

NATIONAL COMMISSION ON LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

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The National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) was created in 1970 by PL 91-345 with the charge to appraise the adequacies and deficiencies of current library/information service; study library/information needs and analyze the means by which these needs may be met; promote research and development activities to improve library and information services; develop overall plans for meeting library/information needs of the nation; advise all levels of government and private agencies on library and information sciences; and advise the president and Congress on the implementation of national information policy.

NATIONAL PROGRAM

During the early years, NCLIS concentrated on carefully identifying the problems and then developing a national program to provide a framework for meeting the current and foreseeable information requirements of the nation's citizens. While there were some studies commissioned, from the outset NCLIS emphasized communication with everyone concerned with the problems. At hearings held in all corners of the country, at professional meetings of both providers and users of information, in voluminous correspondence, in discussions with librarians and legislators, with scholars and schoolchildren, with technologists and teachers, with citizens from every walk of life, the commissioners and staff obtained input for and reaction to the developing program. In mid-1975, NCLIS published its National Program Document, *Toward a National Program for Library and Information Services: Goals for Action*. This document establishes the framework of the national program with the following objectives:

1. Ensure that basic minimums of library and information services are adequate to meet the needs of all local communities.
2. Provide adequate special services to special constituencies, including the unserved.
3. Strengthen existing statewide resources and systems.
4. Ensure basic and continuing education of personnel essential to the implementation of a national program.
5. Coordinate existing federal programs of library and information services.
6. Encourage the private sector (comprising organizations that are not directly tax supported) to become an active partner in the development of the national program.
7. Establish a locus of federal responsibility charged with implementing the national network and coordinating the national program under the policy guidance of the National Commission.
8. Plan, develop, coordinate, and implement a nationwide network of library and information service.

The commission's insistence on the broadest possible input at all stages of producing the document and its care in constructing it for publication were rewarded by almost

universal support for the principles and concept of the program, as evidenced by the almost immediate endorsement of the program document by the major library and information science professional associations. With community support assured, the commission could begin its next task—implementing the National Program.

Implementation, of course, is an evolutionary process that will take many, many years. With its very limited resources, the commission relies heavily on assistance from the entire library and information science community, especially as participants on the many task forces and advisory committees reporting to the commission. The steady progress of the commission toward implementation of the National Program has been noted in previous editions of the *Annual*. This article mentions some of the work conducted during the immediate past year and gives some idea of the directions in which the commission is likely to move during 1979.

PUBLICATIONS

Four publications of particular interest were produced during 1978. Two of these dealt directly with standards, while a third dealt with the role of school libraries and the fourth investigated problems surrounding access and use of nonprint materials.

The first publication, entitled *American National Standards Committee Z39: Recommended Future Directions*, takes a careful look at our present mechanisms for developing voluntary standards in the area of library work. The report is the product of deliberations of a task force jointly sponsored by NCLIS and the National Science Foundation. The ANSI Z39 Committee has been an important focus for the creation and adoption of standards pertaining to library work, documentation, and related publishing practices since its inception in 1939. Yet the effort has depended for its existence on the patience and goodwill of a few individuals who have contributed their time and enthusiasm to this cause. The report makes a number of recommendations to ensure a stable future for this standard-making activity. In general, it sets out the requirements for a planned and carefully managed approach toward standard development. The report recommends an expansion of the scope of the committee, discusses organizational alternatives, appropriate membership, possible sites for a secretariat, and the all-important question of funding. Without appropriate funding, the committee cannot hope to take an aggressive posture toward developing the many standards so vitally necessary to the library and information science community.

A second report, *A Computer Network Protocol for Library and Information Science Applications*, is an example of an evolving standard in draft form. The report contains recommended procedures for computer-to-computer transmission of information in a nationwide library bibliographic network. It outlines methods for ensuring efficient and accurate communication regardless of differences in computer architecture or operating systems. As such, the report represents the clearing away of a major time-consuming technical roadblock that would otherwise impede the establishment of a coherent nationwide library network. The document also points to several areas that need further investigation. Among these are provision for the orderly growth and extension of the protocol, a "registry" of conventions regarding its use, and further research into standards for message content. The report also recommends that some means be sought for testing the concepts contained in the protocol in a realistic environment. Subsequent work at the Library of Congress has helped clarify this concept and prepare an implementation plan during the past year.

