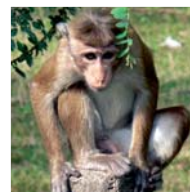


# CHAPTER 17

## LIBRARY

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# 1 INTRODUCTION



**A CRITICISM MADE OF MANY ANIMAL PROTECTION SOCIETIES IS THAT THEY ARE TOO LONG ON EMOTION AND TOO SHORT ON FACTS.**

Accurate and relevant information is vital if the movement is to lose this negative image. In fact, many organisations now have comprehensive and efficient libraries and archives, and some larger societies even employ a professional librarian to safeguard information.

A library is a necessity, rather than a luxury. To be useful, it needs to include relevant and up-to-date resource materials.

# 2 INFORMATION SOURCES

A professional organisation will strive to keep relevant information sources in an easily accessible way, through books, reports, photographs, videos or simply supporting paperwork.

## a) Books and In-house Information

There are some extremely useful and interesting books about animal protection, many of which have been referenced in other chapters of this manual. They should be kept in a library, available for staff's interest and future reference.

**TIP: MANY PUBLISHERS WILL GIVE OUT FREE COPIES OF BOOKS FOR REVIEW PURPOSES. IF YOUR ORGANISATION HAS A MAGAZINE, ONE WAY TO OBTAIN NEW BOOKS FREE OF CHARGE IS TO ASK FOR A REVIEW COPY AND WRITE A REVIEW FOR YOUR MAGAZINE.**

Visiting national, academic or veterinary libraries is a good way of locating relevant books. Amazon ([www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)) is also a good starting point.

Although much research is now carried out on the internet, there is still a real need for **in-house information**. Many organisations are continuously scanning their operating environment, keeping abreast of their issues, political developments, the moves of opponents and the work of other animal protection organisations. These information sources can remain useful if filed in an accessible way.

For organisations that have a permanent library or information system, the difficulty may be in rationalising the range of information kept. It is very tempting to make this as comprehensive as possible, but this may be counter-productive as it may make it difficult to find relevant information amongst the mass of irrelevant information. It is also necessary to review information regularly and throw out unused or out-of-date materials.

Another difficulty is ensuring that staff members are made aware of relevant information, but are not bombarded with masses of information about every issue. Useful ways of dealing with this include digests (brief summaries of key information and details of where to obtain the full information) and targeted distribution lists (i.e. distribution lists for each major issue, as opposed to general lists).

Finally, all libraries and archives need a system of lending out materials, to ensure that these are traceable and returned, as well as a reference system to assist the librarian and users.



### b) Video Library

Videos can be kept in a library, in addition to books. Some organisations also take their own footage. If footage is needed for media work, then a supply of broadcast quality videos (betacams or mini DVs) will need to be maintained.

When videos are lent to the media, they should be accompanied by written instructions detailing the lending conditions, including how copyright acknowledgement should be given. Some organisations have the relevant copyright burned through their broadcast quality videos, to ensure that this cannot be omitted.



### c) Photo Library

Many organisations also keep a photo library for media and publications. Most are kept on computer these days, with hard copy photos being scanned and added. Photo libraries in particular need to be well categorised, please see the section on 'Categorisation' for more information.

It is also good practise to make photo CDs, copies of which can be easily sent out in response to requests. There could be a general one, plus various subject or campaign photo CDs for individual investigations, companies, farming systems etc.

It is also possible to include a Press Centre on the organisation's website, where photos can be accessed and downloaded.

Copyright conditions also need to be given when photos are sent or accessed.

## ARCHIVES

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Important **work-related information** such as relevant strategies, operating plans, time-lines, contacts etc. should also be referenced and kept in archives. Good planning and logical record keeping are essential.

Archives need to be readily accessible. A logical system of cataloguing files can help with this. Another important aspect is the physical arrangement of the archives; space is needed to make these accessible. The most frequently used information in the archives needs to be in physical proximity to the office, once off-site stores are used for archives, busy staff members tend not to use them again!

Archives need to be regularly reviewed and unused information thrown away. However, certain information needs to be kept for a minimum period by law, for example, certain tax and accounts information and charity documentation.

Historic information, such as the founding charter and/or first meeting of the organisation, should always be kept.



## CATEGORISATION

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Categorisation is a process of looking at all the information sources that one has and then finding a logical method of grouping the information. This is a practical exercise and, once done, can prove to be extremely useful in saving time looking for materials.

Which categories to use will depend on each organisation's work and information needs. For example, a society that works solely on companion animal issues, may find it useful to divide its resource materials by **activities**; shelter management, re-homing, vet techniques, educational programmes, campaigning etc. A second main category could be **organisational issues**; financial management, strategy, planning, fundraising etc. **Work-related information** should also be categorised and archived, including office manual, operating procedures, minutes of board meetings, health and safety issues etc.

The main idea is to tailor the categories for your own particular needs, making the materials readily accessible and easy to find.

