

**WRITING THE FUTURE:
Shaping the Canadian Library Association for the 21st Century**

Report to the Executive Council of the Canadian Library Association
by its Commission
March 2001

“IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TODAY TO IMAGINE CANADA WITHOUT THE CANADIAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION.”

W. KAYE LAMB¹

A reading of the history of the Canadian Library Association demonstrates clearly that the Association has embraced periods of significant and continual change. There have been recurring changes in the nature of information and recorded knowledge; in the nature of libraries; in the roles of librarians; in relevant facets of the market place; in the technologies of information; in the legal and political environment; in the expectations of the users of information and libraries and repeatedly in the financial viability of the Association.

The Association is now facing a significant crisis in viability.

For most members of the Canadian library community and, indeed many CLA members, the Canadian Library Association is of little consequence. This is clear in how few members actively participate in the Association. Only about 5% of the library community are members. In a decade, Association membership has dropped significantly but has begun to slowly recover (to some 2,700 today). Within that number, the Commission found that CLA is not on the radar screen even for many of its members.

Many who have chosen to join CLA have only marginal satisfaction with the direction it is taking, its accomplishments and the way it communicates to and treats its members. The Association has been able to keep going because there are members who have passion for the Association and what it might accomplish. There is no doubt that there are members who work very hard in their dedication to our Association.

CLA has been unable to find a clear role that appropriately distinguishes itself from the large number of other national and provincial library associations in Canada. The CLA annual conference is usually only a larger version of the offerings of many provincial conferences. Although the services that the Association offers its members, such as networking, continuing education and its publishing program may be unique in some respects, they are not seen by either members or non-members as essential to their needs.

CLA has had some recent modest successes in serving its members and in increasing the visibility of libraries including: redesigning the web page and Feliciter, moving to more cost efficient premises and streamlining operations, introducing an "On the Hill Day" in conjunction with the fall Council meeting to raise the profile of libraries with government, the formation of five student chapters, the publication of Copyright Guide For Canadian Libraries and the coordination of the Young Canada Works program for libraries. However, in considering the lack of any recent significant achievement in impacting government policy or legislation, members still indicate that

¹ Hulse, Elizabeth *The Morton Years, the Canadian Library Association, 1946-1971*. Foreword by W. Kaye Lamb. Toronto, Ex Libris Association, 1995.

CLA is reactive not proactive. Only slightly more than 50% of members feel that CLA had a general sense of where it is going.

In addition to a crisis of purpose and membership satisfaction, the Association faces severe fiscal challenges as it continues to pursue many avenues of activity with an underpinning of fragile finances. The Association is solvent but it has very little fiscal flexibility.

It is time for CLA to recognize the seriousness of its situation and mobilize its best efforts to address these challenges. Unless CLA has the courage to change, its situation will only deteriorate to the point that the Association could become marginal to the library movement in Canada.

About 56% of our members are over the age of 46. This means that a large number of our long term continuing members will retire in the next 10 years or so. Statistics Canada estimates that 48% of library workers will retire by 2010.

Increasingly, we see recently graduated members of our profession drawn to positions outside Canada or in non-library settings. CLA has not found a way to attract this group, either through its current divisional structure (which is based on traditional library segments) or by making its members feel more involved in setting the strategic direction of the Association.

Many Canadian libraries have reduced their commitment to CLA either by ceasing to be institutional members or by not supporting staff to attend conferences or participate in its activities. Recent amalgamations among public libraries in several provinces have further reduced these numbers.

With the current allocation of its resources and its excessive focus on revenue generation, CLA cannot hope to develop and provide the expertise and visibility it needs to establish presence on the national stage.

We face this crisis armed with two consistent elements. The first has been the unbroken commitment of the Canadian Library Association to the first purposes of its existence as currently stated in Constitution and By-laws of the Association:

“The Association shall exist to develop high standards of librarianship and library and information services.”

The second consistent element has been improvement. These examinations, which appear to recur on a five-to-seven year cycle, reflect not only changes in our environment, but also the priority that CLA and its members give to maintaining a relevant, dynamic and effective Association.

In 1999, the CLA Executive Council considered the most recent wave of changes and challenges in the library and information scene in Canada and the perceived situation of the Canadian Library Association. Mindful of the responsibilities to the professional life of its members and the environment in which it conducts its activities, the Executive Council established a commission to examine the future of the Association.

