

Notes on Meeting  
Steering Committee for the Survey of State Library Agencies  
March 20, 1996

The Steering Committee for the Survey of State Library Agencies met on Wednesday, March 20, 1996, at the DoubleTree Hotel in Arlington, Virginia. Present were: Adrienne Chute (NCES), Mary Alice Hedge (NCLIS), Elaine Kroe (NCES), Keith Lance (Contractor), Libby Law (South Carolina State Library), John Lorenz (NCLIS), Mary Jo Lynch (ALA), Gerry Rowland (State Library of Iowa), Joseph F. Shubert (New York State Library and chair of the Advisory Committee), Ellen Thompson (Bureau of the Census Governments Division), and M. Clare Zales (State Library of Pennsylvania).

Unable to be present were Leslie Burger (ASCLA), Thomas F. Jaques (Louisiana State Library), Roslyn Korb (NCES Postsecondary and Library Surveys), Carrol Kindel (NCES Institutional Records Operation), and Barratt Wilkins (State Library of Florida), and Peter Young (NCLIS).

In introductions, each participant indicated her or his (1) connection with the 1994 State Library Agencies Survey (StLA); (2) opportunity to examine the draft report; (3) reactions or feedback obtained from Chief Officers or others who have examined the report; (4) connection with the 1995 Survey now underway; and (5) anticipated connection with the StLA Survey in 1996 and 1997.

Few participants had reviewed the data in the draft report or had encountered feedback from others.

#### The 1995 Survey

Ms. Kroe and Ms. Thompson reported on the status of the 1995 Survey. The disk and materials were sent to State Library Agencies in October 1995. About 40 states have submitted data. Census is following up with the other states.

#### The 1994 Survey

Ms. Kroe said that the draft 1994 report will be adjudicated on April 2. The data will be available online in April.

Discussion continued on reactions to the draft report. Mr. Shubert quoted one Chief Officer as having called it "extremely useful" and having written:

I held a legislative planning session last week using some of the tables, and I'm using others this week with state budget office staff to justify requests for increases..."

Mr. Shubert also commented that, overall, the draft reflects success in meeting the expectations outlined by the Committee in 1993 (see *Brief Information about the Survey of State Library Agencies, August 27, 1993*, subsequently referred to as "prospectus" in these Notes). Mr. Lorenz will provide copies of the 1993 prospectus to all members of the Committee with the notes from this meeting.

#### Discussion of Data in the Draft 1994 Report

Since most members did not have the penultimate draft which will be used for the adjudication, Ms. Lynch, Ms. Kroe, and Mr. Lance read the brief highlights from that draft. The draft also includes an introduction.

Initial discussion centered on **Hawaii and District of Columbia (DC)** data. Ms. Kroe and Mr. Lance reported on difficulties in clarifying for those respondents what data are needed that will not duplicate FSCS public library data. Mr. Lance and Ms. Lynch recommended that Hawaii and DC be dropped from the Survey. However, it appears that all NCES surveys include DC and the 50 states. The 1993 prospectus proposed inclusion of appropriate DC data.

The Committee agreed that StLA data should not duplicate the FSCS public library data and that NCES should take one or more of the following steps to avoid duplication:

- (1) develop instructions that will help them distinguish between (a) their public library services data and (b) their services as state library agencies, including administration of Title III and service to other types of libraries.
- (2) provide more extensive footnote information for these two agencies as needed, including a "see the Public Library data Ed Tab" reference.
- (3) omit Hawaii and DC data from the StLA Survey, explain why they are omitted, and provide a reference to Public Library data Ed Tab note.

The Committee discussed what seem to be inconsistency and discrepancies in reporting on "**allied operations**" information, the need for clarifying the reference to "the State Library budget" in the definition for question 22, and in the footnote to Table 26.

Mr. Lance suggested deletion of the allied operations data since it constitutes only three percent of the total expenditure. However, expenditures for "allied operations" in the 10 states that operate archives or major institutions such as museums are significant when making comparisons among the states. Note also the discussion of this in the 1993 prospectus.

The Committee discussed apparent inconsistencies between identification of "**special collections**" and data supplied on size of collection. Several member of the Committee

pointed out that the individuals preparing the response may not understand the definition and in this case (and others) it would be to the advantage of the responding state to involve the data coordinator in assembling or checking the data before submission.

Discussion ensued on **process and training**. Suggestions included having a session for StLA respondents in conjunction with an FSCS training workshop, greater involvement of data coordinators, and discussion with COSLA.

The Committee returned to discussion of the **"highlights" and introduction** in the penultimate draft. Mr. Lance asked if the priority is to "get the data out" or to have carefully prepared highlights and text. Committee members had heard (but most had not seen) the highlights, and most had not seen the introduction. They affirmed the importance of both the highlights and the introduction.

The Committee emphasized that adjudication and release of the 1994 report is the highest priority. After discussion, the Committee recommended that Ms. Lynch and Mr. Lance collaborate in an article analyzing the 1994 data and, inasmuch as the data become public within the next two weeks, provide that analysis to the COSLA Research and Statistics Committee before the May 7, 1996 COSLA meeting for distribution and discussion with chief officers.

The Committee returned to discussion of the ways in which inclusion of the Hawaii and DC public library data makes it difficult to make state comparisons. The Committee recommended that the article which Ms. Lynch and Mr. Lance prepares for COSLA and publication should note but not include the public library data.

#### The 1995 Survey

The Committee discussed the presentation of data in Tables 4a-e relating to **various library customer groups**. A more compact presentation of the 1995 data might make the report more useful and reduce the number of tables. The Committee will revisit questions relating to these data.

The Committee discussed which **data change** little from year to year and might therefore be collected on a biennial or longer interval. The Committee recommended that the following be discussed at another meeting:

- Expenditures by source
- Staff ethnicity
- Combined libraries
- Expenditures for national education goals
- Detail on LSCA (inasmuch as the Library Programs Office establishes allotments and collects certain expenditure data).

Ms. Kroe explained that OMB has given three-year (94-95-96) clearance for the Survey and that it would be advisable not to make changes in the 1996 survey, but wait for the 1997 survey.

Continued Discussion for Advice to NCES and 1996 and Beyond

The Committee recommends that the Committee and staff meet in Fall 1996 to continue these discussions of the 1994 data and what then may be known about the 1995 data and that the Committee also meet in Spring 1997 to advise on preparations for the Survey of 1997 data. The Spring 1997 meeting might be held in conjunction with the FSCS training workshop for Data Coordinators or other state agency staff members who assemble information and prepare the StLA survey data.

The next meeting of the Committee will be the morning of Tuesday, September 17, 1996, prior to the start of the September 17-19 meeting of the FSCS Steering Committee.

Attachments:

Prospectus (*Brief Information about the Survey of State Library Agencies, August 27, 1993*)

Committee Roster, March 1996

Charge to the Committee (October 2, 1992)