

Results of the CALL Survey on the Future of the National Union Catalogue

In 2012, Library and Archives Canada established a consultation group representing various library associations across Canada to critically examine the future of the National Union Catalogue and determine its role in the Canadian context. CALL/ACBD was invited to participate in the consultations.

“The [Canadian Association of Law Libraries](#) (CALL) is dedicated to promoting the networking, professional development and career growth of all law librarians in Canada, no matter where they work. For fifty years, CALL has represented, supported and advanced the legal information profession in Canada. CALL is here to represent you, your professional interests, concerns and aspirations.”

In order to better represent the needs and position of the CALL membership during the consultations, a survey was developed and sent to the CALL membership via the CALL-L listserv on January 25, 2013 with the following message:

Library and Archives Canada (LAC) is holding consultations with library associations across Canada in order to plan for the future of the National Union Catalogue (NUC). CALL is one of the library associations involved in these series of consultations. Our association includes a diverse law library community across Canada. In order to better represent the needs and position of the CALL membership during these consultations, we are interested in capturing information on your use of the location and holdings information available from the NUC. Please note this is not a consultation about the LAC Catalogue (AMICUS) -- our focus is solely around the NUC.

We would greatly appreciate it if you could respond to the following survey by **Friday, February 1st, 2013**:

(link to Survey here)

Thank you,

Gail Rawlings

This survey was made available to the entire CALL membership, with a request that the responses should be limited to 1 per institution. 52 CALL members responded (47 in English, 5 in French). The association includes a diverse law library community across Canada, with the membership of approximately 450 information professionals representing academic, corporate, and private law libraries as well as libraries at Federal and other levels of government. Based on the size of the membership and the request that only 1 member per institution respond to the survey, the response rate was very good.

Respondents were asked to identify which category best identified their library by workplace type. The workplace types were drawn from the categories that CALL uses to group libraries in its membership directory. The highest response rate came from the private law libraries, Federal government libraries and academic law libraries, with the rest of the library types responding at an almost equal response rate.

Question 1. Please identify which category best identifies your library by **workplace type**

Response. (note: responses have been sorted in descending order of representation):

Private Law Library	16
Government Library – Federal	10
Academic Law Library	9
Corporate Law Library	5
Government Library – Other level of government	5
Courthouse & Law Society Law	4
Department of Justice/Attorney General Library	3
TOTAL	52

Question 2. Do you use the NUC through Amicus Web to find locations and holdings information for interlibrary loan requests (ILL)? Yes or No

Response:

Yes	41
No	8
TOTAL	49

41 of the 49 libraries responding to the survey indicated that they did use the NUC through Amicus Web for ILL requests to find locations and holdings.

Question 3. If you responded Yes to Question 2, do you:
(Check all that apply)

Response:

Use the Amicus ILL Form	19
Use ILL Protocol enabled software such as VDX or Relais or other	11
Look up holding libraries for request by other methods (email, telephone, etc.)	38
TOTAL	68

Some respondents use a variety of methods to find locations and holdings information for ILL requests, for a total of 68 responses. Comments received indicated that libraries sometimes go directly to Relais, Racer or Colombo. Other methods included telephoning other libraries directly and using the CALL-L listserv. Additional comments were the use of Amicus for developing authority files, and not having a lot of luck using the Amicus ILL form.

Question 4. If you responded No to Question 2, how do you find holdings and location information for ILL requests?

(Check all that apply)

Response:

Regional consortial network	1
OCLC WorldCat	4
Use ILL Protocol enabled software such as VDX or Relais or other via a lookup location feature through a z39.50 search	1
Other: (please specify)	3
TOTAL	9

Of those responding, the majority used OCLC WorldCat if they did not use AMICUS Web. The responses to the "Other" category included comments that the libraries searched websites, searched local university/law society catalogues or asked colleagues. An additional comment was that the library did not do ILL requests but used Amicus for research. Note: more than one response could be chosen.

Question 5. a) Does your Library contribute its holdings to the NUC?

Yes, through MARA (Machine Readable Accessions) Reporting service	2
Yes, through Update Locations on Amicus Web service	4
Yes, through MARA Reporting and Update Locations	6
No, my Library does not contribute its holdings to the NUC	32

Question 6. If your Library does NOT contribute its holdings to the NUC, why not?

Response: All 32 libraries that responded that they did **not** contribute their holdings to the NUC in Question 5 above provided comments. Many of the comments were similar and can be grouped into the following 5 categories:

- Private library. Mandate is to serve clients, not public. Collection must be available to internal clients at any time
- Holdings not unique
- Library is too small. There is not enough time or staff
- Cataloguing records are not in MARC format and/or cataloguing is not standard but meets internal needs
- Unaware of possibility of contributing holdings to NUC. Have never been asked to contribute. Previously contributed but not any longer due to managerial decision.

Question 7. If LAC moves to an external provider for NUC services, would your organization/institution subscribe to this service?