The third publication is entitled *The Role of the School Library Media Program in Networking*. This, too, is a task force report and it deals with the potential role of school

libraries as they relate to the many other initiatives in nationwide networking. The report recognizes the essential part that school libraries can play in a nationwide resource-sharing network. In this way, young people will have a full opportunity to gain exposure to the variety of information resources they will need in their later life. The document establishes the rationale for inclusion of the school library media program in networking endeavors, analyzes the contributions school libraries can make, studies the benefits of users, touches on inherent problems, and finally makes a number of recommendations targeted toward agencies and specific group actions.

A fourth report, approved by the commission and to be published in 1979, is entitled "Project Media Base: Bibliographic Control of Audio-Visual Resources." This report is the result of a special study project sponsored by the commission, and it assesses the need for better access to bibliographic information relating to nonprint media. Within the library community much emphasis has been placed on bibliographic control of printed material. Curiously, relatively less attention has been given to document delivery. With regard to audiovisual material, the situation has been quite the reverse. Primary emphasis has been placed on utilization and access of materials themselves while relatively little attention has been given to establishing bibliographic control. This document explores attitudinal problems as well as operational impediments that prevent incorporating bibliographic data relating to audiovisual materials into ongoing network activities. The study found that most of the elements necessary to build successful bibliographic network for audiovisual materials are already in place. The report emphasizes the use of recognized cataloging standards and suggests that a further study should be initiated, touching on overall economic and management questions and integration with larger networking efforts.

PLANS FOR 1979

During 1979, several activities will occupy the attention of the commission. Perhaps the most significant of these will be the White House Conference on Library and Information Services. The conference provides a significant opportunity for the library and information science communities to formulate anew their direction and to pinpoint needed policy alternatives. The commission is responsible for managing the Conference. [See the article immediately following this one for details on preparations being made for the Conference—*Ed.*]

NCLIS will also be involved in follow-up activity relating to recommendations of its earlier task force on access to periodicals. During 1978, the Council on Library Resources produced a technical development plan for a National Periodicals Center. Although the work was performed at the request of the Library of Congress, it was written in a general enough way that any agency or organization could assume responsibility for the center. NCLIS has established an advisory committee for the National Periodicals System. Among other things, this committee will consider this technical development plan as it formulates its own advice to the commission on this important subject.

The commission will continue its sponsorship of an authority file study conducted by the Network Development Office at the Library of Congress. This study is investigating problems surrounding authority control in a distributed data base.

Several new task forces are scheduled to begin work in 1979. The first of these is a task force on public/private sector relations, which, among other things, will explore the delicate and sometimes fragile interaction between the federal government and the private sector as it relates to information dissemination practices. Another task force, on international relations, will look at international issues such as transborder data flow

and international bibliographic standards. A third task force expected to be active during the year will be on access to monographs. The work of this task force will parallel work done by the previous task force on access to periodicals, and will scrutinize the kinds of access mechanisms that might be deployed to make access to monographic material more efficient and reliable.

In addition to these very direct responsibilities, the commission will be engaged at the policy level in a great number of information-related areas as they arise. Some topics that are sure to gain the commission's attention during the coming year are plans for the five-year review of the Copyright Act of 1976, the rewrite of the Communications Act of 1934, and revision of Title 44 of the United States Code, which establishes federal government printing policy and controls the depository library system.

To the extent that limited resources permit, NCLIS will, with the help of the rest of the library/information community, do what it can to maintain a steady pace toward the ideal stated in its National Program Document: "To eventually provide every individual in the United States with equal opportunity of access to that part of the total information resource which will satisfy the individual's educational, working, cultural and leisure-time needs and interests, regardless of the individual's location, social or physical condition or level of intellectual achievement."

PREPARATION FOR THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES (WHCOLIS)

Mary Power

National Commission on Libraries and Information Science

The first White House Conference on Library and Information Services will take place in the nation's capital October 28–November 1, 1979. The idea for such a conference was introduced in 1957 to the American Library Trustee Association, a division of the American Library Association, by library trustee Channing Bete of Greenfield, Massachusetts. President Gerald R. Ford called the White House Conference on Library and Information Services during the 1976 Centennial Conference of the American Library Association, noting that:

The challenge confronting those who provide information services to the public is one of harnessing modern technology. Telecommunications, computers and micrographics must be further employed to reduce the cost of making information more widely accessible and improving the speed and accuracy with which source material can be supplied. The librarian of today's space age serves a profession and a public more demanding and exacting than ever before.

President Ford signed PL 93-568 authorizing the conference on December 31, 1974. The National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS), a permanent, independent federal agency, was charged with the responsibility for conducting the conference. A 28-member advisory committee was appointed to assist the commission, and in May 1977, President Jimmy Carter signed the FY 1977 Supplemental Budget Request that provided an appropriation of \$3.5 million for the conference. A small program and planning staff was hired and work was begun in September 1977. The

encouragement of four presidents, together with the hard work and planning of the professional community, were at last to make this conference a reality.

