs Sutherland:** Yes.

**Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE:** So the access price to standards has been declining since 2013. You are saying it is \$61.82 —

**Mrs Sutherland:** Yes, because more people are using it. The price is going up, but the number of people accessing it has gone up, which is a good thing, but the price going up is not so good for us.

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** So it is the standard fee divided by the number of logins.

**Mrs Sutherland:** That is correct.

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** I am not sure whether Debra or Libby or you—on this first bit it has got National and State Libraries Australasia. Libby, I am assuming that \$1.929 million is the total fee that the national and state libraries combined are paying to Standards Australia.

**Ms Cass:** No. That table represents the total value spend of the consortium across a range of products, so, as a collective, we spent, in 2013, \$1.92 million collectively purchasing e-resources, so it is not the cost of standards; it is the cost for all the e-resources purchased through the consortium. That is the value of our spend on e-resources, and the second column is the amount of savings that we have been able to verify. So, through purchasing collaboratively we have saved almost half a million dollars, which is about 24 per cent of the spend.

**Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD:** And this is what you wanted to speak to SAI Global about—trying to get some discount by being a consortium, and they will not talk to you.

**Ms Cass:** No. From my understanding, we have been trying since 2005 to talk to SAI about a consortium deal, and there have been attempts made in 2006, 2010, 2011 and, most recently and lastly, in 2013, and we have explained to them that the members would like to simplify and centralise their subscription, purchasing and licensing arrangements, and explained that that centralised billing would mean savings for them as the vendor and for us as the libraries, and they have repeatedly declined to deal with the consortium, with no detailed reason given.

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** Just no, and that is it.

**Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD:** We can guess their reason.

**Ms Cass:** I think it is a good question to ask them, what their reason is. Members themselves are then forced to deal with SAI Global individually, and in those conversations they have repeatedly asked SAI, “Look, we’d like to roll this into a consortium subscription”, and again they have been told by the vendor, “No, we’d rather deal with you individually.”

**Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE:** From a national perspective, have you any idea what libraries under your organisation actually pay globally or annually to SAI Global?

**Ms Cass:** In the supporting document from NSLA, table 2 identifies the cost that NSLA members are paying this year, 2015. Table 2 indicates what all NSLA members are paying at the moment to SAI and Standards Australia. Four members are currently paying about \$13 500, and WA and South Australia are paying more because they have two concurrent users, so they are paying about \$20 000 and \$18 000 respectively.

**Mrs Summers:** But that would not include any public libraries under any state or local government that are themselves subscribers, and there are some of us, so adding that all up, SAI Global would be making quite a lot of money out of libraries who are not allowed to provide equitable access.

**Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE:** From a national body or from a State Library perspective, would it be difficult to ascertain what individual libraries were expending? Would it be something we could —

**Ms Cass:** On SAI Global?

**Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE:** Yes.

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**Ms Cass:** Currently, at the moment, the Australian Library and Information Association is conducting a very quiet survey around costs to Standards Australia. Some of that data will be available, and could possibly be shared.

**The CHAIR:** When do you hope to have that ready?

**Ms Cass:** I would have to talk to my colleagues at ALIA, but I think it is something that—your inquiry has reinvigorated or sparked our library sector to do a bit more fact finding about the issue, but the early findings present that affordability is an issue for about 86 per cent of public libraries, and some of them are paying a lot more than we are. One of the real challenges is that there is no fair and transparent pricing model. You cannot look at the SAI Global website and see a published list of the price for online subscriptions for libraries; you cannot.

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** Would it be possible to get an indication—later on, that is—of when that data might be made available?

**The CHAIR:** We would certainly welcome that. I guess what we are thinking—what I am thinking, anyway; I cannot speak for the rest of the committee—is that our understanding is that the total budget of running Standards Australia is under \$20 million a year in terms of funding that they need. There is a lot of voluntary labour provided into the organisation developing the standards, and what we are trying to ascertain is: how much is it actually costing the community to access those standards? Would it be more prudent for our society as a whole for, say, the federal government to make a \$20 million grant every year to Standards Australia, and in return for that grant, as soon as a standard is done, it simply goes up on a website, and if you want it, you print it off—done? In that way, basically, it makes it freely available and, as the internet rolls out more and more into rural areas and all that, it actually provides equitable access, and the costs, from what we are hearing—we had the electricians here before—the cost to that industry alone, not to mention all the other industries, it would be a massive cost saving it would seem. But it would be good to be able to get some facts and figures, for example, just for the libraries. When that becomes available, we would certainly welcome being given access to it.

**Ms Cass:** Well, certainly the New South Wales net could probably provide information because, up until June this year, there was a heavily subsidised statewide subscription for all public libraries in New South Wales. That has just ended, so from June this year there is now reduced access in public libraries in New South Wales. Previously the State Library of New South Wales, through funding from the state government, was purchasing access for all of the public libraries, but now that has ended.

**Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE:** It might be useful if you could provide us some links or information pertaining to that; that would be great.

**Ms Cass:** I will try to get some information on that. Due to the high cost and low usage, one of the real conundrums about standards is the really restrictive licence. It can only be used on site, only by one person at a time, and no use for interlibrary loans. It means that the usage is low, and table 3 in the supporting document produced by NSLA gives you a cost per login for each NSLA member. Looking at the data provided by WA, the average cost for access to a standard is about \$30 to \$40, which is considered high by the library sector. When it comes time to renew a subscription, some of the information that you look at is: How heavily is this used? What is the average cost per login? I would argue that standards is a must-have. Libraries recognise it as important and would always try to find the money to pay for it, but with the restrictive licence, they are getting a very low return on their investment, because it is not very heavily used.

[12 noon]

**The CHAIR:** Because delegated legislation often makes reference to Australian Standards, the obligation, in a sense, of government is to make that available to everyone. If we expect them to obey the law, we need to tell them what is in the law. That is basically, I guess, my view.

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**Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD:** So Standards Australia do most standards, but there are others? Do you carry other standards?

**Ms Cass:** Yes.

**Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD:** Are they restricted in any way?

**Ms Cass:** No. So for international standards, there is an alternative provider. You can purchase them through SAI Global under the very same restrictive standards, but you can also purchase them from another vendor that has a much better platform and a much better licence and is easier to use.

**Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE:** Can we have information on that, please?

**Ms Cass:** Sure. One of the issues with SAI is that they currently hold the exclusive commercial licence until 2018. There is no alternative provider for standards.

**Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD:** We hope 2018 comes soon.

**The CHAIR:** We know from what we have understood so far that international standards are being picked up by SAI Global, rebadged by SAI Global as theirs, and then marketed that way. It is really interesting that if you can access the international standard, and we know it is parallel to SAI Global, that is making a mockery of the whole process.

**Ms Cass:** They certainly do. The committees do look at, refer and adapt international standards to the Australian context, and then sell them back to the Australian community.

**Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD:** That is more Standards Australia that does that, and then SAI sort of binds it, then.

**The CHAIR:** I think this issue that international standards can be purchased in the United States, with the licence around it, and you can bring that back into Australia without having to go through SAI Global, that is the trouble.

**Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD:** The trouble is that delegated legislation refers to Australian Standards. You might say that the American standard is equivalent, but how do you know?

**The CHAIR:** Sure, that is a different issue.

What is the extent of the contribution made by your members' staff in terms of volunteering on Standards Australia committees? Are libraries involved in standards development at all or not?

**Ms Cass:** Very heavily. There would not be a standard related to the library sector that has not resulted from a contribution by NSLA members. It is a very long-term activity.

**Mrs Sutherland:** For example, Margaret Allen, who is the CEO of the State Library—she was not able to be here today, and I am acting for her—participated in the IT19 committee during the 1990s while she was working for a private information technology company. She was also the CASL—the Council of Australian State Libraries—representative to IT19 while she was working for the State Library of South Australia from 2000 to 2002. This contribution included regular travel from South Australia to meetings on the eastern seaboard and in New Zealand, as well as time taken to write, think and participate in various Standards Australia activities. That is just one person.

**Ms Cass:** I have talked to NSLA members who have served on that main IT19 committee, and the information I have is that it meets about three times a year, with regular emails to read and documents to comment on. There is a relatively new NSLA representative on that committee and he estimates that at the moment about an average of an hour a week of his time has been spent serving on this committee. The committee members receive no funding from Standards Australia to attend meetings. Often, they realise the importance of it, and they will be flying to things on their own dollar or their organisation will support their attendance.

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**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** So they do not get paid to attend, they do not get any compensation for travel or their time away, so it is totally voluntary?

**Ms Cass:** It is totally voluntary, yes.

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** Is that right? And then Standards Australia bunches it all up, makes a standard and then hands it over to SAI Global, which then distributes it and charges?

**Ms S.F. McGURK:** We had better not tell Serco about this!

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** I want to put that in context. Is that right?

**Mrs Sutherland:** I think that people may be employed. So, for example, if I was on IT19, I might go and travel, and the state government would probably pay my travel. The state government would be paying my salary. I would not be doing it as part of my annual leave, but I would still be being paid, but not by Standards Australia.

**Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD:** Normally, it would be the organisation, but on a rare occasion it would be the individual putting their own resources in.

**Ms Cass:** Yes. The advice that I have is that over the years, NSLA members' ability to contribute to this work has diminished because of the financial constraints that their institutions are under, but we recognise the importance of this work, and this is where some members are attending these things at their own cost.

