

Richmond Tweed Regional Library

Annual Report

2021 - 2022





*Members and Elders of the Bundjalung Nation
have been custodians of this land for many centuries.
They have lived in, and derived their physical and spiritual needs
from the forests, rivers, lakes and streams of this beautiful region.
Here, Bundjalung people have performed age-old ceremonies
of celebration, initiation and renewal.*

*We acknowledge our Indigenous community's living culture,
their unique role and invaluable contribution to life in our region.*

We pay respect to the Elders, past, present, and emerging.

Our libraries:

A snapshot 2021/22

RTRL Member Councils

1,276,127
total items
borrowed



103,255 members



46% of our region
are members

226,255
population
served across
our region



499,458
visits to
the library



434 preschool programs

5,459 people attended



247 programs for
children & young adults
4,099 people attended



473 programs for adults

3,687 people attended



175 book clubs
1,165 people attended



12 Branches
Across 4 LGAs

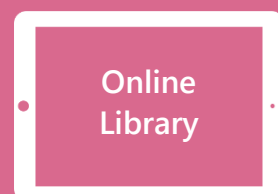


1 Mobile Library
Across 19 locations

Other ways to connect...



www.rtrl.nsw.gov.au



30,285 engagements on social media



382 hours of library videos watched on
YouTube

Over 51,911 items
in the Online Library,
including eBooks,
eAudiobooks & eMagazines,
with 155,082 total loans.



Introduction

The annual report provides a snapshot of the services delivered during 2021/2022 and a range of performance based and other statistics for this period.

The Richmond Tweed Regional Library (RTRL) Deed of Agreement (DOA) section 7.10 requires an annual report be prepared and distributed. The annual report satisfies the requirements of the DOA.

It was a challenging year for the libraries with changes in COVID-19 restrictions impacting service delivery again this year. Various lockdowns across the region and the requirement for proof of vaccination status provided challenges for library staff and the community. Security guards temporarily operated in the branches to assist with managing challenging behaviour due to the opposition to vaccination requirements for library entry. These challenges paled in comparison to the massive damage and loss suffered by the Lismore Library and Mobile Library as a result of the devastating February 2022 severe weather event and flooding. Tweed Heads and Murwillumbah libraries also suffered minor damage. All libraries supported their communities throughout this challenging time as every RTRL local government area (LGA) was impacted.

With the great challenges came an overwhelming outpouring of love and support from the Australian community for the libraries and the people who live here. In response to the loss of over 33,228 books on the first floor of the Lismore Library, the Mobile Library, and Tweed Heads children's collections, people from right across Australia donated their books, or purchased new books, to restock the collections lost. Donations were also shared across RTRL's LGAs and further afield to give to schools, preschools, families, and individuals who had also lost their books and personal libraries. Over \$247,000 has been donated from individuals and organisations to the RTRL gift recipient account to support the recovery of the libraries, in particular, Lismore Library.

The Mobile Library trailer was damaged beyond repair due to floodwater inundation. The lack of the semi-trailer didn't halt Mobile Library services, with staff utilising the library station wagon and Popup Library resources to continue the service albeit at significantly reduced book carrying capacity. Considering much of the Mobile Library service area was impacted by flooding, it was important to offer service continuity and support for the community. The semi-trailer was replaced using insurance money and the full service reinstated in late July.

Lismore Library maintained services as much as possible with Goonellabah Library increasing opening hours, stock, and staff as well as a Popup Library co-locating with the Research and Family History Centre at Support Services in Goonellabah. Popup library events were held in conjunction with Trees Not Bombs and the Lismore Carboot Markets in the carpark at the Lismore Library site.

Good Things Foundation made grants available to allow the libraries to supply people aged over 50 years who were flood affected with loans of either iPads or laptops including data to support people through recovery. Devices were available for one month loans in Lismore, Ballina and Tweed areas.

Ballina and Murwillumbah Libraries were successful in receiving Public Library Infrastructure grants to improve amenities and facilities such as upgrading the air conditioning at Ballina Library and updating the Children's Area, Study Room and circulation area at Murwillumbah Library. Tweed Heads Library



Image 1: Receding flood waters at Lismore Library February 2022. Flood waters reached above head height on the first floor

utilised insurance money as a result of storm damage to repair the roof and refurbish the children's area and collections.