As mandated by Congress in the law, the primary goal of the White House Conference on Library and Information Services is “. . . to develop recommendations for the further improvement of the Nation’s libraries and information centers and their use by the public,” in accordance with the following basic assumptions:

1. Access to information and ideas is indispensable to the development of human potential, the advancement of civilization, and the continuance of enlightened self-government.
2. The preservation and dissemination of information and ideas are the primary purpose and function of libraries and information centers.
3. The growth and augmentation of the nation’s libraries and information centers are essential if all Americans are to have reasonable access to adequate services of libraries and information centers.
4. New achievements in technology offer a potential for enabling libraries and information centers to serve the public more fully, expeditiously, and economically.
5. Maximum realization of the potential inherent in the use of advanced technology by libraries and information centers requires cooperation through planning for, and coordination of, the services of libraries and information centers.
6. The National Commission on Libraries and Information Science is developing plans for meeting national needs for library and information services and for coordinating activities to meet those needs.

To accomplish the goal of the White House Conference, the law provides for a pre-White House Conference to be held in each state and territory of the United States, thereby ensuring maximum grassroots input. Further, two-thirds of the participants at both the state/territorial meetings and at the national conference must be library users and potential users—lay citizens—with the remaining one-third composed of library and information specialists. Using a formula based upon their respective congressional delegations, the states and territories will send a total of 568 official delegates and 238 alternates to the national conference; NCLIS will appoint an additional 105 national delegates at-large and 150 nonvoting delegates to participate. In addition, the NCLIS commissioners and the White House Conference Advisory Committee will be in attendance.

The White House Conference on Library and Information Services can thus be described as a “national town meeting.” Representative citizens will gather to focus on their library and information service needs in order to develop feasible and achievable recommendations to improve the nation’s libraries and information services in the light of today’s needs and potential future needs in our complex society. The conference will deepen public understanding of how libraries and information services can better serve the nation as well as meet the expectations of Congress by setting goals and recommending policy direction for the 1980s.

The state and territorial pre-White House Conferences began in September 1977, and are scheduled for completion by April 30, 1979. The state and territorial library agencies are charged with the responsibility of planning and conducting these preconferences with the assistance of program and planning consultants from the National Conference staff. Based upon the size of its population, each state and territory is eligible for a grant ranging between \$13,750 and \$25,000. To receive its grant, the state/territory must file a letter of intent with NCLIS and submit a grant application guaranteeing additional funds from 45 to 60 percent of the total preconference cost.

Each state and territory was asked to address the concepts detailed in the document *Toward a National Program for Library and Information Services: Goals for Action*, published in 1975 by NCLIS. In addition, they were asked to use their five-year, long-range plan, required under the Library Services and Construction Act, for consideration of their respective user needs. Together, these documents allow citizens to assess their state's information needs and resources and provide a common framework of preparation and uniform reporting for the national conference agenda.

Thirty-seven of the pre-White House Conferences have been completed at this writing. It is generally felt by the states and territories, as well as by the White House Conference staff, that the preconferences are generating a high level of awareness and concern for the future of libraries and information services at the state and local levels. For example, the preconferences have been responsible, in whole or in part, for the passage of a \$4.3 million supplemental appropriation for library services in New York; a legislative override of a reduction of funding in Illinois; the restoration of funds for bookmobile services in the District of Columbia; and pledges of improved legislation and expanded or additional funding for library services by the governors of Arkansas, Louisiana, West Virginia, Montana, North Dakota, and Alabama. These actions constitute significant steps toward improving the participation of the states in providing the balanced library support recommended by NCLIS, and thus contribute to the development of a national program for library and information service.

Although a detailed enumeration and analysis of issues and recommendations emanating from the state/territorial pre-White House Conferences cannot be completed until all the preconferences have been held, some recurring issues that have been identified are funding at the local, state, and federal levels; structure and governance of a national library and information service network; legislation at the state and federal levels; functional illiteracy; services to the handicapped and institutionalized; and problems of access, such as copyright, fees, and resource sharing.

To provide additional input on national issues and concerns, a series of theme conferences is being conducted. The first of this series was a two-part conference on funding, sponsored by NCLIS and held in June and September 1978. A conference on governance for a nationwide library and information network was held in November 1978, cosponsored by the University of Pittsburgh School of Graduate Library and Information Science and NCLIS. A conference on Libraries and Literacy, sponsored by NCLIS and scheduled to take place in April 1979, will complete the series.

