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August 26, 2014
File Number: 26046

Ms. Marie DeYoung
President
Canadian Library Association
Suite 400-1150 Morrison Drive
Ottawa, Ontario
K2H 8S9

Dear Colleague:

Thank you for your letter of August 5, 2014 expressing your endorsement of the British Columbia Library Association's recent letter to Library and Archives Canada (LAC). This letter expressed concerns over the announcement that LAC is proposing to contract with the Online Computer Library Center, Inc. (OCLC) to host Canada's National Union Catalogue (NUC).

Despite the fact that LAC's intention to enter into direct negotiations with OCLC was published a few months ago, this public procurement process is still far from over. Discussions regarding the replacement of the NUC are still underway with the Government of Canada's procurement arm, Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC). While these discussions take place, constraints are placed on the information we are allowed to share publicly. Nevertheless, I wanted to bring a few matters to your attention that may answer some of the points you raise in your letter. Moreover, I am certain we will have several opportunities to discuss any remaining issues later on, and you have my assurance that LAC will communicate extensively with the library community as soon as we are in a position to do so.

In 2012-2013, LAC consulted broadly with the Canadian library community concerning the replacement of AMICUS and the NUC. Several libraries were approached directly as well as many associations. In particular, LAC had the pleasure of consulting with your predecessors at CLA, Karen Adams and Pilar Martinez. Over the course of these discussions, LAC learned that

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libraries were chiefly concerned with their ability to pay for an improved NUC. For this reason, we wish to highlight that we are pursuing an NUC model where costs to users will be minimal.

As you are also aware, there are other sources of free MARC records, which can be searched using the Z39.50 protocol. Examples of sources for free MARC records are regional consortia catalogues and catalogues of large institutions such as public and university libraries that are currently members of OCLC.

Regarding intellectual property rights, we have specified in our procurement process that the service provider must certify that it currently complies or will comply with the requirements for specific attribution of data source ownership for individual bibliographic records.

Lastly, I would like to stress that we currently have no contract in place. Rather, we are seeking the authorization to initiate negotiations. When we are given the approval to proceed, if it is determined that the service provider is not able to address any of our core requirements to our satisfaction, we will consider other procurement approaches or building a replacement system internally.

I hope I have addressed your concerns and I look forward to working closely with the Canadian Library Association.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Guy Berthiaume', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Guy Berthiaume