The CARM Repository – the first 10 years

Gary Hardy, Robert Stafford, Eva Fisch, Karen Kealy
The CARM Model

- Cooperative initiative of member libraries
- Capital contribution and annual maintenance
- Items ceded by members to the store
- Discovery via CARM Catalogue
- Best practice environmental storage
- Items available to all libraries via Inter Library Loan.
So far

- 15,800 linear m. available
- Allocations range from 198 to 3894 linear m.
- 50% of available allocation utilized
- Utilization by individual member libraries between 15% and 95%
- 534,000 volumes
The CARM "Collection"

- Most 1950’s – 1980’s (80%)
- Around 300,000 volumes serials
- 18,000 serial titles
- 18% of serial titles published in Australia
The good …

• Pick list … discard of duplicates
• Confidence in long term preservation
• Much more economical than individual storage
• Professional expertise in conservation
• Book heaven
...and the not so good..

- Issues with ceding materials
  - Auditors
  - Material needed again
- Lack of incentives to store materials
- Discovery no longer integrated
- User resistance
- Different contribution rates
- Usage levels
“An evolving absence of need”  
J.P. McCarthy

- 85 loans per month
- 63 copies per month
- 70% of loan requests for monographs
- 66% of requests from member libraries
If CARM was a database, would we cancel it?
Is the value of CARM symbolic and psychological rather than practical?
Next ten years

• Most of the librarians and academics who built our collections will leave
• Mass digitization projects will resolve
• Ongoing shift in the way our users access information will continue
• Pressures on library space will intensify and with it the need for storage
• We don't have a storage problem ... we have a co-ordination problem.

(misquoting Brad Wheeler...)
Need to rethink our approach to storage

• Do we know what we should save at regional, national and international level?
• Do we have any clear idea what we are saving?
• What are the overlaps with National and State Libraries?
• What is the extent of duplication in Higher Ed storage efforts?
• To what extent should we save material which has been digitized?
A National Distributed Repository (Meta-repository?)

- Mechanism for individual institutions to designate titles which they are preserving
- Policy, standards, trust framework
- Discovery mechanism
- Incentive to preserve
Thankyou

Questions, comments?