As still another source of input for the national conference, NCLIS has invited professional associations in the library and information services fields and special constituency groups to identify issues and concerns. At this writing, several groups have undertaken the writing of background and issue papers for consideration by the national conference delegates. Concerns, issues, and recommendations emanating from the theme conferences and association papers will be analyzed in much the same way as the state/territorial recommendations and will serve as input to the national conference agenda.

A major effort has been made to ensure that delegates to the state/territorial pre-conferences and to the national conference are thoroughly prepared to participate effectively. To accomplish this end, a number of materials have been prepared and distributed to the states, such as a brochure highlighting the conference, a "Fact Sheet" and a "Chronology" about the White House Conference, two booklets written for a lay audience discussing the resource needs and funding questions; a popular "Overview" of the NCLIS program document; and two sound filmstrip presentations detailing the NCLIS program and the White House Conference process.

Toward the end of 1978, the national conference staff was concentrating on the

completion of the 20 remaining state and territorial conferences and at the same time beginning to direct its attention to the detailed planning for the national conference. This included the acceleration of public information activities, design of a special delegate newsletter entitled *WHC Update*, and the development of plans for delegate orientation.

Now as the final months of planning approach, attention will be on the expectations for the White House Conference on Library and Information Services as expressed by President Carter:

This conference should be the culmination of an extensive process of citizen involvement in library policy-making making its beginning at the grassroots. Through preliminary conferences in each of the states, the local citizenry can take a close look at their libraries and decide whether perhaps there are overlapping roles and responsibilities of public libraries, new services needed, or other changes that need to be made.

These are decisions that must be approved at the state and local levels by an informed and knowledgeable citizenry. The White House Conference process will help to develop a public knowledge about alternative ways of providing good library service and it will help create public support for libraries. Results from the state conferences can be pooled at the White House Conference. We will then have a sound foundation upon which to devise complementary local, state, and federal plans for library and information services in the decade ahead.

STATE AND TERRITORIAL CONFERENCES PRECEDING THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES (WHCOLIS)

<i>State/ Territory</i>	<i>Conference Dates</i>	<i>NCLIS Staff Liaison</i>	<i>State Liaison and Telephone Number</i>
AL	1/07/79-1/09/79	Heather Nicoll	*Anthony Miele, (205) 832-5743
AK	2/79	Richard Akeroyd	Margaret Leibowitz, (907) 465-2910
AZ	11/29/78-12/01/78	Kevin Flaherty	Edith Hart, (602) 271-5841
AR	11/15/78-11/17/78	Ronald Linehan	*Frances Nix, (501) 371-1524
CA	3/02/79-3/04/79	Kevin Flaherty	Gail McGovern, (916) 445-4730
CO	4/20/79-4/22/79	Ruth L. Tighe	Sylvia J. Kornelsen, (303) 839-2174
CT	12/06/78-12/08/78	Ruth L. Tighe	Ernest A. DiMattia, Jr., (203) 325-4354
DE	10/19/78-10/21/78	Jean-Anne South	Janet Taulane, (302) 678-4748
DC	9/28/78-9/30/78	Ruth L. Tighe	Virginia Phillips, (202) 727-1101
FL	11/15/78-11/17/78	Richard Akeroyd	Barbara Cooper, (305) 564-4093 *Barratt Wilkins, (904) 487-2651
GA	9/15/77-9/16/77	A. F. Trezza	Elizabeth Cole, (404) 656-2461
HI	6/11/78-6/13/78	Jean-Anne South	*Ruth Itamura (808) 548-2430
ID	4/09/78-4/11/78	Richard Akeroyd	*Helen M. Miller, (208) 384-2150
IL	11/12/78-11/14/78	Jean-Anne South	Jean Jose, (317) 633-5441 *Barry L. Porter, (515) 281-4105
IN	8/11/78-8/13/78	Jean-Anne South	*Ernestine Gilliland, (913) 296-3259
IA	3/27/79-3/29/79	Kevin Flaherty	Barbara Pospisil, (502) 564-7910
KS	3/14/79-3/16/79	Heather Nicoll	M. L. Lynch, (504) 342-4923
KY	3/18/79-3/20/79	Jean-Anne South	Barbara Pospisil, (502) 564-7910
LA	9/27/78-9/29/78	Jean-Anne South	M. L. Lynch, (504) 342-4923
ME	4/17/79-4/19/79	Heather Nicoll	Caroline Nolin, (207) 289-3328
MD	10/12/78-10/14/78	Jean-Anne South	J. Maurice Travillian, (301) 796-8300

STATE AND TERRITORIAL CONFERENCES PRECEDING THE WHITE HOUSE
 CONFERENCE ON LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES
 (WHCOLIS) (cont.)