The initial issues that led to the creation of the Commission included:

- demographic projections of significant retirements of librarians in the next 10 years;

- evolving professional attitudes;
- a decade of declining CLA membership;
- fragmentation of the library voice;
- workplace changes in the nature of jobs and in the involvement of technology;
- similar trends in other membership-based organizations.

It was the intent of the Executive Council that the results of this study will be used to determine how best CLA can position itself among the library and information community to ensure that it represents the needs and concerns of the profession as a whole.

Building on work done in the past, the Executive Council saw the need to develop a dynamic strategy for the Canadian Library Association that would address current member needs and critical issues in the library community. The issues listed often had similar counterparts in many of the previous efforts in self-examination and strategic planning.

Other Executive Council concerns included:

- the need for greater government recognition of the importance of the Canadian library infrastructure;
- a sustainable future for the Canadian library community;
- a CLA organization structured to be more representative of the Canadian library community.

The members of the Commission are:

Deb deBruijn, Canadian National Site Licensing Project,
 Sandy Iverson, The Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine,
 Alan H. MacDonald, University of Calgary, Chair
 Louise McGillis, Sir Wilfred Grenfell College,
 Memorial University of Newfoundland
 Paul Whitney, Burnaby Public Library.

The Commission made a concerted effort to understand the views and expectations of the current members of the Canadian Library Association as well as those of other library associations throughout Canada. It retained the services of Association Resource Centre Inc. as a facilitator in its extensive consultations.

Members of the Commission met with a number of groups across the country to discuss the issues facing the library and information profession. However, the Commission felt strongly that a membership organization should turn first to its membership for information.

Between April and June 2000, Association Resource Centre Inc. conducted eight focus groups with CLA members, in various locations across Canada. The results of these focus groups were used by the Commission to develop a wide-ranging membership survey. Every current personal member of record received the survey during the summer of 2000. 28% of the surveys were returned to Association Resource Centre Inc. that tabulated the results. (The survey results and instrument are posted on the CLA web site: www.cla.ca.)

In the language of the surveyors the results from this sample are considered to be accurate to within $\pm 3.4\%$ nineteen times out of twenty (95% confidence interval). The Commission has

confidence that this feedback is a reliable indicator of membership attitudes toward their association.

This survey was a concerted effort by the Association to understand its members and their expectations. Most of the recommendations of the Commission are a direct response to the survey results and the consultations with other library associations.

The results of the survey indicate:

- Member satisfaction with CLA is modest at best. There is considerable room for improvement;
- Members feel that a significant portion of CLA's time and effort should be devoted to representing member interests to groups whose decisions have impact on them. Members believe that some 59% of CLA's time should be devoted to such issues;
- CLA's secondary area of focus should be on continuing education and career development;
- Communication and member influence are key issues for improvement of membership satisfaction. Members want to influence the direction of the Association.

Parallel with the membership survey, there were briefings and consultations with the CLA Executive Council, with the leaders of CLA's five divisions, and on several occasions, with the Provincial and Territorial Library Association Council (PTLAC) whose members constitute most of the geographic library associations in Canada. Many PTLAC participants are also members of the Canadian Library Association. The PTLAC consultation was a shared cost effort with financial assistance from both CLA and the Ontario Library Association.

In September 2000 a one-day consultation took place with this group in Toronto, Ontario. The presidents, officers and executive directors attending the meeting took a fresh look at the needs of the library movement in Canada, having agreed to set aside, for the moment, the realities of the multiplicity of library and related organizations functioning in Canada today.

This gathering produced a wide ranging situational assessment of the library movement in Canada and the generic roles of associations in supporting that movement. After its deliberations, this group concluded that:

- Library related associations in Canada are numerous. There are certainly more than 100.
- We are diverse. We represent geographical jurisdictions, library types, library roles, functional interests, user types, technologies and information formats.
- We are polycentric with hubs of activity from coast to coast to coast in communities of all sizes and types.
- We act provincially and territorially, regionally, nationally and, in some instances, trans-nationally.
- To a large extent we are unilingual in an officially bilingual country.
- We are often collaborative, binding together in *ad hoc* alliances, as important issues require.
- We are often divided, as perceptions of conflicting interests seem to prevent the finding of the common ground of greater good on some issues.

- We are competitive. We overlap. We often are chasing the same member prospects while ignoring non-traditional potential members.
- We are fundamentally unsuccessful since the majority of those who work in and for libraries and related services may not adhere to any association in the field.
- We all are committed to advocacy for libraries and related services.
- We all quest for competence and connectedness for those who work in libraries and related services.
- The status quo is unacceptable.
- We must lay aside some of the burdens of our histories.