RTRL welcomed two new Area Librarians to the Tweed and Ballina Areas with the Lismore Area Librarian continuing in the Regional Library Manager role until recruitment for the role can be completed in 2023.



Image 2: Tweed Heads Children's Area



Image 3: Volunteers and staff clean flood waters off shelving at Lismore Library

The following information relates specifically to the DOA requirements:

7.10.1 Activities of the RTRL including but not limited to statistics of purchases for the Collection.

Collection Items Purchased or Donated for the Year

	Items Purchased 21/22 (including magazine)	Donated Items added to collections 21/22	Total Collection Size
Ballina Libraries	5,624	3,542	70,563
Byron Libraries	4,738	1,327	58,506
Lismore Libraries	4,521	2,317	44,236
Tweed Libraries	11,989	1,002	78,475
Support Services	41	*1,664	2,914
Mobile Library	860	5,322	10,093
Total	27,773	15,174	217,637

*Lismore Library items allocated to Support Services whilst being used for Lismore Pop up library



Image 4 & 5: Volunteers sort donated items at RTRL Support Services

Online Library Usage

The Library provides access to thousands of online resources including encyclopaedias and research databases which include access to thousands of journal and newspaper articles supporting research at all levels through Britannica Library and Gale databases.

Through our eLibrary platforms, Libby Overdrive, Bolinda BorrowBox, and Indyreads, the library provides access to over 12,236 eBooks, 38,840 eAudiobooks and 4,061 eMagazines. Loans for the eLibrary platforms for the year were 242,082. It is not possible to differentiate and report use between the four council areas due to the way the platforms collect user data. Library staff continue to work with our eLibrary providers to improve reporting.

Online resources and platforms can be accessed through the RTRL website or Library App.

In addition to the Online Library resources, RTRL maintains a number of social media channels to connect with the community.

Social Media	Posts	Reach	Likes & Reactions
Facebook	498	977,403	28,030
Instagram	117	35,262	2,255
YouTube	Video Views	Estimated time watched	New subscribers
	10,767	382 hours	53
RTRL Website	Sessions	Users	Pageviews
	211,356	138,620	421,837
Library App	Devices Accessing App	New Devices	Launches
	7,307	2,931	104,826



Image 6: Computer user at Brunswick Heads Library

Performance Comparison to Previous Financial Year

Area	Year	Membership	Library Visits	Loans	Reservations	Collection	PC Usage
Ballina	21/22	21,251	111,073	237,764	25,406	70,563	8,463
	20/21	20,881	126,996	325,446	23,048	72,483	12,484
	% change	1.77%	-12.54%	-26.94%	10.23%	-2.65%	-32.21%
Byron	21/22	24,033	140,216	204,556	26,396	58,506	14,567
	20/21	23,203	195,669	292,288	27,052	58,225	11,949
	% change	3.58%	-28.34%	-30.02%	-2.42%	0.48%	21.91%
Lismore	21/22	19,747	69,707	180,519	16,020	44,236	3,059
	20/21	19,407	159,033	324,589	17,289	71,483	10,310
	% change	1.75%	-56.17%	-44.39%	-7.34%	-38.12%	-70.33%
Tweed	21/22	35,121	155,680	377,662	30,940	78,475	11,751
	20/21	33,786	185,523	502,416	27,199	76,273	20,595
	% change	3.95%	-16.09%	-24.83%	13.75%	2.89%	-42.94%
Mobile Library	21/22	3,103	22,782	33,542	5,942	10,093	3
	20/21	2,933	23,705	39,804	5,764	7,971	12
	% change	5.80%	-3.89%	-15.73%	3.09%	26.62%	-75.00%

7.10.2 Audited statement of accounts

The Special Purpose Financial Report for 2021/22 is being prepared for audit. The audited report will be submitted to an RTRL Committee meeting in 2023. A link to the last audited Special Purpose Financial Report for 2020/21 is <https://rtrl.nsw.gov.au/page.asp?f=RES-HTY-71-55-36>



Image 7: Donation Cheque presentation Image 8: Flood replacement Mobile Library trailer Image 9: Flood damage to Mobile Library

7.10.3 Assets Register

The following table provides a summary of all asset classes to 30 June 2022. Information on Major Assets and Lending and Reference Collection is also provided.

