MoD and
Army Library and Information Service

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MoD career history: Over a 24 year MoD career I have worked at:

- RAE, DRA, Farnborough – Aerospace & aviation
- RARDE, DRA, Chertsey – Fighting vehicles
- RSRE, Malvern – Radar and electronic warfare
- ALibS, Lisburn – Army Library Services
- DPA, Bristol – Business Library
- ALIS, Upavon and Andover – Head of Army Library and Information Service

In August 2014 moved to The Library, University of Bath
Army libraries a brief introduction
1793 – Garrison Library opened in Gibraltar.

The Gibraltar Garrison Library was founded in 1793 by Captain (afterwards Colonel) Drinkwater, the historian of the Great Siege of Gibraltar, 1779-1783. Drinkwater had, during the Siege, ‘lamented the want of a public library in Gibraltar’, especially under siege conditions when little by way of newspapers and reading material reached Gibraltar.
Army libraries: A history

- 1800 – Rifle Corps library.
- 1813 – Royal Engineers Library Chatham. Specialist library established to keep members of the Corps abreast of technical developments in their profession.
1860 – Prince Consort’s Library for education of officers established. “A gift most graciously bestowed and so highly beneficial to the Service.”
Army libraries: a brief history

- 1939 – books donated by population to support the Army with general reading.
- 1940 – Services Library and Book Fund
- 1946 – Army Educational Central Book Depot and Army Central Library established. Role – classification, storage, issue of general stock including emergency stocks to support ‘active service areas.’
- 1948 – Comprehensive Army Library Service established:
  - Institute of Army Education Libraries Section based in London composed of:
    - Army Central Library.
    - Army Education Central Book Depot.
    - Command Libraries.
- 1950s - Library loan statistics:
  - 1957-58 Issues  2,053,867
  - 1958-59 Issues  2,339,880
  - 1959-60 Issues  2,618,834
1970 –
- Review of library services led to determination that in UK County Libraries could provide adequate recreational library services.
- Army Library Service based on a large library in each Command and supporting smaller Army Education Centre libraries.

1990’s –
- Computerisation, Online service provision and start of the awareness and impact of Internet.

2000’s –
- SDSR, AVANTI, BORONA, A2020, Google, e-books, digitisation, library service cuts......

2014- Future provision......
In the last 7 years 67% of Army libraries have closed.

More effort and resources going into electronic and online services. Electronic library on DII, ALIS Online on Armynet.
Army libraries and the future

- Library provision based around:
  - Prince Consort’s Library
  - Support Unit
  - Services Central Library
    - NI, Warminster, TLC, Colchester AEC, MCTC, Brunei, Nepal
  - Overseas – Germany to 2018, Cyprus
The future of ALIS is to continue to serve the interests of stakeholders and customers and flexibly adapt to their needs.

The future of the Army is A2020 – ALIS needs to deliver library and information services that support the aims of A2020.
“If you don’t like change, you’re going to like irrelevance even less.”—General Eric Shinseki, retired Chief of Staff, U. S. Army.
● VICKERS, PAUL

● WAYPER, LESLIE

● Col. WHITE, A.C.T., V.C.
Army Libraries - web sites used

- www.britannica.com
- www.carnegietrust.org.uk
- www.cilip.org.uk
- www.ers.org.uk
- www.wikipedia.com
- www.google.com
- www.visitgibraltar.gi
- www.re-museum.co.uk
- http://www.victorianweb.org/art/architecture/fowke/2.html