Overall, it was agreed there are 30 million compelling reasons for the library associations in Canada to find avenues to succeed.

As a result of its diverse consultations, the Commission is confident that it has an accurate reading of individual membership opinion. Our first task is to make recommendations to the Executive Council that will bring the Association into alignment with its members and then into alignment and alliance with all who labour for libraries and kindred services in Canada.

The membership survey told us that members wish to write the Association's agenda. They expect two quite different things from their Canadian Library Association.

On the one hand, there are clear and strong expectations that the Association should focus on representing member interests to groups whose decisions have an impact on them. This includes influencing government in the evolution of public policy and the promotion of the profession. This is the "big picture" expectation.

On the other hand, there was an equally clear expectation that the Association will provide opportunities for the professional development of its members. This is the "member enhancement" expectation.

At first glance these two expectations might not seem congruent. We would disagree. Since its establishment in 1946, the purpose of the Canadian Library Association has been to develop high standards of librarianship and library and information services, that is, to focus on both the library environment and those who serve in it.

Findings

Our recommendations will focus first and foremost on the implementation of expectations. Only then should we invest energy on the structural and housekeeping manifestations within the Association.

A.1 The Big Picture - Representing Member Interests to Groups Whose Decisions Have an Impact on Them

The practical visionaries who met in Hamilton in 1946 to create CLA took as their mission "to make no small plans." Over the years, however, the Association's single-minded focus on the big picture and on the advancement of the core values of the profession has been eroded through waves of structural tinkering, response to the financial challenges of the moment, and the inevitable need to attend to details of Association housekeeping.

A dispassionate examination of CLA today reveals an association centred more on library types than issues, where Association housekeeping, albeit important, consumes an inordinate proportion of CLA's attention.

At the nadir in 1999 only 19% of CLA's revenue came from membership dues. During 2000 membership growth has brought that back to 25%. Because of the necessity of revenue generation, the Association is faced with spending a great deal of its time undertaking projects and distributing materials in order to generate needed revenue. Because of limited time and resources, this has shifted the focus of the office and the governing councils away from promoting the needs of its members and the library community toward finance and administrative functions.

The existing activities of influencing public policy, the demonstration of the benefits of libraries to Canadian society and the promotion of the library profession to employers and citizens must be retrieved from the margins of the Association and moved to its daily agenda at the core.

The Commission believes the library community must present a strong, united voice on matters of national import. We believe the Canadian Library Association has a key role to play in the establishment of that national voice. We expect that CLA should redirect its energies to:

- develop and promote policy positions on national issues of importance to the library community;
- represent the library communities to the federal government and promote policy positions as appropriate;
- foster ongoing working relationships with other national associations which share common values and concerns;
- provide a vehicle whereby individuals, institutions, regional and provincial associations can support and participate in national policy development and promotion;
- seek ways to better represent the library and information profession to employers, the public, the media and government.

Setting specific priorities for the activities of the Association is imperative to ensure success through concentrated effort. The Commission envisages that, at any one time, there will be only a limited number of areas that will constitute the Association's public activities. These priorities will be determined by the membership as a whole.

Some of these priorities will reflect the broadly defined and well-established policy pre-occupations of a library community that is committed to providing access to information for all Canadians. Ongoing priorities include copyright and intellectual property, information policy, intellectual freedom and literacy. In addition, and from time to time, there will be necessary focus on the evolution of library service to target groups in need such as, for example, the print-disabled and First Nations.

As the subject of continuous attention, these priority areas will provide the means for individuals, institutions and other associations to be engaged with the Canadian Library Association in activities of common interest. Efforts on each area will include:

- policy position development and promotion;
- fundraising, including facilitating grants from appropriate public sources;
- research;

- continuing education;
- appropriate representation and lobbying.

The voice of the Canadian library community

The fragmentation of library and information organizations and the erosion of membership in these organizations are a corrosive force undermining the advancement of the library and information movements in Canada. The chances that Canada might ever embrace a monolithic organization are not only near zero, such an effort to do so could exacerbate the existing unsatisfactory situation.

The Canadian Library Association is a strong national association drawing members from all provinces and territories. It can and will be made stronger. At the same time, CLA must always be a practical organization. It cannot expect to speak for all Canadians on all relevant issues. It cannot even speak on its own at all times for all Canadians involved in library and information services. We are agreed that we are a very diverse community. CLA must work with and within that diversity.

