Appendix E   FULL TEXT OF INDIVIDUAL COMMITTEE RESPONSES TO THE SECTION REVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE [Spring 2007]

[Approximately 13 printed pages – included for archival purposes]

1. Are the charge and description found in the MARS Handbook a correct representation of the group's purpose, responsibilities and membership? Please comment.

Achievement Recognition: Yes

MARS Best Web Sites: The description is still accurate.

Our purpose is very straightforward we find and publicize worthwhile reference web sites.
Our committee does this both through an online site and through publication in RUSQ
We are in the process of creating and revising our subject index.

Management of Electronic Resources and Services (MERS): Yes.

Local Systems and Services: There is some inconsistency between the Handbook and the charges as they appear on the MARS website. LSAS' purpose as defined in the Handbook mentions that local systems

- To maintain the Washington State Virtual Reference Tutorial, given over to ALA for maintenance

2. Has the committee established any subcommittees or similar working groups during 2002-2007? If so, do you see a potential need for any of these to become a formal committee?

Achievement Recognition: No.

MARS Best Web Sites: MARS Best Fee sites was established in 2004. Its mission is to "Develop a pilot proposal for implementation of a new area of recognition for fee-based web sites/databases, based on the research done by the MARS Best Fee-Based Websites Task Force prepare criteria for selection implement the pilot, publish the results, and report back to the Executive Committee with a plan for continuing the effort." Because electronic resources are so numerous and frequently updated, having a reliable organization point out useful and trustworthy web sites could be very useful. While there may still be problems to work out MARS Best Fee sites has a great deal of potential.

Local Systems and Services: No, there have been no subcommittees or working groups from 2002-2007.

MERS: No.

Planning: no Sub-committees or working groups have come out of the Planning Committee during this period. The Executive Committee has developed a number of Task Forces (CE and Publications, Web Site) with which the Planning Committee has been involved. There was a suggestion that the MARS Handbook updates could be handled by a separate Committee or Sub-committee of Planning, though has there may not be sufficient work to keep the Committee/Sub-committee going.

Products & Services: No.

Public Libraries: No. Committee membership is too small

UAS' purpose mentions "database searching," and their charge includes "electronic reference services and their delivery systems include but are not limited to, mediated electronic searching, end-user searching, automated systems interfaces, networks and gateways."

For Midwinter 2005, LSAS hosted a discussion forum on meta-search products. This is a topic in an area we share with UAS. Federated search is a topic that concerns access to bibliographic databases, subscription-based electronic research tools, and how patrons make use of online tools.

It is difficult to separate discussion of systems implementations from librarian ethics, user issues and behavior. This may be cause to expand or more precisely define the committee's purpose.

LSAS and Products and Services
The purpose of LSAS is to "create, collect, analyze, and disseminate information and materials on the development, implementation, and evaluation of local and locally customized systems and services in any format," and Products and Services is concern a

- RSS Cooperative Reference Service Committee ("study, promote, and support cooperative reference service")
- LAMA Measurement, Assessment, and Evaluation Section especially our current project on evaluation of VR ("matters pertaining to needs for and uses of measurement of library resources, services, and facilities,")
- LAMA Human Resources Section, ("general personnel administration information, education, techniques, theories, practices, guidance materials, and research")
- LAMA Planning & Evaluation of Library Services Committee, which is in their Library Organization and Management Section ("both the theoretical and practical aspects of planning and evaluation of library services ")
- LAMA Systems and Services Section ("study and evaluate the application of new technology in services, and the management thereof, ")
- One would expect overlap with LITA but we don't see anything obvious.

Planning: This is an administrative group with no duplication with other ALA units.
Products & Services: We have collabo

Local Systems and Services: Committee members who attend the meetings are engaged and enthusiastic, and our meetings frequently feature lively discussions and brainstorming about future activities.

Overlap with other committees' work is a concern, but in the past, we have touched base with UAS and Products and Services to make sure we do not plan similar events. There is a general satisfaction with the amount of work delegated to and created from within the committee, and members feel they have enough to accomplish.

MERS: We have been fairly productive with one major output per year. Our main focus has been on virtual reference, but since others also cover that, we could turn our attention to the management aspects of electronic resources. We have just reviewed the committee's charge, overlap with other committees, etc.

Planning: the Committee provides useful and appropriate support to MARS, particularly in assisting the Vice-Chair in developing his or her goals and responding to requests from the Executive Committee. The Committee has been very heavily involved in a major revision of the MARS Handbook and all members have been able to contribute to this project, and have, even though updates have been occurring very often throughout the past few years. We need to have good communication with Publications and the Web Coordinator. It helps to have a Publications Committee member liaison to MARS planning.

Products & Services: Level of interest has gone down in recent years the committee could certainly be more productive. It suffers from a lack of members. We are currently

Goal 6: Begin work to develop a 3-5 year plan of continuing education and publication activities to help reference personnel keep up with emerging issues and changing technologies and to provide opportunities for members to gather inf

MERS: Most members think the all-committee meeting is an improvement in general for planning our time and could make cooperation across committees easier. However, it was much noisier and harder to concentrate.

