



Submission No 9

Inquiry into Australia's Relations with the Republic of Korea; and Developments on the Korean Peninsula

Organisation: National Library of Australia

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Mr John Carter
Secretary
Foreign Affairs Sub-Committee
Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
Parliament of Australia
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Mr Carter

**INQUIRY INTO AUSTRALIA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE REPUBLIC OF
KOREA; AND DEVELOPMENTS ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA**

The National Library of Australia welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade's inquiry into Australia's relationship with the Republic of Korea. I attach the Library's submission. I would be delighted to answer any queries the Committee may have on the submission.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jan Fullerton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jan Fullerton
Director-General

National Library of Australia

Submission to the Foreign Affairs Sub-committee, Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, on Australia's relationship with the Republic of Korea, and developments on the Korean peninsula

The Korean Collection

The Korean language collection at the National Library of Australia numbers some 39,000 volumes of monographs, 1,500 serial titles and 30 newspaper titles. It is the largest and most significant Korean collection in Australia and Western language publications about Korea are also actively acquired. Developed since the early 1950s, the strengths of the collection lie in the subject fields of the social sciences, especially economics, statistics, politics and government, foreign relations and law, and the humanities, including Korean history, biography and archaeology, language and literature, and philosophy and religion.

There are active purchasing arrangements with suppliers in Korea, using the annual material acquisitions budget of around \$130,000. In addition, the Korea Foundation in Seoul, the Korea History Compilation Committee and the Academy of Korean Studies both in Songnam, Korea, have been major donors of Korean and English language materials to the Library.

The Korean collection is a national resource to support Korean studies in the country. Users of the collection include academic researchers, government departments, the Korean embassy and the general public. The Library is keen to see strong support for Korean studies as a national priority so that Australians have avenues to understand and interact with this important East Asian neighbour. The Library is constantly exploring ways to promote the collection and encourage researchers or members of the public to utilise the services and resources it offers, such as participating in the biennial Korean Studies Association of Australasia conference, and offering library tours as part of the annual Asia-Pacific Week program organised by the Australian National University for postgraduate students in Asian studies throughout the country.

Survey of Users of Korean Materials

In 1996 the Korean Working Group was established with representatives from the academic and library sectors. The Library took on an active role within the Group, which aimed at investigating the type of Korean information needed by Australians, and whether these needs were being satisfied. In 1997 a survey was carried out with 156 people taking part, representing the academic, government and business sectors. A report entitled "Survey of Users of Korean Materials: The Australia-Korea Research and Information Profile" was published in 1998. It was ascertained that the information

needs of all three sectors would benefit from increased cooperation among libraries in promoting their collections, and development of closer ties with Korean libraries.

Relations with Korean Libraries

Major exchange programs have been established with the National Assembly Library and the Central National Library in Seoul since the 1960s. These programs ensure the Library receives a substantial collection of current government publications. In addition four librarians from the National Assembly Library have spent 3 to 6 months at the Library during the period 1994-1999 to learn more about the Library's operations in depth.

Collecting from North Korea

Since 2003 a reliable supply of library materials from North Korea has been established with Korea Publications Export & Import Corporation in Pyongyang. The Library also has an exchange program with the Grand People's Study House of the D.P.R.K. in Pyongyang. Supply was interrupted from 1993 to 2002 but was re-established in 2003. The result is a growing collection of North Korean materials, unique to the country, currently numbering 1,300 monographs, 80 serials and 2 newspapers. The Library is eager to explore ways to expand its acquisitions of North Korean materials.