It is also clear that many issues of importance to the library and information communities are assigned by the Canadian constitution to provincial or territorial jurisdiction and some in turn to municipal jurisdiction. In order for the library community to be properly represented, there must also be a network of strong, sustainable provincial organizations that will speak with a province-wide voice in the councils of provincial decision making. It would be appropriate for the CLA to participate in such discussions only upon invitation from the local parties.

At the same time we recognize that there are and will continue to be many national and regional associations focused on various aspects or perspectives on library and information services in Canada. We must find productive ways of assuring the establishment and sustenance of a strong national voice on issues of national import. The real challenge will be to mute the harmful cacophony that denies us voice. We must seek to establish solidarity without suppression of the energy and the focus of many vigorous organizations.

We propose that, in its focus on the improvement of public policy, CLA should seek new partnerships and opportunities with these Canadian national associations in areas of common interest.

We propose that CLA seek to work with Canada's other library and information associations to create an ongoing "national forum" on library and information issues to share resources and ideas with willing associations of all kinds in order to collaboratively produce the much needed national voice for libraries in Canada.

There are several possible models for such a forum.

A fairly informal venue that would allow interested participants to gather to work on common issues would often suffice. An excellent example may be found in The Copyright Forum. This is an ad hoc group of representatives of 13 national associations, both library and beyond. They have worked together to design and foster a common position on copyright policy particularly in the digital area.

The recent English report on the National Library and National Archives recommended the creation of a Council of Canadian Libraries. This could be a useful venue for libraries to raise national issues although its sponsorship by a Federal government agency would limit its usefulness in advocacy to influence Federal policies.

We also note the recent agreement among members of PTLAC (the Provincial and Territorial Library Associations Council) and CLA to work together with other library associations in a movement called "Libraries Advance Canada". This may be an excellent beginning for a larger and more formal alliance among the diversity of Canadian library and information associations. It deserves the attention and enthusiasm of the Canadian Library Association.

It is the Commission's hope that the Executive Council of the Canadian Library Association will support the creation of an inclusive and effective national forum, possibly in the promising context of Libraries Advance Canada. To be effective the forum must reach beyond CLA and the provincial and territorial associations to involve many of the specialized associations and groups that represent both individuals and institutions.

We believe CLA should be the initiator of such a gathering. If appropriate, we should be a willing and major participant in any gathering initiated by others. In either case, it can never be a case of a national forum proposing and CLA disposing. CLA cannot lead every parade. The voice for libraries and librarians will only be as strong and clear as the willingness and trust of all the participants to come together and create it. As with a great chorus, every participant must do their part for the whole to achieve its magnificence. The voice must bear the brand of all its participants.

There will be challenges of leadership and of cost. The first will be solved through good will. The second will be vexing particularly if the voice of small and more distant communities is to be heard as well as those who already have big voices. The opportunities of electronic communication, conferencing, e-mail, collaboratories and broad band Internet will all have to be recruited to assure that participants in the library movement in all parts of Canada will have their local and personal voices heard.

Another challenge will be the establishment of processes that allow the community to respond with a single voice with some dispatch when an issue boils over without notice or a new factor is suddenly added to the mix of issues.

The Canadian Library Association began as a bilingual organization, albeit not a very successful one. At the request of the evolving French language association of the day, ACBLF, CLA agreed to style itself as an English language organization. This practical solution from another era produces unsatisfactory responses in our current public policy efforts.

The Commission recommends that in order to have credibility at the national level in the public policy arena, all CLA policy documents and related publicity should appear in both official languages.

We also recommend that both official languages be operative in the proposed national forum efforts. In particular we believe the CLA Executive Council should seek renewed and increased cooperation with ASTED on matters of Canada-wide interest.

A.2 Services to the Profession

The Commission recognizes that there are certain professional services that CLA should undertake on behalf of the profession as a whole in Canada.

Among these current undertakings are:

- a program of publishing and publication distribution which addresses the interests and concerns of the library community and which fosters relevant research;
- sponsorship of accreditation of various types of library education programs;
- productive relationships with cognate associations in other countries.

The undertakings do not automatically suppose that all aspects must be brought under the umbrella and staffing of CLA's office. As an example, publishing and the distribution of foreign works might be licensed to domestic publishers in the public or private sector.

Through such initiatives, both libraries and the profession are strengthened.

B. Empowering the CLA Member

While members indicate they want their Association to focus strongly on public awareness, government relations and public policy development, they also indicate that a second highly important emphasis should be placed on empowering and supporting the individual member of the Association.

The Commission has identified four priority thrusts in this area of activity:

- Continuing education
- Information flow
- Leadership and career development
- Networking opportunities.