The information reported is subject to change as the Special Purpose Financial Report for 2021/22 is yet to be finalised.

Asset Classes	Carrying Amount	Accumulated Depreciation	Net Carrying Amount
Plant and Equipment	\$312,267	\$188,762	\$123,505
Office Equipment	\$626,053	\$433,647	\$192,406
Furniture and Fittings	\$57,473	\$35,436	\$22,037
Land - Operational	\$850,000	\$0	\$850,000
Buildings	\$2,603,261	\$1,631,195	\$972,066
Lending and Reference Collection*	\$5,018,057	\$2,787,568	\$2,230,489
Total	\$9,467,111	\$5,076,607	\$4,390,504

*Includes flood and other losses of approximately \$645,000 and excludes donations of approximately \$210,000

Major Assets	Carrying Amount	Accumulated Depreciation	Net Carrying Amount
Scania Prime Mover & Trailer	\$261,012	\$137,506	\$123,506
Headquarters Land and Building	\$2,853,261	\$1,631,195	\$1,222,066
Vacant Land	\$600,000	\$0	\$600,000
Lending and Reference Collection	\$5,018,057	\$2,787,568	\$2,230,489

Lending and Reference Collection	Estimated Net Carrying Amount
Ballina Libraries	\$580,457
Byron Libraries	\$485,919
Lismore Libraries	\$436,087
Tweed Libraries	\$650,413
Support Services	\$27,111
Mobile Library	\$50,502
Total	\$2,230,489

7.10.4 Collection size and its age and distribution within the RTRL Region

Service Areas	Collection Size	Collection Age < 5 years old	Collection Age < 10 years old
Ballina Libraries	70,563	49%	71%
Byron Libraries	58,506	48%	74%
Lismore Libraries*	44,236	56%	91%
Tweed Libraries	78,475	57%	76%
Mobile Library**	10,093	55%	66%
Total	217,637	53%	76%

*collection reduced due to flood losses and stock transfers to Mobile Library

** includes donations and transfers of Lismore Library stock to replace flood damaged stock

7.10.5 Number of borrowers and items borrowed

Service Areas	Number of Registered members	Number of Registered members as % or population	Number items borrowed (Loans)*
Ballina Libraries	21,251	46%	298,285
Byron Libraries	24,033	66%	265,077
Lismore Libraries	19,747	45%	241,040
Tweed Libraries	35,121	35%	438,183
Mobile Library	3,103		33,542
Total	103,255	46%	1,276,127

*Loans=eLibrary loans divided by 4 and added to each area total)

7.10.6 Number of library visits and item loans per capita

Service Area	Library visits	Total Items loaned per capita (inc. Mobile library & eLoans)	Population
Ballina Libraries	111,073	6.67	45,980
Byron Libraries	140,216	7.47	36,619
Lismore Libraries	69,707	5.73	43,544
Tweed Libraries	155,680	4.46	100,112
Mobile Library	22,782		
Total	499,458		226,255

Note: Items loaned per capita is derived by the following formula: eLoans + Mobile Library loans, divided by four, then added to each LGAs loans figures as stated in 7.10.5, divided by population



Image 10: Author Talk Ballina Library



Image 11: Children's activities across the RTRL Region

7.10.7 Number and type of value-added services provided in connection with the Library Services

COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions still impacted on program delivery but to a lesser extent this year. Lismore Library and Mobile Library program delivery was severely impacted by the limited service able to be offered due to flood damaged infrastructure.

Program	Events	Attendance
Early Childhood	434	5,459
Children's Activities	206	3,693
Youth Activities	41	406
Adult Activities	193	1,950
Senior's Activities	280	1,737
Digital Inclusion	102	279
Book Club	175	1,165
Online Program Sessions	197	Views : 8,325
Total	1,628	23,014



Image 12: Lismore Lantern Parade with Lismore Library's lantern carried by staff

7.10.8 An assessment of the quality of the Library Services delivered to each Member Council measured against performance benchmarks in the RTRL Strategic Plan and RTRL Delivery Program and the SLA applying to the Member Council.