<i>State/ Territory</i>	<i>Conference Dates</i>	<i>NCLIS Staff Liaison</i>	<i>State Liaison and Telephone Number</i>
MA	4/26/78-4/27/78	Kevin Flaherty	Sandra Waddock, (617) 267-9400
MI	3/27/79-3/28/79	Heather Nicoll	Elizabeth Lindsey, (517) 373-1574
MN	9/10/78-9/12/78	Kevin Flaherty	Grieg Aspnes, (612) 296-2821
MS	2/25/79-2/27/79	Heather Nicoll	Madel Morgan, (601) 354-6369
MO	11/29/78-12/01/78	Kevin Flaherty	Susanna Alexander, (314) 751-2751
MT	10/06/78-10/08/78	Ronald Linehan	Marsha Greenwood, (406) 449-3004
NE	4/26/79-4/28/79	Ronald Linehan	*John Kopischke, (402) 471-2045
NV	11/26/78-11/28/78	Heather Nicoll	Harold H. J. Erickson, (702) 739-3286
NH	9/21/78-9/23/78	Heather Nicoll	*Avis Duckworth, (603) 271-2392
NJ	4/01/79-4/03/79	Ruth L. Tighe	Henry J. Michniewski, (609) 292-6237
NM	11/12/78-11/14/78	Ronald Linehan	Paul Agriesti, (505) 827-2033
NY	6/05/78-6/07/78	Mary R. Power	*Joseph F. Shubert, (518) 474-5930 Esther Swanker, (518) 474-3498
NC	10/19/78-10/21/78	Richard Akeroyd	*David N. McKay, (919) 733-2570
ND	9/28/78-9/30/78	Jean-Anne South	Dina Butcher, (701) 852-4980/838-8806
OH	9/20/78-9/22/78	Richard Akeroyd	Diana M. Cohen, (614) 466-2693
OK	4/30/78-5/02/78	Heather Nicoll	Marilyn L. Vesely, (405) 521-2502
OR	6/01/78-6/03/78	Richard Akeroyd	*Marcia Lowell, (503) 378-4367
PA	10/31/77-11/01/77	A. F. Trezza	*Patricia Broderick, (717) 787-2646
RI	4/06/79-4/08/79	Kevin Flaherty	*Jewel Drickamer, (401) 277-2726
SC	3/15/79-3/17/79	Ronald Linehan	Betty E. Callahan, (803) 758-3181
SD	None scheduled.	Kevin Flaherty	*Herschel V. Anderson, (605) 224-3131
TN	11/19/78-11/21/78	Richard Akeroyd	*Katheryn C. Culbertson, (615) 741-2451
TX	11/16/78-11/18/78	Ronald Linehan	Sydelle Popinsky, (512) 475-4119
UT	4/09/79-4/11/79	Ronald Linehan	*Russell L. Davis, (801) 533-5875
VT	4/26/79-4/27/79	Richard Akeroyd	Sally B. Roberts, (802) 828-3261
VA	3/29/79-3/31/79	Kevin Flaherty	Suzanne Shook, (804) 786-2332
WA	4/23/79-4/25/79	Heather Nicoll	*Roderick G. Swartz, (206) 753-2915
WV	10/12/78-10/15/78	Kevin Flaherty	*Frederic J. Glazer, (304) 348-2041
WI	9/17/78-9/19/78	Richard Akeroyd	Gretchen M. Farwell, (608) 266-9534
WY	4/04/79-4/07/79	Jean-Anne South	*Wayne Johnson, (307) 777-7281
Am. Samoa	3/21/78-3/23/78	Ruth L. Tighe	*Linette A. Hunter, 633-5869 (overseas op.)
GU	11/30/78-12/02/78	Ruth L. Tighe	*Magdalena S. Taitano, 472-6417 (overseas op.)
N. Mariana Is.	12/05/78-12/07/78	Ruth L. Tighe	*Augustine C. Castro, 9823 (overseas op.)
PR	4/17/79-4/19/79	Ronald Linehan	Carmencita Leon, (809) 766-2652
Trust Terr.	12/10/78-12/12/78	Ruth L. Tighe	*Daniel J. Peacock, 9448 (overseas op.)
VI	9/29/78-9/30/78	Jean-Anne South	*Henry C. Chang, (809) 936-8441, X288
U.S. Indians	10/20/78-10/22/78	Ronald Linehan	*Mary A. Huffer Virginia H. Mathews, (202) 343-5821

*Liaisons are also state library heads.