Whenever possible CLA should undertake initiatives in these areas in conjunction with its member-defined groupings such as its divisions. These are ideally positioned to provide relevant and meaningful opportunities for their individual members.

Economics and geography recommend that real partnerships should be established with provincial and specialized groups wherever possible in order to deliver the right programs in the right areas at the right time at the right price.

B.1a Continuing Education

Nearly half of CLA's surveyed members identified continuing education as an important issue and an important activity for the Association. In most cases, continuing education programs are best developed and delivered by regional or subject specific associations or organizations that are best positioned to develop focused and relevant continuing education opportunities.

The Commission recommends that the Association should work diligently to develop effective partnering relationships with provincial, regional and sectoral associations and organizations to deliver relevant and accessible continuing education opportunities to their memberships as well as interested non-members.

The CLA, through its staff, should take responsibility for encouraging and coordinating CE partnership opportunities that have been identified as a benefit to its members. The Association should offer to assist with administration, development and promotion of CE events with whatever partners are most appropriate and willing.

It should be recognized that the capacity to create and deliver CE opportunities differs among the various existing associations given the size of their memberships and the levels of available funding. Efforts for co-ordination should seek to minimize these differences possibly through investment in development of joint CE opportunities being proportional to Association size.

When a particular CE project crosses sectoral or regional boundaries, CLA might accept primary responsibility for CE development or it might work with or yield to a partner or partners as the avenue for development and delivery.

B.1b CLA Conference

In order to ensure that CLA's conference is unique and non-competitive with those of Canada's other library associations; the CLA Conference should continue as a major activity and should shift its major focus from CE to an issue-based program organized around a number of issue streams.

Suggested models might include the approach now offered by the Australian Library and Information Association and planned for the American Library Association.

At the 2000 ALIA conference, each day began with a plenary session from 9:15 to 10:00 a.m. followed by four tracks with 3 sessions each over the day. On day one the tracks were the societal context, the legal context, the learning context and the technological context. Day two: knowledge management, content, access to service, and technology. Day three: the information professional, value, performance and relevance, the creators, and technology. At any time during the ALIA conference, which has a higher registration than CLA's, only 4 concurrent sessions were held. (At CLA in 2000 there were 10 concurrent sessions in each time period.)

Beginning in 2001, the American Library Association will implement programmatic tracks at its Annual Conference. The goal of the change is to increase and improve conference marketing and program attendance and conference attendee satisfaction. The program tracks (a track is defined as a broad interest area which may contain multiple, related strands or threads) will include a variety of program length options (e.g. 1.5, 2 and 3 hour programs) but program starts will be consistent. Tracks will be developed from the "bottom up," that is, derived by examining patterns in programming developed for each conference by the broad range of program developers within ALA. The tracks in 2001 are leadership, information services, digital library, children and youth, advocacy, information access, and issues and updates.

It is recommended that those educational sessions that are offered at a Conference be broader in nature and be designed to inform the policy development work of the Association. It is also recommended that approaches to the conference should provide opportunities for non-attenders to benefit either through interactive web casting from the conference or post-conference repeats of presentations in other communities.

In order to achieve this shift in balance of Conference programming, the existing planning mechanism anchored on Divisional and Interest Group input and direction will have to be modified.

In order to enhance the profile for the library community with the federal government, the Commission proposes that the CLA continue to hold an annual conference, with every second meeting to be held in Ottawa, beginning in 2004. (This is similar to other national associations such as the Canadian Museum Association.) As the focus of the Conference shifts to a more issue-based program designed to inform national policy development work and increase the profile of the profession, the importance of having the Conference in Ottawa, close to national-level decision-makers becomes apparent.

Holding the conference in Ottawa, the home of the CLA office and staff, would also reduce the cost of that conference and allow the Association to negotiate good, long-term rates for the conference centre, travel and accommodation that will benefit all participants.

For the conference in alternate years, it is recommended that the Association examine two options:

- mounting of a full conference in cities around the country either individually or jointly with another library association; or
- offering a one day CLA component or add on to willing provincial or regional conferences. (In addition to expanding the local CE base, this would also provide opportunities for membership consultation.)

B.2 Information Flow

It is essential to the well being and effectiveness of any membership organization that its members are fully informed and regularly consulted.

As the membership survey determined, this is not the current case. The Commission recommends that the Association promote the development of fully informed members who feel able to participate fully in the affairs of the Association and influence its decision making.