RTRL has a strategic plan adopted by the Regional Library Committee. The RTRL Strategic Plan provides six key themes with seven primary strategic outcomes along with 17 statements about how we will achieve these. The RTRL strategic plan 2019-2029 can be viewed at this link: https://rtrl.nsw.gov.au/files/Strategic_Plan_2019_FINAL_Single_Page.pdf

At this stage, the Delivery Plan and Service Level Agreements were not in use in 2021/22. By way of providing some assessment of the quality of library services delivered, benchmarking against the State Library of NSW (SLNSW) *Living Learning Libraries* has been provided. This assessment is provided for the 2020/2021 financial year as this is the latest data available from SLNSW.

State Library of NSW Public Library Benchmarks 2020/2021

Living Learning Libraries provides a framework for service assessment and continuous improvement, as well as a practical basis for comparison among library services. It is intended to encourage best practice in service delivery by highlighting state and peer cohort medians and the services that have been achieved by leading libraries. Eighteen standards and twenty two guidelines are provided within the document to assess the quality of library services. View the full document here: *Living Learning Libraries – a population approach 7th edition: Standards and guidelines for NSW public libraries*, Library Council of NSW, August 2020, <https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/public-library-services/content/living-learning-libraries>

Richmond Tweed Regional Library Benchmarks 2020/2021

Following is the presentation of the highlights of the standards benchmarks for RTRL for 2020/21. You can view the full analysis here: https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/pl_statistics_2021.pdf

The SLNSW provides benchmarking data for each library service. For SLNSW benchmarking, RTRL is compared to the urban large cohort due to our total population served, however, on an individual basis, RTRL member councils are either urban medium or urban small. For the purpose of this report, figures will be reported at the regional level.

LOCATION	POPULATION	COHORT
Richmond Tweed Regional Library	223,039	Urban Large
Ballina Area	45,217	Urban Small
Byron Area	35,773	Urban Small
Lismore Area	43,667	Urban Small
Tweed Area	98,382	Urban Medium

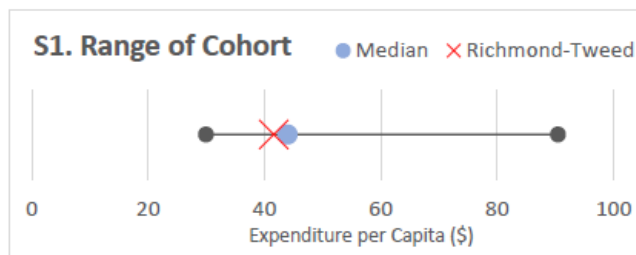


Image 13: Children's activities at Byron Bay Library

S1. Library expenditure per capita 20/21

Library Value: **\$41.61**

Cohort Median: \$44.00

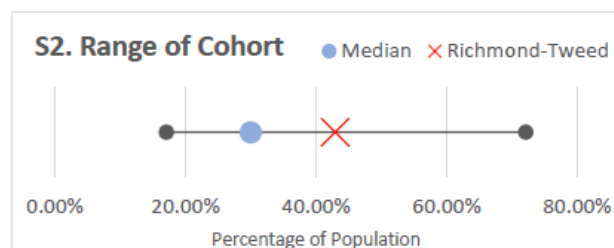


LOCATION	LIBRARY VALUE	COHORT MEDIAN
Richmond Tweed Regional Library	\$41.61	\$44.00
Ballina Area	\$39.23	\$57.03
Byron Area	\$57.65	\$57.03
Lismore Area	\$43.69	\$57.03
Tweed Area	\$33.30	\$50.48

