



Victorian Public Libraries Roles, Responsibilities and Shared Services Statement

Over the past decade, Victoria's public libraries have expanded their services to their communities significantly. Contemporary public libraries are places where community members access e-resources, wi-fi, computers, meeting rooms, art spaces and a diverse range of child, youth and adult programs. Victoria's public libraries support the development of Victoria's knowledge-based economy and promote literacy.

Access to free or low-cost information technology in public libraries is of great benefit to all Victorians. To support continued innovation and collaboration in public libraries and to enhance service levels to the community, the organisations and bodies listed below will work together for the benefit of the Victorian community.

Part 2 of this roles and responsibilities statement outlines priorities for the investigation and implementation of shared service initiatives between the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (through Local Government Victoria), the Municipal Association of Victoria, the State Library of Victoria and Public Libraries Victoria.

PART 1 -Who we are

LOCAL GOVERNMENT VICTORIA

Who are we? Local Government Victoria (LGV) provides policy advice, oversees legislation and works with councils and regional library corporations, through grants, programs and projects, to support responsive and accountable local government services.

Role/s in relation to Victoria's public libraries: LGV supports councils and regional library corporations to provide quality library facilities for all Victorians.

LGV's public library funding programs include:

- The [Public Libraries Funding Program](#) which provides annual funding for public library operations.
- The [Living Libraries Infrastructure Program](#) which assists councils and regional library corporations to meet the needs of their communities through the funding of public library infrastructure projects.
- The [Premiers' Reading Challenge Book Fund](#) provides funding to public libraries for the purchase of books and other materials to support children and young people undertaking the annual Premiers' Reading Challenge.

LGV also provides funding support to special projects – at the discretion of the Minister for Local Government.

Responsibilities in relation to Victoria's public libraries: LGV supports local government in the provision of high quality, value for money public library services through funding, but is not responsible for the direct delivery of those library services. In providing public library funding, LGV is responsible for ensuring that every Victorian has access to quality library resources and facilities – regardless of where they live. This is achieved through both operational and infrastructure funding.

Role/s in Victoria's public libraries shared services: LGV supports sector and peak bodies in their efforts to implement shared services in public libraries that drive service improvements and achieve value for money. This support is through funding (as and when available) and engagement with the sector more broadly.

MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA

Who are we? Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)

MAV is the legislated peak body representing and lobbying on behalf of the 79 councils. Councils have the primary responsibility for the provision of public library services, and are the owners, operators and majority funders of these

services in Victoria. MAV's two key roles are as the lead negotiator between local government and the other spheres of government, and acting as an advocate for councils on policy, funding and program priorities. On behalf of local government in Victoria, MAV negotiates broad policy and funding arrangements with the State and the Commonwealth. MAV is the communication and information hub for and about Victorian local government and facilitates councils' capacity development. (Refer to Victorian State Local Government Agreement).

Role/s in relation to Victoria's public libraries: MAV in conjunction with Public Libraries Victoria is progressing shared services initiatives for public libraries where these meet strategic goals and promote sector improvements, effectiveness, efficiency and collective cost savings for the local government sector.

Responsibilities in relation to Victoria's public libraries: MAV advocates on behalf of public libraries, which are regarded as an iconic local government service.

Role/s in Victoria's public libraries shared services: MAV's procurement arm harnesses sector expertise and has the capacity to procure and manage complex contracts on behalf of councils and regional libraries who choose to participate.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES VICTORIA

Who are we? Public Libraries Victoria Inc (PLV)

Role/s in relation to Victoria's public libraries: PLV is the peak body for public libraries in Victoria, with representation through institutional membership from every public library in the state.

The membership works as a progressive alliance to champion the value of public libraries and to make a positive difference in the communities they serve.

Responsibilities in relation to Victoria's public libraries: PLV advocates on behalf of the library sector, builds the capacity of members through professional development and provides value through partnership arrangements.