The Association should also establish regular and reliable mechanisms for gathering ongoing membership feedback.

The Commission makes a number of recommendations to enhance information flow, both from the Association to its members and from the membership to the Association leadership.

- Continued development, improvement and distribution of a published newsletter (*Feliciter*);
- Enhancement of the CLA web page as an electronic presence to allow for the interactive exchange of information, frequent electronic polling and targeted information distribution;
- Institution of regular focus groups across Canada to receive input and feedback from the membership;
- Establishment of formal consultative mechanisms open to all CLA members, to enhance communication to and from all members and accountability for the Executive Council; possibly in the context of local, provincial and regional association gatherings
- Continued development and distribution of tool kits relating to CE and policy development programs to interested members

B.3 Leadership and Career Development

The Association as a whole as well as its constituent parts should seek to develop, license and deliver leadership and career development programs. Initiatives in the area of leadership and career development should include:

- award and recognition programs
- scholarship programs
- new member recruitment, assistance and development programs
- mentoring, shadowing and consultation programs and opportunities

B.4 Networking and Involvement Opportunities

Participation in the business of the Association must not be predicated upon location of one's work nor upon attending a conference or travelling by plane anywhere. All are barriers to the individual member being heard and deriving benefit from their membership.

Utilizing interactive technology and regional partnerships, the Association should work to provide a range of opportunities for CLA members to network with other members and to play an active role in the Association. Most networking opportunities would be provided through constituent parts and allocation of resources for these programs should be based on membership.

C. CLA Structure

We deal with structural matters last. Executive Council must agree on the programmatic directions of the Association before there is any discussion of adjusting the structure.

The Commission believes that some changes in governance and structure are necessary to foster the strategic directions which the members have identified for the Association: i.e. influencing government in the evolution of public policy, the promotion of the profession, continuing education and membership empowerment.

C.1 Executive Council Restructuring

Given the refocusing of the strategic direction to broad issues, the significant enhancement of membership input and accountability mechanisms and the propensity of the current structure to focus on operational details and internal issues, it is proposed to streamline the Executive Council. We propose three officers: a President, Vice President/President-elect, Treasurer; six Councilors-at-large and the Executive Director (ex-officio), non-voting.

The Executive Council should regularly consult with the whole membership, establish policy, approve programs of activity, propose and/or approve external relationships and approve the budget framework. It may be desirable for each Councilor to be assigned a portfolio of activities for which they would be the conduits to Executive Council (e.g. Interest Groups). The Commission believes this infrastructure model will create an Executive Council that should have more time to focus on policy development and resource allocation.

The Councilors will be the prime stewards of the Association as a whole as they will be elected by and represent all members, rather than sit as delegates of a specific sector or area. Diligent and evenhanded efforts will be essential to the winning of the trust and support of all members.

Their efforts should focus on making the most effective decisions for the Association and the larger library community. The Commission believes the increase in the number of at-large councilors could ensure a more diverse Executive Council.

C.2 Divisions and Interest Groups

We believe divisions should continue to exist as a vehicle for major membership affinities. Specific divisions should not be named in the Constitution and By-Laws as their number, names and focus may change from time to time as the membership may require. The divisions should be constitutionally unbundled from governance of the Association as a whole. Given the funding changes proposed below, divisions will have the unhindered potential to benefit from membership growth and increased program development. Some divisions may fail. Some new divisions may come into being in response to member needs.

In order to create capacity for CLA to focus on the areas identified by the members, there needs to be some reallocation of existing financial resources as well as the identification of new financial resources. For example, in order to be more successful in influencing public policy, the Association requires additional resources for research and lobbying.

One reallocation will be the funds that CLA now provides to its five divisions. Currently a total of between \$75,000 and \$90,000 is allocated each year to its five divisions for governance (travel and accommodation) and direct services (newsletters, awards and grants) to divisional members. Funds are currently allocated to divisions based on their activities, not their membership size. This is reflected in similar budget amounts for both the large and small CLA divisions.

Upon payment of their membership fee all CLA members now receive one divisional membership at no cost. The Commission proposes that the full amount of CLA's membership fee be used to support the core activities of the Association as identified by the membership and that a divisional fee be implemented to support divisional activities.