S2. Library Members, % of Population 20/21

Library Value: **42.95%**

Cohort Median: 29.99%



S5. Visits to Library per Capita 20/21

Library Value: **2.84**

Cohort Median: 1.84

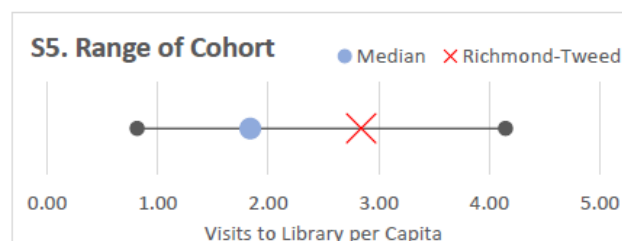


Image 14: AusMusic T-shirt Day at Ballina Library – local musician Ray Arnott lent his multi platinum album award for his work on Jimmy Barnes' album 'Working Class Man'

alstonville public library

Richmond Tweed Regional Library

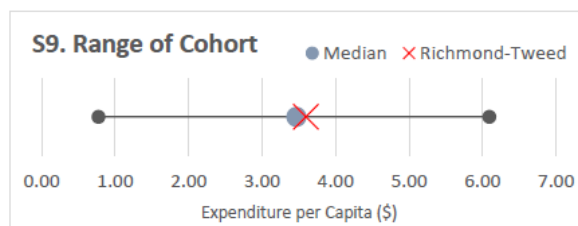
Connect. Discover. Escape.

Image 15: Alstonville Library entrance

S9. Expenditure on Library Materials per Capita 20/21

Library Value: **3.60**

Cohort Median: 3.46



S10. Items per Capita 20/21

Library Value: **1.31**

Cohort Median: 1.20

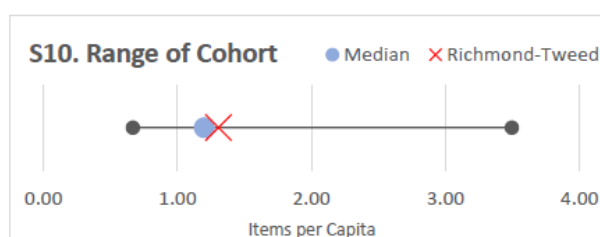
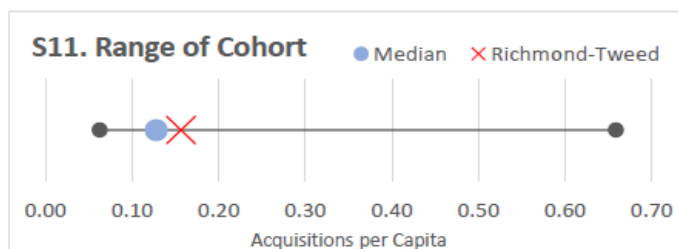


