



Guy Berthiaume,
Librarian and Archivist of Canada
Library and Archives Canada
550 de la Cité Blvd
Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0N4

August 5, 2014

Dear M. Berthiaume,

Re: OCLC Proposal to host Canada's Union Catalogue

The Canadian Library Association (CLA), as the national voice for Canada's libraries, is very concerned that access to MARC records be ongoing and freely available to all members of the library community. We believe that the move to OCLC may seriously compromise this. For this reason we endorse the recent letter sent to you by the British Columbia Library Association.

We endorse, therefore, the statement by BCLA that:

"Libraries across Canada use the Canadian Union Catalogue, presently in Amicus, to acquire MARC cataloguing records on a daily basis, with and without registration, and free of charge. We are concerned that this will change once OCLC administers our Canadian Union Catalogue. OCLC has a history of claiming ownership of records, classification schemes and other information, regardless of the original source. At the same time we are aware that access to OCLC's cataloguing service is costly. Libraries across Canada will lack a stable and current source of catalogue records if access to the Canadian Union Catalogue is limited by prohibitive fees. Such a deficiency in accessible, affordable and essential information will undermine Canadian libraries' ability to provide open and equitable information to the Canadian public."¹

The Canadian Library Association Executive Council therefore respectfully requests that LAC "reassure the library community and clearly state that Canadian libraries will continue to have free and timely access to the Canadian Union Catalogue. We look forward to hearing that LAC has made all possible provisions ensuring that the OCLC maintains unrestricted, timely and free access to catalogue records created by LAC. Such confirmation would help build trust in LAC management and future changes".²

¹ British Columbia Library Association letter to Guy Berthiaume, dated July 22, 2014, at page 1.

² Ibid, page 2.

We wish a clear commitment to the provision of free access to download all Canadian cataloguing that is created either by LAC or by libraries contributing to the Union Catalogue.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding this important matter.

Sincerely,

Marie DeYoung,
President, Canadian Library Association