The Commission proposes:

- all members should pay the single basic membership fee (either personal or institutional);
- members may join any division upon paying an additional fee (similar to the \$30.00 currently assessed for second and subsequent divisions);
- the current policy of one free division should be discontinued;
- divisions should be funded by the divisional dues remitted by members, less an appropriate administrative fee as determined by Council, for CLA support of divisional initiatives and programs (e.g. election administration, membership drives, web site hosting)
- divisions should be permitted to establish divisional fees as they see fit;
- basic membership fee income will be allocated primarily to strategic initiatives and related overheads;
- Executive Council may wish to review the size of the basic membership fee in light of these changes

The funds that divisions would receive under this structure will be based upon their membership size. The Commission believes that divisions should have a minimum size, possibly 300-400

members in order to have sufficient funds to be viable as fairly freestanding organizations. This may vary if a larger divisional fee is established.

Divisions should determine their own budgets and expenditures and identify possible revenue streams, such as the sponsorship of CE programs. CLA core funding should continue to support divisional membership drives, continuing education initiatives, the infrastructure for divisional communications (e.g. hosting web sites), and basic administration.

Groups who have not yet achieved that number of members should avail themselves of the existing interest group mechanism which should continue as a most productive grass roots way to bring together the many facets of library and information activity. Executive Council has expended some effort over the past two years to work with some 24 interest groups to ensure that they are active and providing services to members. CLA Interest group members pay a \$15.00 fee in addition to the regular Association fee. This should not change.

C.3 Name Change

It has been reasonably argued that a name change would be an appropriate way to reflect the evolving nature of the Canadian Library Association. In the opinion of the Commission, any debate on such a change would be divisive and unproductive, deflecting attention and energy from critical discussions on the fundamental nature of the Association and its strategic initiatives.

While we agree that a name change will probably be appropriate at some point, any consideration of a change of name should be deferred until renaming would be a reflection of real change in the character of the Association.

C.4 CLA Office and Staffing

Changes in the focus and structure of CLA will also require changes in the complement and focus of CLA's staff. Broad changes are needed that will allow the office to become more agile and more readily able to respond to the needs of the Executive Council and the members of the Association. Contractual staff may best address many time-focused activities and some routines.

Having identified the need for change only at the broadest levels, the Commission recommends that a thorough analysis of the CLA Office's financial and human resources be undertaken once the Association and the Executive Council establish new directions. An orderly plan for change should minimize the impact on staff as well as impact on the Association and the costs of change.

Conclusion

This Commission is about fundamental change in our Association, uncomfortable change, "deep in your heart" change. The Commission believes that the status quo is not an option. CLA has a demonstrated historical ability to embrace change. We have confidence in the courage of the Association's elected representatives to move beyond maintenance of an organization to shape a vibrant and responsive Association.

The Commission's recommendations are based on what the members have identified as the right focus for the Association. They are intended to increase the level of satisfaction of current members as well as making the Association a "must join" for every active member of the Canadian library and information professions.

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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1 (CLA Focus):

CLA should redirect its energies to:

- 1.1 develop and promote policy positions on national issues of importance to the library community;
- 1.1 represent the library communities to the federal government and promote policy positions as appropriate;
- 1.2 foster ongoing working relationships with other national associations which share common values and concerns;
- 1.3 provide a vehicle whereby individuals, institutions, regional and provincial associations can support and participate in national policy development and promotion;
- 1.4 seek ways to better represent the library and information profession to employers, the public, the media and government.

Recommendation 2 (Relationships with other Library Associations):

- 2.1 CLA should seek new partnerships and opportunities with Canadian national associations in areas of common interest.
- 2.2 CLA should seek to work with Canada's other library and information associations to create an ongoing national forum on library and information issues, to share resources and ideas with willing associations of all kinds in order to collaboratively produce a national voice for libraries in Canada.

Recommendation 3 (Official Languages):

- 3.1 All CLA policy documents and related publicity should appear in both official languages.
- 3.2 Both official languages should be operative in the proposed national forum efforts.

Recommendation 4 (Relationship with ASTED):

- 4.1 CLA Executive Council should seek renewed and increased cooperation with ASTED on matters of Canada-wide interest.

Recommendation 5 (Professional Services):

CLA should continue to undertake the following professional services on behalf of the profession as a whole in Canada:

- 5.1 a program of publishing and publication distribution which addresses the interests and concerns of the library community and which fosters relevant research;
- 5.2 sponsorship of accreditation of various types of library education programs;
- 5.3 productive relationships with cognate associations in other countries.

Recommendation 6 (Continuing Education Partnerships):

- 6.1 The Association should work diligently to develop effective partnering relationships with provincial, regional and sectoral associations and organizations to deliver relevant, affordable and accessible continuing education opportunities to their memberships as well as interested non-members.