Role/s in Victoria's public libraries shared services: PLV has responsibility to:

- manage the administration of the Integrated Library Management System (ILMS) contract including system administration and shared collections; and
 - lead future sector-wide innovation projects and auspice relevant shared service opportunities
-

STATE LIBRARY OF VICTORIA

Who are we? State Library of Victoria (SLV)

Role/s in relation to Victoria's public libraries: State Library Victoria (SLV) is governed by the Library Board of Victoria. Under the *Libraries Act 1988*, the Board's role (and therefore the State Library's role) is:

- to oversee cooperation in programs with libraries and information organisations to promote access to library and information resources;
 - to exercise leadership and promote high standards in the provision of library and information services; and
 - to provide advice and information to the Minister on any matter concerning libraries and information organisation.
-

Responsibilities in relation to Victoria's public libraries: SLV has direct responsibility for a program of work known as the state-wide Public Library Development Projects.

Role/s in Victoria's public libraries shared services: The state-wide Public Library Development Projects are a form of 'shared service'. They are about the State Library working with all Victorian public library services to deliver initiatives that support the development of world class library services accessible to all Victorians. Initiatives include sector research, strategy development, advocacy, professional development for library staff and community engagement programs.



PART 2 – How we will work together

What are our shared service priorities ?

The following priorities, outlined in order of their proposed investigation/implementation, have been agreed to by all parties. All activities are subject to the availability of funding and participation of individual library services.

- Take up of the state-wide Library Management System (LMS)

A LMS is the engine room of the library. It provides the core bibliographic database of the collection and the library member database. It offers core functionality upon which other enhanced systems can be anchored. A single LMS enables a common database for all resources held in Victorian libraries and facilitates the sharing and tracking of those resources. It also enables other initiatives, such as a single library card, to be rolled out. The state-wide LMS contract will provide significant cost savings to participants.

This group will support councils and regional library corporations in accessing and taking up the state-wide LMS.

- Centralised distribution

Physical collections are, and will continue to be, an integral part of public libraries. A fully integrated interlibrary loan centralised distribution centre would provide all Victorians with increased access to the whole collection, using the most efficient techniques to do so at an offsite location.

This group will investigate options and cost/risk benefit of centralised distribution points across Victoria for interlibrary lending.

- Radio Frequency Identification (RFID)

RFID identification has become more common in the public library sector in recent years. Placing ISO 28560-compliant tags in all borrowable materials in Victorian public libraries would facilitate the efficient movement of materials around Victoria and enable state-wide tracking. There are only a minimal number of libraries not already equipped with RFID.

This group will work towards installing RFID readers in all public library services that wish to have them and tagging all items in their collections.

- Electronic/digital shared services

The way the community accesses information is continually changing. An increased uptake of internet resources, e-readers and e-books has led to a new opportunity for public libraries. To meet the needs of their local communities, libraries need to facilitate access to digital material. The complex and changing nature of technology makes it difficult for individual library services to provide timely and equitable access to e-resources.

This group will investigate the development and implementation of a common platform for digital resources.

- Languages Other Than English (LOTE) collection

Non-English-speaking communities are a significant part of the Victorian community; however, LOTE items comprise approximately 5.3 per cent of total library collections state-wide. A state-wide LOTE collection would provide Victorians with better access to more resources in a greater number of community languages.

This group will investigate the establishment of a true state-wide LOTE collection.

- Onecard – a single library card

A single library card would enable users to join the library service of their choice and then access all public libraries across Victoria, borrow from and return materials to any library and use the facilities of any library. A single library card could only be implemented if public libraries are utilising the state-wide LMS and if their collections have been RFID tagged.



This group notes that the priority level of development of this service priority is dependent on other activities being implemented successfully.

How will we work together to deliver these shared services ?

Quarterly meetings will be held between LGV, MAV, PLV and SLV.

These meetings will be used to discuss the continuing implementation of the Victorian Public Libraries - Roles, Responsibilities and Shared Services Statement shared vision and priorities.

This document will be formally reviewed by the group annually, with the intention of:

- a. tracking the progress of the shared services priorities outlined in this document;
 - b. ensuring that the shared services priorities continue to remain relevant, and
 - c. making any changes to the shared services priorities by agreement between all four parties.
-

May 2020