

RFP for Australian CJK system issued

On 11th October the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the national CJK (Chinese, Japanese and Korean) library system was issued to over twenty library automation companies in Australia, North America and Asia. The system, due to be installed in late 1994, will allow CJK scripts to be used in searches and displays, will provide copy cataloguing containing CJK scripts, and will establish an online national union catalogue for CJK material.

The RFP has been compiled over the last four months by the National CJK Technical Committee assisted by consultants RMG/CAVAL. The Technical Committee consists of a representative of each library participating in the project: (Susan Prentice (Australian National University), Magdalen Lee (University of Sydney), Bick-har Yeung (University of Melbourne), Ross O'Neil (Murdoch University), Laura Stone (Griffith University), Chris Taylor (University of Queensland), Andrew Gosling (National Library of Australia) and Chooi Hon Ho (Monash University).

During the process of compiling the RFP, the Technical Committee, its parent body the CJK Steering Committee, and the National Library faced the complex issue of the relationship of the CJK system to the Australian Bibliographic Network (ABN). A number of resolutions passed by the Steering Committee on 23 September reflect the present view of this relationship. The resolutions are:

That the Steering Committee endorses the strategy of no regular cross-updating between the ABN and CJK databases

That the Steering Committee recommends that the National Library, in considering which data files should be loaded to ABN and the CJK system, follow a strategy of minimal overlap between the two databases

That the Steering Committee accepts the National Library's offer to fund National Bibliographic Database (NBD) -style costs of the National CJK System, in a similar manner to ABN.

The relationship between the ABN and CJK systems will be discussed further at the February meeting of the ABN Network Committee. It is clear, however, that the old familiar view of the National Bibliographic Database and the ABN Database as being the same thing will soon be replaced by a new equation: $NBD = ABN + CJK$.

The relationship of the CJK system to the National Document and Information System (the name to be given to ABN when it is redeveloped after 1996) has not yet been determined. The CJK system may migrate to the NDIS, or may continue as a separate system. It is difficult to predict at this stage which option will be technically and economically preferable. In the meantime, ABN users will be able to access the CJK system through a gateway.

The project is being funded by grants from the Australian Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) and by the participant libraries. Operational costs are intended to be recovered through charges for use of the system.

Evaluation of the responses to the RFP will be completed by February 1994. The National CJK Steering Committee will announce the selected library automation package in late February or March.

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