Recommendation 7 (Continuing Education Support):

- 7.1 CLA, through its staff, should take responsibility for encouraging and coordinating CE partnership opportunities that have been identified as a benefit its members. The Association should offer to assist with administration, development and promotion of CE events with whatever partners are most appropriate and willing.

Recommendation 8 (Conference):

- 8.1 CLA should continue to organize an annual conference as a major activity;
- 8.2 The CLA Conference should shift its major focus from CE to an issue-based program organized around issue streams.
- 8.3 Those educational sessions that are offered at a Conference be broader in nature and be designed to inform the policy development work of the Association.
- 8.4 The existing planning mechanisms anchored in Divisional and Interest Group input and direction should be modified to assure the shift of focus.

Recommendation 9 (Conference Location):

- 9.1 The conference should meet every second year in Ottawa, beginning in 2004.
- 9.2 In the alternate years, it is recommended that the Association examine two options:
 - mounting of a full conference in cities around the country either individually or jointly with another library association; or
 - offering a one day CLA component or add on to willing provincial or regional conferences
- 9.3 Planning for any form of conference should provide opportunities for non-attenders to benefit either through interactive web-casting from the conference or post-conference repeats of presentations in other communities.

Recommendation 10 (Membership Feedback and Involvement):

- 10.1 The Association should establish regular and reliable mechanisms for gathering ongoing membership feedback and to enhance information flow, both from the Association to its members and from the membership to the Association leadership.
Specifically:
- 10.2 There should be continued development, improvement and distribution of a published newsletter (*Feliciter*).
- 10.3 The CLA web page should be enhanced as an electronic presence to allow for the interactive exchange of information, frequent electronic polling and targeted information distribution.
- 10.4 Regular focus groups should be instituted across Canada to receive input and feedback from the membership.
- 10.5 A formal consultative mechanism, open to all CLA members, should be established to enhance communication to and from all members and accountability for the Executive Council, possibly in the context of local, provincial and regional association gatherings
- 10.6 The Association should continue development and distribution of tool kits relating to CE and policy development programs to interested members

Recommendation 11 (Leadership and Career Development):

- 11.1 The Association should seek to develop, license, and deliver leadership and career development programs.

Recommendation 12 (Networking and Involvement Opportunities):

- 12.1 Utilizing interactive technology and regional partnerships, the Association should work to provide a range of opportunities for CLA members to network with other members and to play an active role in the Association.

Recommendation 13 (Executive Council Membership):

- 13.1 The Executive Council should consist of three officers (President, Vice President/President-elect, and Treasurer), six Councilors-at-large and the Executive Director (*ex-officio*) non-voting.

Recommendation 14 (Executive Council Duties):

- 14.1 The Executive Council should regularly consult with the whole membership, establish policy, approve programs of activity, propose and/or approve external relationships and approve the budget framework. Efforts should focus on making the most effective decisions for the Association and the larger library community.

Recommendation 15 (Divisions):

- 15.1 Divisions should continue to exist as a vehicle for major membership affinities
- 15.2 Specific divisions should not be named in the Constitution and By-laws
- 15.3 Divisions should be constitutionally unbundled from governance of the Association as a whole.

Specifically:

- 15.4 All members should pay the single basic membership fee (either personal or institutional)
- 15.5 Members may join any division upon paying an additional fee of at least \$30.00 for each division.
- 15.6 The current policy of one free division should be discontinued.
- 15.7 Divisions should be funded by the divisional dues remitted by members, less an appropriate administrative fee as determined by Council, for CLA support of divisional initiatives and programs (e.g. election administration, membership drives, web site hosting).
- 15.8 Divisions should be permitted to establish divisional fees as they see fit.
- 15.9 Basic membership fee income will be allocated primarily to strategic initiatives and related overheads
- 15.10 Executive Council may wish to review the size of the basic membership fee in light of these changes

Recommendation 16 (Interest Groups):

- 16.1 Existing interest group mechanism should continue as a the most productive grass roots way to bring together the many facets of library and information activity.
- 16.2 Interest Group fees should remain unchanged at this time.

Recommendation 17 (Change of Name of the Association):

- 17.1 Any consideration of a change of name of the Association should be deferred until renaming would be a reflection of real change in the character of the Association.

Recommendation 18 (CLA Office and Staffing):

- 18.1 A thorough analysis of the CLA Office's financial and human resources should be undertaken once directions are established by the Association and the Executive Council.
- 18.2 An orderly plan for change should be established to minimize the impact on staff as well as impact on the Association and the costs of change.