Response:

Yes	2
No	7
Uncertain. It would depend on the costing model for the service	35
TOTAL	44

Close to 80% of the respondents were uncertain about whether they would subscribe or not, depending on the costing model for the service.

Question 8. If yes, what, if anything, would make subscribing impractical?

Response:

There were 2 comments in response to this question:

- Difficulties in downloading records or restrictions placed on our library
- If the fees charged were too high

Question 9. If No or uncertain, how would you support your requirements for location and holdings information research for ILL purposes?

Response:

There were 42 comments in response to this question, representing a response from each library that either indicated No or Uncertain for Question 7 above. Many of the comments were similar and can be grouped into the following 7 categories. 40% of comments fell into the last category below, with some comments spanning several categories.

- Search catalogues of libraries available on the internet (targeted, e.g. those with law schools), Z39.50
- OCLC Worldcat
- AdvoCAT, Racer
- Local ILL listserv to email requests to local libraries or by telephone. Use CALL listserv for national requests. Use British Library of Infotrieve for international requests
- Rely on other online services, colleagues. Perhaps buy more if possible
- Go through local Courthouse library or local university law library and ask them to do search. Try to negotiate with other law libraries for access.
- Unsure what to do. Concerns about costs. Concerns that this will become difficult and/or time-consuming. Concern that this is a step backwards for service to Canadians

Question 10. If LAC moves to a cost-sharing approach to support NUC services, would your organization/institution participate?

Response:

Yes	11
No	30
TOTAL	41

Close to 73% of the respondents indicated that they would not participate in a cost-sharing approach to support NUC services.

Question 11. If Yes, what, if anything, would make participating impractical?

Response:

There were 11 comments in response to this question. 2 libraries indicated that they would either participate or would participate if enough libraries continued to add their holdings and the cost was reasonable for the service. Most of the other comments were related to the cost, time and effort that might be required, particularly if they had to submit their records.

Question 12. If No, how would you support your requirements for location and holdings information research for ILL purposes?

Response:

There were 23 comments in response to this question. Most comments were similar to those for questions 6 and 7 above, such as using other library catalogues and/or WorldCat, concerns about cost, and the possibility of not being able to offer ILL services. Additionally, two of the libraries raised the possibility of using a pay per view model if it was a reasonable cost or that a transactional model might be more cost effective for them.

Question 13. If you currently contribute location and holdings information to the NUC, would you continue?

Response:

Yes	12
No	25
TOTAL	37

The number of No responses may be misleading due to the fact that 14 of the 18 comments stated that the question was not applicable, or that the library does not currently contribute holdings, or could not be interpreted. The other 4 comments focussed on the cost-benefit aspect and affordability.

Question 14. Do you use the NUC for anything else?

Response:

Yes	19
No	18
TOTAL	37

The responses were almost evenly split between yes and No. An analysis of the 18 comments indicated that other uses for the NUC included cataloguing and classification, copy cataloguing, importing MARC records, authority work (name and subject), and research and citation verification by Reference and ILL staff,

Question 15. Other Comments.

Response:

There were 11 comments from survey respondents (1 was related to the format of the survey and is not included). The comments are from separate responders and are as follows:

- BAC fait obstacle à l'exécution de services offerts aux clientèles des bibliothèques canadiennes et étrangères en imposant les coûts de CCN aux bibliothèques. BAC se désengage de son rôle "leader" dans la communauté. Peut-être que BAC ne comprend pas que les bibliothèques auront à choisir entre les services qu'elles offrent déjà à leur clientèle et n'auront pas plus de fonds pour des nouvelles dépenses. The National Catalogue gives equal access to information for all Canadians via their public library about the holdings of various Canadian libraries (including the ability to borrow these books). There is a strong possibility that the shared funding model presented by BAC means that fewer libraries will be able to contribute and that the ability for each library to service Canadians at the same level, is inhibited by their budgets and by their institutional funders ability to understand the necessity of such a service.
- Ce service est essentiel car nous pouvons savoir rapidement ce qui existe sur un sujet et où le trouver
- The loss of ILL services through LAC is a very disturbing decision. I believe many libraries will suffer greatly by this decision by LAC. I think it is a very grave error in judgment on the part of the government.
- This is a valuable Canadian resource and I hope we don't lose it.
- Overall, we do not know what the cost or the replacement will be. Also the value of the service is dependent on participation by relevant organizations. A cost-benefit analysis would have to be made when details about service provider and costing model are available.
- Amicus is a valuable source of information. I hope that it stays on and stays current as well.
- There are very few sources that can be used for developing reliable authority files and the NUC is one of the very reliable resources.
- The NUC has become less relevant over the past few years as it does not seem to be very up-to-date. Some frequently-used libraries do not contribute their holdings anymore. Although it is nice to use as a back-up for harder to locate material.
- AMICUS is a very valuable service for small organizational libraries and it is still needed. With the increasing cost of legal publishing and not enough places to find resources, it enables the viability of small libraries to be able to acquire materials. AMICUS is a one stop resource and MUST continue!
- I don't use Amicus often, but do find it a valuable resource.