Image 16: Byron Area staff filming an Online Story Time session

S11. Acquisitions per Capita 20/21

Library Value: **0.16**

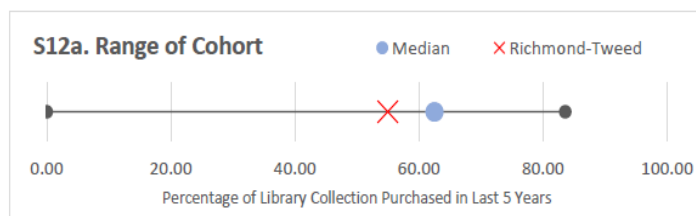
Cohort Median: 0.13



S12a. Age of Collection 20/21

Percentage of Library Collection
Purchased in Last 5 Years: **55.00%**

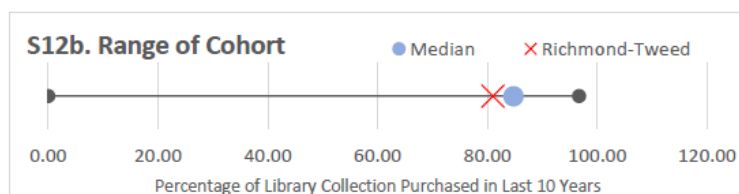
Cohort Median: 62.50%



S12b. Age of Collection 20/21

Percentage of Library Collection
Purchased in Last 10 Years: **81.00%**

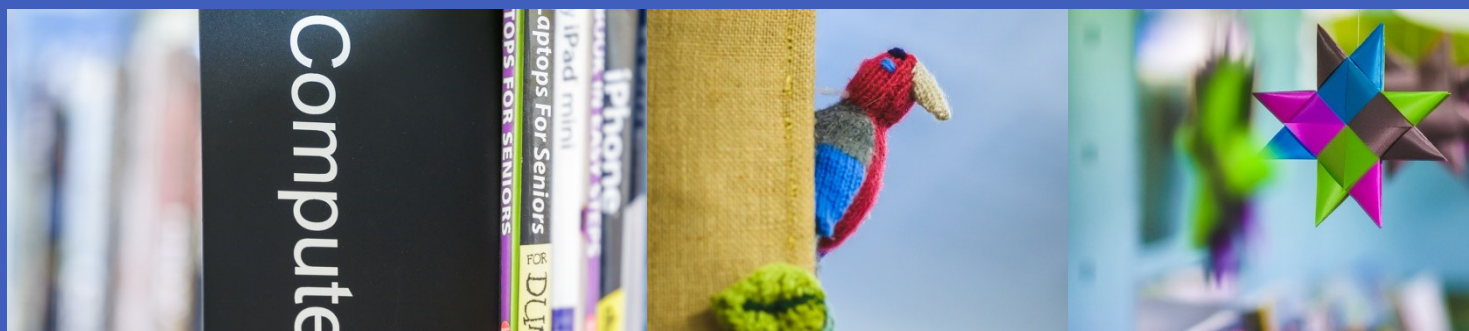
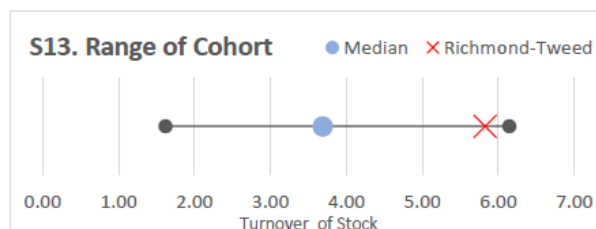
Cohort Median: 84.71%



S13. Turnover of Stock 20/21

Library Value: **5.83**

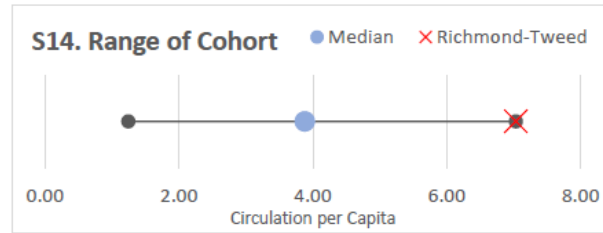
Cohort Median: 3.68



S14. Circulation per Capita 20/21

Library Value: **7.04**

Cohort Median: 3.88



7.10.9 For each branch library, the level of staffing, the nature of staffing employment, and financial details relating to accrued staff leave.

The following table provides staffing related information on a service area basis:

Service Area	FTE*		Employment	Accrued
	Budget	30/06/2022	Status**	Leave***
Ballina Libraries	11.55	11.20	Permanent - F/T or P/T	\$127,229
Byron Libraries	11.49	10.86	Permanent - F/T or P/T	\$176,949
Lismore Libraries	13.24	9.81	Permanent - F/T or P/T	\$124,839
Tweed Libraries	17.17	16.22	Permanent - F/T or P/T	\$266,710
Support Services****	14.54	10.74	Permanent - F/T or P/T	\$308,445
Totals	67.99	58.83	N/A	\$1,004,172

* Full Time Equivalent staffing based on a 35 hour week.

