

Determining the impact of the 2012 federal budget cuts on Library and Archives Canada

CLA members continue to express concern about the impact of the 2012 budget cuts to federal libraries and to Library and Archives Canada. CLA undertook a survey to determine members' views on the potential impacts of those cuts. Based on the survey results, CLA Executive Council has prepared the following questions specifically related to changes at LAC that have been implemented due to the budget cuts. We look forward to discussing these issues further with LAC senior management at the meeting of CLA Executive Council on 4 February 2013.

1. CLA members are most concerned about the impact the cuts will have on the ability of Canadians to access LAC's material and information. In addition to the consultations taking place through the Pan-Canadian Documentary Heritage Network, what steps are being taken by LAC to ensure that libraries across Canada, and their users, will continue to have access to LAC's collections, staff expertise and services from Canada's national library?
2. LAC has indicated that access to its collections will increasingly be facilitated online and in digital formats. With the elimination of the Community Access Program, and with 21% of Canadians households not having access to the internet (and 46% of household in the lowest income quartile), what will be done to ensure that all Canadians will have on-going access to LAC collections?
3. It is expected that digital collections, both born digital and digitized materials, will constitute an increasingly significant portion of LAC's collection. The development and maintenance of digital collections is very capital and labour intensive. Yet LAC is seeing a reduction in both its budget and labour force.
 - a. What is LAC's current digital preservation strategy?
 - b. How will LAC ensure the long-term preservation of and continued access to the expanding digital collections?
 - c. What is LAC's collection strategy/policy for digital content, including material acquired through legal deposit?
 - d. What is the status of LAC's efforts to coordinate a networked solution with other content holders?
4. Given the extent of the budget cuts, how will LAC ensure that it continues to fulfill its core mandate?
 - *to preserve the documentary heritage of Canada for the benefit of present and future generations;*
 - *to be a source of enduring knowledge accessible to all, contributing to the cultural, social and economic advancement of Canada as a free and democratic society;*
 - *to facilitate in Canada co-operation among communities involved in the acquisition, preservation and diffusion of knowledge;*
 - *to serve as the continuing memory of the Government of Canada and its institutions.*

And how will the federal government seek feedback from Canadians, including the library community, on LAC's changing services levels to ensure that LAC is meeting its mandate?

5. As indicated in the Library and Archives of Canada Act, one of the roles of LAC is to "coordinate the library services of federal institutions" (7(e)), while the Librarian and Archivist is directed to "provide leadership and direction for library services of government institutions" (8(h)). In what way is LAC actively championing the role of federal librarians and librarians within government to ensure the ongoing provision of quality library services to the departments?
6. Given the provisions in the Library and Archives of Canada Act and the Multi-Institutional Disposition Authority, how is LAC managing the collections from the closed federal libraries that have come under its control?
 - a. What is the extent of material from the closed libraries now under LAC control?
 - b. Does LAC have sufficient resources (staff, space, technical) to manage this material in a timely manner to ensure continued access to this information?