

2025 ANZREG Chair's Report to INUG

Introduction

The Australian and New Zealand Regional Ex Libris Group (ANZREG) is a recognised regional user group for the International Group of Ex Libris Users (IGeLU). The group, led by a member community Committee, strives to promote communication, knowledge sharing, and collaboration among users of Ex Libris products across Australia and New Zealand. ANZREG provides feedback regionally and internationally to IGeLU and Ex Libris. Membership is free to Australian and New Zealand libraries for sites using any Ex Libris products. ANZREG has 85 institutional members across Australia and New Zealand, and 441 subscribers to the ANZREG-L mailing list (hosted by the State Library of Queensland).

Committee

ANZREG sadly said goodbye to long time committee member Deborah Fitchett in 2025, after 8 years of outstanding service to her community. In August 2025, a call was put out for two new members, with our by laws requiring at least one of these positions to be from a New Zealand institution. This will fulfil our obligation to have at least 2 Australian and 2 New Zealand representatives on the committee. We hope to announce our new committee members shortly. The current ANZREG Committee:

- Chair: Ella Rohde-Condon, La Trobe University
- Deputy Chair/Chair Elect: Lorraine Ackroyd, Curtin University
- Financial Officer: Patricia Farnan, University of Notre Dame
- Product Development Advocate: Yelena Kopilov, CQUniversity
- Secretary: Brenda Norton, Victoria University of Wellington
- Co-Web Manager: Sean Boden, University of South Australia
- Co-Web Manager: Caroline Serrano, University of Sydney
- Programme Coordinator / Communications Officer: Alison Jordan, University of Newcastle

Many members of our ANZ community are also very active in the IGeLU community internationally, as members and Coordinators of Working Groups and Communities of Practice. We recognise all our active and engaged regional representatives on our ANZREG website: <https://anzreg.igelu.org/working-groups/>.

In February, the committee ran a vote to endorse our updated By-Laws, which would have seen more detail and clarification added. Unfortunately our By-Laws require a majority of our members to vote, and we did not receive enough responses to ratify the changes. We will be running another vote in the coming months, so we can hopefully instigate the new By-Laws before the new year.

Activities

As with every year since COVID, we have continued to avoid face to face event programming this year to allow for as many attendees as possible. Library budgets in the region are still very tight, in particular when it comes to professional development. We as a committee strive to deliver quality free or low-cost professional development to our members whenever we can.

2025 ANZREG Conference

Again we hosted our popular ANZREG annual conference completely online. This conference showcases customer adoption and innovation of Ex Libris products and provides members of our community with the opportunity for knowledge sharing and dedicated time to consider both

common and novel technical requirements and options. The 2025 conference was held over 3 days, with one day being a dedicated Best Practice day. The conference ran over 4 hours each day to best accommodate time zones from New Zealand across to Western Australia. There were 14 community presentations and 4 sponsor sessions, with an average of 97 attendees across all sessions. Highlights included two highly anticipated keynotes from industry leaders Emelia Bell and Adele Walsh, as well as the best practice day full of tips and tricks for using Ex Libris products. The Committee is very pleased with how this year's conference came together and was received by the community. All non-embargoed presentations can be found on the ANZREG YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdyArH1UX3SI5aeCyCVczxw>.

Webinar Series

While the first half of the ANZREG Committee year is typically reserved for planning and running the conference, the second half sees us offer more focussed single-topic webinars. This year we have a number of webinars either already completed or in the works.

Customer Care Webinar:

Martin Büscher, Customer Care Director for Ex Libris, was unable to attend the ANZREG conference, so a couple of weeks after the conference, we hosted a webinar based on Customer Care. The webinar included a presentation from Martin on the new Known Issues Portal, updates to the Customer Care Structure, and then a Q&A with both presubmitted and live questions. The session was recorded and added to our YouTube channel for those who were unable to attend live. It has had 63 views in the month it has been available, in addition to the 30-40 people who attended live.

AI Webinar:

Towards the end of September, the committee is planning on hosting an AI-focussed webinar, where we hope to have presenters who have turned on Ex Libris AI tools, as well as those who have chosen not to. We aim to present perspectives from both sides of the AI argument, and gain insight into how our community is utilising the tools available to us.

IGeLU Conference Wrap Up Webinar:

As usual, a highlight of our webinar series for the year will be our IGeLU Conference Wrap Up webinar, where we hear from attendees, both online and virtual, about their highlights of the conference, their experience attending, and why ANZREG members should consider attending next year.

Advocacy

The ANZREG Committee enjoys quarterly meetings with Ex Libris representatives, notably Alan Oliver, Director Community Engagement, and Carolyn Richings, Product Sales Manager, Software (ANZ based); other Ex Libris representatives attend as topics arise. Agenda items are distributed beforehand, for response preparation. These meetings are a continuing exchange of information and a valued avenue for highlighting and resolving issues raised by ANZREG community members. On our website, we publish a summary of issues that have been broached with Ex Libris in these meetings, aiming to increase visibility of our advocacy work:

<https://anzreg.igelu.org/about-this-site/advocacy/>.

Items discussed within the last year include:

- **ProQuest Ebooks Evolution announcement** and the fallout from this decision, including poor communication with the user community and the profound impacts on our daily work.
 - To facilitate the discussion of this topic, the committee ran a community survey seeking direct feedback and questions from the ANZ community.
 - This feedback was used in our quarterly meetings with Ex Libris representatives, and was also passed on to the IGeLU Steering Committee to share with Ex Libris Senior Management at their bi-annual meeting.

- **Customer Care within ANZ.** Prior to the ANZREG conference, the committee met with Martin, Luda, and other Customer Care team representatives to receive a broad update on the goings on there and the best way to escalate cases. We also discussed the Known Issues Portal and ongoing issues with local timezone support. This meeting is what led to the Customer Care Webinar for the wider community.
- **Ongoing support from Ex Libris of the ANZREG Conference** including sponsorship and multiple presentation spots.

Highlighted Issues

The ANZREG Committee would like to take this opportunity to highlight with our international colleagues in the IGeLU community and with Ex Libris the following issues and concerns:

- Once again, the ANZREG Committee would like to raise the issue of Artificial Intelligence being introduced to Ex Libris and Clarivate products with little to no community consultation. This rapid introduction is concerning in terms of security and data sovereignty, as well as varying capacity to opt out of AI features.
- The committee acknowledges that, since the ProQuest Ebooks Evolution announcement, strong customer feedback has resulted in some amendments being made to the planned changes (including pushing back the rollout date). Even so, we would like to have on record the significant impact this decision has had (and will have) on our community. While we understand that the 'commercial in confidence' nature of the change meant extensive customer consultation was not possible, we continue to be struck by the apparent lack of understanding of library budgets and operations, at least in our region. Changing to subscription models often means a shift from capital budget to operating budget, something which is not achievable on this scale for many of our ANZREG community members.

The ANZREG Committee welcomes responses from Ex Libris to the above highlighted issues on behalf of our member institutions, which would improve the collective experience of Library staff and our patrons.

Ella Rohde-Condon - Chair

Submitted on behalf of the ANZREG Committee

September 2025