** Full Time = 35 hours per week, and Part Time = Less than 35 hours per week.

*** Includes annual, long service and time in lieu leave.

**** Includes Mobile Library.



Image 17: Flooding outside Ballina Library

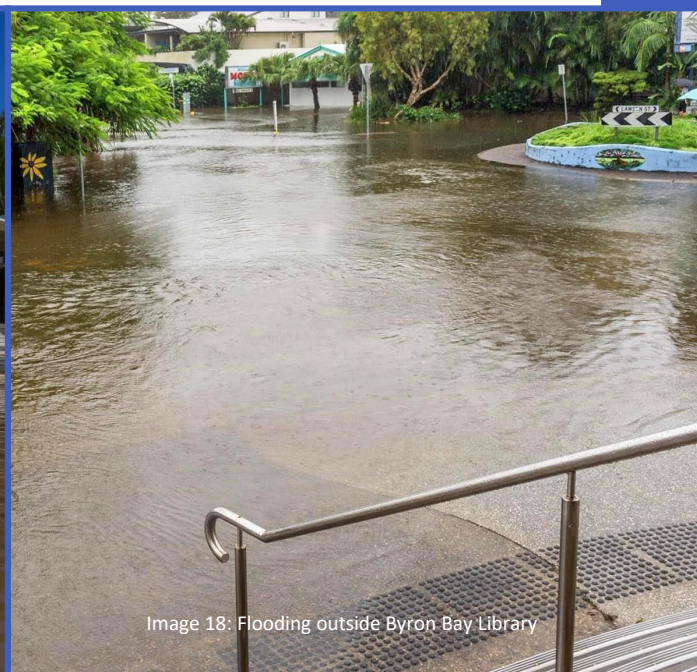


Image 18: Flooding outside Byron Bay Library

7.10.10 Other matter reasonably required by the RTRL Committee

COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic had widespread impacts on the entire community including the Richmond Tweed Regional Library (RTRL). RTRL was required to close library branches, and still deliver library services. The Click and Collect model proved to be the most successful way to still provide library services during this time. After COVID-19 service interruptions from March 2020, all library branches re-opened on Wednesday, 10 November 2021.

Staff Review and Service Delivery Model Investigations

The RTRL Deed of Agreement requires the review of library staffing to assess whether any library staff should be employed directly by Member Councils. An initial review was completed and reported to the RTRL Committee (Committee) in November 2020. The Committee resolved that further investigations were to be undertaken.

The detailed investigations were completed by the Senior Leadership Group (SLG). The SLG determined the range of information required, reviewed all the information collated and distributed by Lismore City Council, and interpreted all information provided for its application to a cooperative library model; and agreed on the findings and recommendations to the Committee.

The Committee resolved that at this time, no further action be taken to implement a cooperative library model, and the review of library staffing required by the Deed of Agreement is complete.

February and March 2022 Flood Impact

Lismore Library

In February 2022, the Wilson River reached a peak, 14.4 metres, taking flood water into the 1st floor of the library destroying everything in that floor. 29,101 items were thrown out of the windows, a loss of \$560,134.00. Furniture, shelving, technology, flooring, all equipment in the communications room, the air conditioning, electrical, security and fire panel boxes were all situated on this floor and were destroyed. The building again had water enter the building on 30 March, but this time only on the ground floor.

Lismore Library is closed with estimates being prepared to determine the costs to bring the building into operation. The building has been assessed by structural engineers contracted by Lismore City Council and the structural report allows only staff and contractors to access the building.

Library services in the Lismore City Council local government area were conducted at Goonellabah Library, a much smaller Library. Lismore Library is 1500 square metres while Goonellabah Library is 120 square metres. Programs continued with the need to return to normal library services for the community. The Support Services building supported the Lismore service. Shelving was installed in the Family History and Research area for Library users to browse and borrow materials. Programs with larger attendances, such as the weekly Craft group, Young Writers workshops, Youth Book clubs, were held in this building.



Image 19: Goonellabah Library



Image 20: Workshop at Lismore Popup Library co-located with RTRL Support Services



Image 21: Lismore Library flood clean up

Book donations to restock the Lismore Library, and the replacement of damaged stock for the Mobile Library and Tweed Heads Library were delivered to Support Services. Library staff and volunteers sorted these donations, catalogued, and processed items into the collections of these branches. All Lismore stock was allocated to Goonellabah branch to meet demand as the original Goonellabah stock count was small. Publishers, authors, schools, members of the public participated in the drive to restock the libraries. The drive was initiated by the community when the photograph shown on the left of the pile of books outside the library went viral.

Publishers, such as Pearson, and charities, including 123Read2Me and Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, sent materials to be shared between multiple libraries to assist children throughout the community. A partnership between RTRL, schools, preschools, and childcare centres was developed to share donated resources across flood affected communities. The responses to book and financial assistance have been overwhelming. Donations are arriving at all branches, with staff sorting and processing donated items at all branches.

