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## IALS February Update

**Hello from IALS Library, and welcome to the first newsletter for 2009!** We report on the recent



Snowy scene outside IALS

survey of researchers which we conducted in November. The Deputy Librarian, David Gee, gives an account of his trip to Puerto Rico in December, to attend the annual conference of the International Association of Law Librarians. Hester Swift, the IALS Foreign and International Law Librarian, shares some tips on finding law material in languages other than English. We finish up this newsletter with details of some new resources on the IALS Electronic Law Library.

We look forward to keeping in regular contact with law school colleagues throughout 2009 – students, academic staff, postdoctoral researchers, research directors, librarians and administrators. Remember that the IALS Library is here to help you, as a supplement and complement to your own law library. If you don't visit IALS yourself in person this year, please phone us or send an e-mail if we can help you in any way with your law research.

*Gerard Power*  
Access Librarian

### Survey of Researchers

The IALS Library conducted an online survey of law researchers during

November 2008. The survey was publicised in the UK to postgraduate students, law teachers, post-doctoral researchers, librarians, and law school administrators. The survey aimed to elicit researchers' views on effective ways of keeping up-to-date on legal information, their access to a range of research material, their use of resource discovery tools, and their suggestions for improvements to IALS Library services. Over 150 valid returns have been received from over 45 Institutions. The lucky winner of book tokens from the prize draw is Ray Purdy, Senior Research Fellow at University College London Faculty of Laws.

Thank you very much to everyone who completed a survey form. The answers to the questions, and the suggestions which we received from respondents, are of great value to us in keeping our services effective and in reaching out to researchers. Among the findings to note are:

- The old reliable tools of e-mail and newsletters, whether print or web, are still very popular with respondents in keeping up-to-date with information about law. Web research guides are also popular. Newer methods, such as blogs, are not yet frequently used.

- Approximately one third of respondents indicated that they need access to foreign-language material, and many of them find it difficult to find and get access to this material. The IALS Library will continue to promote its collections of foreign law and the key finding tools, such as FLAG Foreign Law Guide, Intute and various indexes. (See below for Hester Swift's tips on finding material in foreign languages).



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We received several suggestions for new content, including new research guides, details of new books, and electronic versions of out-of-copyright material. Respondents also suggested ways that we could make existing resources more visible and accessible on the IALS website.

The survey was a very worthwhile exercise. Thanks very much to Steven Whittle, IALS Information Systems Manager, for his help in publishing the questionnaire on the web, and to Dr Peter Clinch of Cardiff University, for his valuable suggestions and tips on survey method. Look out for a detailed report of the survey findings on the IALS website later in February.

Gerard Power  
Access Librarian

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## Puerto Rico and the Caribbean: Legal Information in Multiple Legal Systems

During early December 2008 I was lucky enough to attend the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Course on International Law Librarianship in San Juan, Puerto Rico organised by the International Association of Law Libraries (<http://www.iall.org/conference.html>). This IALL conference was exceptionally well organised by a dedicated local conference team and attracted over 120 attendees (many of whom were law library directors) from prestigious law libraries around the world.

The academic programme was diverse and fascinating with many interesting speakers drawn from around the Caribbean. For example, two high spots for me were Lord Antony Gifford QC speaking eloquently and movingly about the death penalty in Caribbean jurisprudence and Madame Justice Desiree Bernard (a Judge of the Caribbean Court of Justice) explaining the developing role of the relatively new Caribbean Court of Justice. There were also stimulating sessions on subjects such as: mixed civil and common law jurisdictions around the world (did you know that Puerto Rico, Scotland, Israel and Quebec are all examples of mixed legal systems?); the challenge of Caribbean legal research; the future of CARICOM; the modernization of the Cuban Legal System; and the book publishing and the bookseller trade in the Caribbean. Many of these topics covered research areas which will be useful for me in my work at IALS Library. In addition many of the contacts I made with local booksellers and publishers will help the library expand its collections for these specialised jurisdictions.

Finally it was, of course, very useful for me to meet up again with many of my international colleagues and friends working in law libraries around the world. Many of the attendees manage large and prestigious law libraries in countries such as the USA, Norway, Germany, South Africa, India and Australia and it is very helpful for me to discuss shared management issues, current challenges and the need to continually improve our law libraries to meet the ever changing needs of our research communities.

David Gee  
IALS Deputy Librarian



## Five Tips for Finding Material in Foreign Languages

1. Use the research guides on the [IALS](#) and [Globalex](#) websites. Librarians from IALS have produced a set of guides to the Library's holdings for seven different European jurisdictions, highlighting key printed and electronic publications and listing finding tools and useful websites. The Globalex website, based at New York University School of Law, provides research guides for many more jurisdictions, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe. Again, key sources are mentioned, including websites and any relevant subscription databases.
2. For help finding foreign laws, refer to the Foreign Law Guide database (available at IALS on its [Electronic Law Library](#)). This is the online version of Reynolds and Flores, *Foreign law : current sources of codes and basic legislation in jurisdictions of the world*. For each jurisdiction, the published sources of legislation (and law reports) are given, as well as websites. Where materials are available in English translation, details are provided.
3. For journal articles, search the online *Index to Foreign Legal Periodicals* (available at IALS on its Electronic Law Library). The indexers give English subject headings to each article, so the database can be searched using English terms even though most of the articles are in other languages. More than 500 legal journals are covered.
4. Use the [Intute: law](#) internet gateway to find selected internet sources relating to the jurisdiction in which you are interested. Approximately 200 jurisdictions are covered and the websites include those of governments, courts, research centres,

international organisations, legal information institutes and legal publishers.

5. If you need to track down legislation and law reports from jurisdictions beyond the scope of the IALS [Collection Development Policy](#), use the [FLAG Foreign Law Guide database](#). Simply select the jurisdiction and the type of material that you want and the database will list UK libraries with relevant holdings. FLAG is a free service provided via the IALS website.

*Hester Swift*  
*Foreign and International Law Librarian*

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## New on the Electronic Law Library

Four Australian titles, previously in looseleaf, are now available online through the Electronic Law Library:

- Australian Consumer Credit Law Reporter online Library
- Australian Employment Legislation online Library
- Australian Sales & Fair Trading Law online Library
- Australian Securities & Investment Commission releases online

They all offer user-friendly search, browse and print options.

Another recent addition is the **United Nations Law Collection**, available via Hein Online. This includes the full text of many UN and International Court of Justice law publications, for example the *United Nations Treaty Series*, *Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary General*, and the *Reports of International Arbitral Awards*, to name a few. The collection is made available with the usual Hein user-friendly interface.

The databases on the IALS Electronic Law Library are available at IALS Library to academic users. If you are planning to visit IALS soon and would like to find out more about the many databases on the Electronic Law Library, simply click on the “I” information button alongside the database on the electronic law library list at <http://ials.sas.ac.uk/library/eservice/elibrary.htm> for more information. Phone us on 020 7862 5790 if you have further questions – we can arrange a brief demonstration for you of any of the databases at a convenient time.

Finally, there was news in December 2008 about a noteworthy addition to Commonlii [www.commonlii.org](http://www.commonlii.org) which offers free access to Commonwealth and common law. The full text of the *English Reports* 1220 – 1873 has been added to the service, based on data supplied by Justis. Access is free, and the documents are in PDF.

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## And Finally ....

IALS in the snow.



*View from a chilly Russell Square*

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