**Mrs Summers:** Then it would be interesting, as I represent local government public libraries, to know the number of our local government specialists who themselves may be contributing to the development of standards. For my environmental health team, there are over 65 standards that they have to ensure that our ratepayers and residents comply with. There are 23 related to the safety of swimming pools, so it would be interesting to do that fact-finding across local government expertise in the areas of health, construction—all of the things that local government regulates on behalf of state and federal governments—and how much of that time is being contributed in the development of those standards.

**Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD:** It is a great model to actually achieve a standard at a very conservative price, except for the contract between Standards Australia and SAI. That is where all the profits are actually made, but the actual model itself is pretty good.

**The CHAIR:** For Standards Australia, from what we understand, for all the work that is done, the less than \$20 million budget is phenomenal, but it is because the state librarian goes along and does a bit, and their salary is paid here. There is a massive community investment in the Australian Standards and it would appear, to me at least, there is no dividend to the community for all that investment, and you are actually paying big dollars to access your own work, kind of thing.

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** I know it is a big impossibility, but it would be good to know, if we could convert the total dollar spend by all agencies that contribute to Standards Australia for nothing, bearing in mind that the employer organisations probably pay, like local governments and that. I know it would be impossible to do, but it would be interesting to come up with a number.

**Ms Cass:** Well, Standards Australia themselves estimate the contribution is worth more than \$30 million per year from committees.

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** If they estimate that, I think it might be a bit more than that. It just goes back to the principle of work being done for nothing and somebody is benefiting from it.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you very much. Is there anything you would like to say, that we have not covered, but that you would like to draw to our attention?

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**Ms Cass:** There was one question you asked about legal deposit. I can answer that question: copies of Australian Standards are supplied to the National Library by SAI Global in compliance with the Copyright Act, section 201, legal deposit, and copies must be supplied within 30 days of publication. This material is only available for viewing onsite, meaning that use of interlibrary loan is not allowed and this restriction is enforced by SAI Global. My understanding is that that is unusual; that restriction does not apply to other legal deposit publications. The National Library does have a print copy collection of Australian Standards, and I think it is important to recognise that that print copy is an archival collection. We often hear of talking about access to current standards, but access to archival standards is very important as well. If you want to access the 1950 wiring act, you have to visit to Canberra to do so.

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** All these restrictions that are placed on that—there are no interlibrary loans and that sort of stuff—if you know, what mechanisms do SAI Global use to police and enforce that? I mean, you cannot do this, you cannot do that and you cannot inter-loan. Is there somebody in Western Australia who constantly goes around checking that you are doing the right thing? I have not come across that yet.

[12.10 pm]

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** They are coming to give evidence to us, so you can ask them.

**Ms Cass:** That would be a great question to ask them.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Probably these guys —

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** I know, but they might have had experience of somebody coming in and doing an audit or something, that is what I am saying.

**Mrs Summers:** I am not representing Port Hedland at the moment, but when I worked at the Town of Port Hedland —

**Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE:** I was a Port Hedland town counsellor, so you can speak freely.

**Mrs Summers:** —when we were constructing, we referred to Australian Standards conditions of contract. We were often dealing with small contractors, so we attached conditions of contract to some of our tender specifications. Retrospectively, we were contacted by SAI Global and asked to document how many times we had actually done that, and being a local government agency, we comply with requests. When I left Port Hedland, we were considering how we would pay the bill that came to the town for charging that retrospective use. So there are audits, and I think that they rely on the honesty of those of us who are dealing with the public information and we are very good at complying with things like that.

**Mr G.M. CASTRILLI:** Did they say is it part of the contract or part of the agreement that they can ask you to do that? How much did you charge them for collating that information? That is a rhetorical question.

**Ms Cass:** In terms of access to the online platform at SAI Global, you sign a contract which limits what you can and cannot do with it. If the software itself has IP authentication and digital rights management that will prevent you from having more than X amount of concurrent users, you have to provide them with your IP range, so it will lock out any access from anybody outside the IP range. In relation to interlibrary loans and legal deposit, libraries have policies that state what you can and cannot do with products, so it is enforced at a library level because of the license or for other historical reasons.

**Mrs Sutherland:** I was actually shocked when I was doing some work in preparation for this, and that is why I have included the full terms and conditions of use for you to see. The first sentence says, “By using this Standards On-line service, you, the Licensee”, which means that anyone who is

accessing the online database becomes a licensee, so then they are responsible for this and it no longer becomes the State Library at that time, and I would defy most people to even recognise that that was the situation. When you look at it, a normal person who would come in and use the State Library to find an Australian Standard is not going to read that, and I would have thought it would be unusual for them to be able to understand it very clearly either.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you very much for your contribution, it has been most valuable.

**Hearing concluded at 12.13 pm**

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