

CALL/ACBD Vendor Liaison Committee

Annual Report 2017 - 18

May 2018 – Halifax, NS

Committee Chair: Joan Rataic-Lang

Members: Annamarie Bergen, Loise Hamel, Amy Kaufman, Katherine Laundry, Michèle LeBlanc, Katherine Melville, Helen Mok and Mary-Jo Mustoe, Connie Crosby (Executive Liaison)

Activities and initiatives that the committee has completed during this past year:

The Semi-Annual Vendor Calls with LexisNexis and Thomson Reuters have proven to be a productive and efficient way of bringing CALL membership's issues to the table. They require much work in all stages, from arranging a time that everyone can participate to getting agreement on the final notes. Two meetings were held with TR, one on October 12, 2017 and one on February 14, 2018. The LN call was on November 23, 2017. That call took 2 hours because there was so much to cover.

The Vendor Open Forum's cancellation was not a decision taken lightly. In full consultation and agreement with the CALL/ACBD Board it was decided that the Vendor Calls cover all issues that might be raised at the Open Forum, and without time constraints and other issues presented by the forum. Members are encouraged to find the write-up in the Members Only section of the website.

The Committee continues to play an active role at the Conference and will provide Vendor Demo summaries on the website for those not able to attend the Conference in person.

By the time you read this the VLC Business Meeting will have been held, but when I had to submit the report, it was still an idea. Through open discussion, much like the President's roundtable at the past few Conferences we want to find out what our members want, what is the future of the VLC, how can we work cooperatively with the publishers?

Progress is being made on the formation of the CanLII Advisory Board, following the Resolution made at the Conference in May, 2106. Discussions have been held and in principle the idea has been agreed upon.

Activities and initiatives that the committee hopes to tackle for the next business year:

We will better communicate the results of Semi-Annual Vendor Calls. Membership has been great at forwarding questions/concerns/issues; however, the committee is not convinced the responses are being widely read. We will use the various platforms available to let members know when they can access this valuable information. The same can be said for the Vendor Demo summaries. Furthermore, since the discussions are only for members the reports need to be only accessible to the membership, which sometimes presents challenges for members to find them. Instructions on how to easily locate will be part of the communications.

The mandate for the Committee in part says,

- Gathering input from the membership and co-ordinating efforts to advocate, recommend and proposes solutions to our common issues that relate to vendor relationships and products,
- Monitoring trends and developments in the industry and communicate such information to the membership.

Can we interpret this more broadly? At one level we are dealing with the specific issues, can we also take a strategic view to look at where we will be in 3-5 years and how can we work with publishers in a mutually beneficial manner? The discussions from the Business Meeting will guide us in determining future activities and initiatives.

The CanLII Advisory Board will be established and operational. To continue from Activities Completed, next steps are to agree on Terms of Reference and populate the Committee.

The final item is a maybe - possibly complete a comparative analysis of Westlaw and Lexis Advance Quicklaw, depending on where the latter sits in way of completion.

Update, as of May 23.

VLC followed up on the suggestion to establish an advisory board modeled on other CALL publisher advisory boards. CALL's feedback was instrumental in the early years to provide feedback on CanLII's developments through an advisory board that was formed at the request of the Federation of Law Societies and Courthouse Library Directors. CanLII has limited staff time and funding to administer an advisory board and limited funding to implement any suggestions that might be made. CanLII is also not like other publishers as its agenda is set by its board and law societies' priorities. However, our opinions are valued. Please use the Feedback form (under Contact Us) on the CanLII website to report daily issues. For more substantial issues or suggestions, please contact Sarah Sutherland at ssutherland@canlii.org. CanLII staff has been and will be reaching out to library staff and management along with other users to assess what issues are the top priority for development with a focus on working toward equitable access for legal research in all jurisdictions in Canada. CanLII is happy to have an in person meeting at the Conference annually and will be discussing that possibility with the VLC in advance of the 2019 conference.

Respectfully submitted

Joan Rataic-Lang