Mobile Library

Unfortunately, the rear of the Mobile Library trailer was damaged by flood water. The trailer was written off and 402 items were damaged by the flood water entering the trailer, at a cost of \$8,270. Staff pursued a short term mobile library trailer replacement option and the Committee resolved to acquire a 2007 Custom Semi Mobile Library from SemiTrailerSales.com for \$126,489 including GST funded from the insurance claim settlement. The semi-trailer service recommenced in July/August 2022.

As an interim measure, mobile library services resumed on Monday 21 March following the normal timetable utilising the RTRL station wagon and Popup Library resources. This ensured continuity of service and maintained strong links with the community, many of whom were significantly flood affected themselves. Although able to carry only a small number of items, the community was extremely appreciative of the service with new members even signing up. Whilst there was a decline in service use across Ballina, Byron and Tweed, in the Lismore LGA the number of people accessing the service significantly increased. This can be attributed to the limited access to library services at a branch in Lismore.

Support Services

This building experienced water leaks in numerous locations. The removal of a pine tree has taken place as its needles block the box guttering and causes water to overflow into the internal roof area and leak through the ceiling panels.

Ballina Library

Whilst the water went up and down from the tides, flood waters did not enter the building.

Tweed Heads Library

Tweed Heads Library had a major water leak in the ceiling with the Easy Reads and Junior Nonfiction impacted. 363 items were damaged and were discarded. The total cost is \$16,367.00. The roof has since been repaired and collection items replaced.



Murwillumbah Library

Murwillumbah Library had flood water enter the building at the front door and creep to the circulation desk and around the wall to the public PCs. It crept over the carpet but did not gain height to damage furniture or books. This water was removed with an industrial cleaner.

Byron Library

Byron Library had flood water to the front steps on 30 March, but no damage.

Service Level Agreements

Service level agreements (SLA) have been developed for RTRL services provided by the Executive Council to Member Councils. The SLA defines the range and standards of services to be offered. The SLAs are intended to quantify key services provided, not all services provided. Full details of all services is provided in the RTRL Core Activity Statement. The SLAs and RTRL Core Activity Statement have been developed by staff and the quality work is acknowledged by the RTRL Senior Leadership Group (SLG).

Deed of Agreement – Option to Extend Term by Twelve Months

The Richmond Tweed Regional Library Deed of Agreement (DOA), which creates and details the operating arrangements for the regional library service, had an amended expiry date of 30 June 2022 with a conditional option to extend the term to 30 June 2023. The RTRL Committee resolved to extend the DOA for another twelve months to 30 June 2023

A new Deed to continue the RTRL service from 1 July 2023 is being drafted. It is planned that the draft will be presented to the Senior Leadership Group and General Managers by October 2022 and reported to the RTRL Committee in November 2022. It is intended that the new DOA will be similar to the current DOA with the key changes being:

- Deed will be operational from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2027
- The RTRL Committee is to hold not less than two (2) meetings each year.
- The total member council contribution increase each year is to be based on the annual base rate peg (excluding the individual rate peg population factor relevant for each council). It is acknowledged that due to population cost driver impacts, individual member council contributions may be above or below the rate peg.
- A proposal for changes in services or service levels which results in total member council contributions increasing above the rate peg limit may also be provided however they must be clearly stated, costed and how they are to be paid by a member council or member councils.
- Where the Executive Council is considering closing or significantly changing a Member Council service due to a staff or customer work, health and safety concern, the Executive Council must consult with the Member Council Senior Leadership Group representative as part of the process to determine an agreed risk-based approach and available options to respond to the work, health and safety concern and customer service impacts.



Images 22,23,24: Mobile Popup Library at Pottsville, Nimbin, Clunes



Image 25: RTRL Mobile Library flood replacement trailer

Richmond Tweed Regional Library

Connect. Discover. Escape.

6 Centenary Drive • PO Box 4031 • Goonellabah NSW 2480
T 02 6625 5100 • E rtrl@rtrl.nsw.gov.au

www.rtrl.nsw.gov.au



**Providing free public library services
to the local government areas of
Ballina, Byron, Lismore, and Tweed**

Richmond Tweed Regional Library acknowledges
the traditional custodians of the land on which we work.