Planning: Committee members had differing views on this question. Two members thought that the all Committee meeting facilitates communication because everyone is in one place, and allows members to participate and efficiently report on activities. Also, it is more flexible for people's ALA schedules especially Members-at-Large. One difficulty however, is that members of the Planning Committee are usually members who have been involved in the section for a long time and have many Committee responsibilities, sitting on multiple committees that are only meeting during the All-Committee meeting so they are unable to attend all of their Committee meetings. This Committee has been involved in establishing and planning for the All-Committee meeting.

Products & Services: The all-committee meeting is beneficial for learning what other committees are doing and collaborating across committees. However, one committee member expressed concerns about only one meeting per conference being insufficient to plan and execute business. This is my fault, as I didn't see a need for a second meeting. In the future I wee   ed

With the speed of past developments, it's difficult to judge what could develop over the next five years.

Main trends are federated searching Google Scholar digital collections shifting archives/holdings in database sets

More material will be published electronically, and quite possibly not in simultaneous print versions.

More databases (catalogues, article indexes, etc.) will provide better and "more human" access to their contents: will include input from users (e.g., "tagging") will be able to offer suggestions based on previous searches or similar searches by other users (akin to Amazon's abilities) will to offer suggestions when spelling/typing errors are encountered or when.

The general public will be less aware of what's not online, less aware of what they're missing, etc.

Planning: OPAC future in question (open WorldCat, WorldCat local) access and integration of electronic reference materials virtual reference migrating from chat software to IM/Meebo-type applications usability/web design integrating local services, repositories, and unique materials through a library website portal continued development of visualization tools for searching. More reference material online, less reference service tied to a particular place.

Products & Services: We think the reference tools will be increasingly end-user-focused, designed for personalization by our patrons, not librarians. Libraries may be designing these tools based on their particular user groups. We will also increasingly be publishers of digital materials.

Public Libraries: Machine-assisted reference will continue to develop over the next 5 years - more and more patrons will access the library online. This trend will demand that libraries develop online tutorials for their resources that guide the user remotely. Standards and best practices must be developed by managers and training must take place for staff.

Publication: Some areas we see as important in the next 5 years: electronic means of communication will continue to be important, but online publications (blogs, wikis, institutional repositories), print on demand, productivity software, next-generation catalog, including social tagging options like Penn-tags (http://tags.library.upenn.edu/) archiving of electronic reference tools will all be EXTREMELY important.

Virtual Reference: Online social networking is the big thing to watch now.

b). What might we do in MARS to support our library colleagues within this rapidly changing environment?

Achievement Recognition: Interactive training websites and webcasts. Poster sessions are a great idea. We need to be more proactive in our outreach efforts so people will find the resources.

MARS Best Web Sites: Perhaps MARS should have a presence on Facebook.

Local Systems and Services: Librarians will always need software and database product training to keep up with the marketplace. In response to the increased amount of data on our users, librarians will require both software training and assessment techniques. For librarians who are Web developers, they will need to expand their repertoire of Web programming skills. Developments in distance education will require training in public speaking, communications tools, and online course management. The potential growth of video content and changes to online database products will demand that librarians understand search technologies, the role of metadata, and research on interface design. MARS can support library colleagues by offering preconferences, webinars, and sessions during conferences that give members the chance to learn about these new developments.

MERS: Evaluation of resources updates on new search tools and strategies Publicize activity like our VR virtual posters Librarians, like the public, turn to just in time & personal help, e.g., listservs, as quickly as we do to websites or journal databases. Remind them/us of material that's already available instead of posting fairly basic questions (e.g., does

anyone out there have advice for a library considering chat reference? – which is still, in 2007, being asked on libref-l & such)

Planning: We could offer Hot Topics discussions, conference or preconference programs as webcasts and/or podcasts, or have virtual programs where all participants are involved remotely.

Products & Services: We need to continue to highlight dominant trends and keep our colleagues informed of them, while keeping our eyes open for new ones.

Public Libraries: Provide the tools that libraries and librarians need in this changing environment - templates and training in the new 2.0 world.

Publication: Training,- Make free or low-cost training sites available (possibly providing some training ourselves), blogging to identify new services/developing new online publications Extend the conference experience by provide greater information online about past conference programs sponsored by MARS (links to presentations, summaries, reading lists) provide a Virtual Conference Option for a reduced registration fee with links to recordings of selected presentations available for during and after the conference to conference registrants.

Virtual Reference: Provide more content and opportunities for interaction outside of conferences through blogging, wikis, etc.

c). Do you feel the current MARS structure effectively supports

RUSA scheduling supports the potential for cooperative work between MARS and RSS, rather than mitigating against it. The artificial divide between these two sections need not hinder close, productive cooperation between them.
Virtual Reference: No observations here.

9. MARS has a Continuing Education and Publications Task Force currently investigating these areas (a-c):
a)What priority should MARS put on CE (continuing education) projects in the next five years?
b) Should MARS consider a publication plan as a subset of continuing education or should these two activities have different goals?
c)Should MARS plan to create either a CE project or a publication from each of its

Massively Applicable Reference Section

Modern Accessible Reference Section

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Planning: 1. MARS : Meeting All Reference Services (in Electronic Format) 2. We could keep MARS but come up with a slogan/byline i.e. Keeping reference librarians current on technology

Products & Services: no suggesN   ge