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**Circle of State Librarians**

Edited by Mags Griffin

*HM Customs and Excise*

**Circle of  
State  
Librarians**

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## **Acknowledgements**

This issue contains articles that fully illustrate our very catholic interests as information specialists. Ranging from legal and supplier relationship issues, through to personal development and service promotion. What is of particular relevance to most of us is the evolving policy guidance for the development of the thesaurus structure at the Department of Health.

The Committee is grateful to all authors for their agreement to the publication of their contributions here.

## **Call for Papers**

This magazine aims to cover all subject interests relating to policy and operation information management in government for information specialists. This includes news about changes within your organisation, new developments and new ideas about information/IT/KM policies and operational practises. If you would like to contribute a article please contact the editor at **GriffinM@hmce.gsi.gov.uk**, or at IMSD Logistics, 6<sup>th</sup> floor North West, New Kings Beam House, 22 Upper Ground, London, SE1 9PJ, Tel: 0207 865 5513, Fax: 0207 865 5879.

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# Contributors

## **Philip Defriez**

Philip Defriez was formerly Head Librarian at the Institute for the Study of Drug Dependence (ISDD) where he edited and revised the ISDD thesaurus. Since then he has worked on a number of thesaurus projects at the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, Derwent Information Ltd., and the Department of Health, as well as the National Centre for Clinical Audit. He is now Database Librarian at the Department of Health acting as Head of the Cataloguing and Data Quality Unit.

## **James Denmead**

James joined the civil service in 1990 working as sales agent for a variety of international organisations in HMSO. In 1992 he transferred to the Department of Trade and Industry employed in a number of different areas that included running the departmental enquiry unit for two years. He then transferred to British Trade International as the customer services manager within the Export Market Information Centre (EMIC). In July 2001 James transferred to the Department for Education and Employment (now DfES) where his first job challenge was to move the main London library twice within three months.

## **Roger Bull**

Roger is a Senior Business & marketing manager for CLA, having joined in 1994 to start up the CLA Business and Government licensing division. Marketing responsibilities include the development of the CLA web site, its exhibition and seminar programme and licence support and promotional literature.

## **Jessica Peel Yates**

Jessica completed her MSc in Information management in September 2000, and started working at the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) about a week later. Prior to the course she had worked in both academic and public libraries, as well as for a recruitment company and as a dance teacher (which included teaching 40 teenagers to polka!). At DfES, her main duties have been overseeing the serials section and current awareness services in the main offices in London, working within the enquiry service and developing e-journals.

# Thesaurus Development at The Department of Health

**Philip Defriez.**

*Database Librarian*

## **Background**

This is a third edition of the Department of Health thesaurus, (first published in 1985) it has been prepared over the past two years. This edition incorporates at its heart the thesaurus, published in 2001, of the 'The Healthcare Management Information Consortium' (HMIC) - three libraries with similar subject coverage: the Department of Health (DH), the King's Fund, and the Nuffield Institute for Health.

## **REASONS FOR CHANGE**

The two main areas requiring change to the previous edition were the scope and the structure of the thesaurus:

### **Scope**

New subject areas where the DH thesaurus required expansion e.g. economics and management, and new terms required to accommodate the wide-ranging reforms of the NHS over the past decade.

### **Structural problems**

- High level of pre-coordination in the keywords
- Some hierarchical relationships not conceptually consistent with ISO 2788
- Within keywords prepositions and conjunctions which might interfere with search strategies in certain contexts

- Inappropriate duplication of keywords within hierarchical structures
- Non ISO 2788 compliant wording in some keywords
- Very high proportion of Top terms accentuated by very high number of 'orphan' terms i.e. those which do not belong to any hierarchy
- Some large hierarchies repeated several times within the thesaurus often under comparatively meaningless, very general, terms such as Health or Services.
- Some politically incorrect terms or structural relationships

## **MODELS**

The revised DH thesaurus was constructed in accordance with International Standard 2788 - Guidelines for the establishment and development of monolingual thesauri. The importance of using such a standard as this cannot be overemphasised, particularly if the subject area is multidisciplinary and requires input from people with different professional backgrounds. The ISO standard is invaluable for setting ground rules and guidelines and sorting out potential areas of conflict.

## **SUBJECT COVERAGE**

The core areas of the thesaurus are health and social care.

## **PROJECT APPROACH**

The basic approach to revising the thesaurus was a structural one, analysing terms within their hierarchical structures. Many of the problems identified had resulted from a non-structural or alphabetical, term-by-term, approach.

### **Structural revision**

Key elements identified for the overhaul of hierarchical structures were:

- Reorganising terms within hierarchies
- Removing unnecessary duplication
- Integrating the very small hierarchies
- Integrating the Orphan terms
- Identifying preordination terms for factoring (splitting), and establishing guidelines and criteria for implementing this process.

## **Methods**

- Following electronic output of the hierarchical structure of the thesaurus, the Orphan terms were separated from the rest.
- Around thirty-core subject areas were identified e.g. Care, Finance, Management and Services.
- All structures and Orphan terms were allocated to one of these subject areas.
- A Miscellaneous category was also used.
- Structural revision as above was then carried out in each subject area one by one.

## **Additions and deletions**

Additions were made during the structural revision. Principal sources were:

- Terms in the HMIC partners' thesauri
- Suggestions from library staff
- Publications received by the library
- Electronic sources such as MESH (US National Library of Medicine. Medical subject headings) and the UNESCO thesaurus

Deletions were made of terms which had not been used in the past or those which fell outside the core subject areas and were consequently difficult to integrate into the main body of the thesaurus.

## **Factoring (splitting) of keywords**

In the earlier editions of the Department of Health thesaurus there was a very high level of pre-coordination in the keywords. The alternative method of post-coordination of constituent keywords is preferred in ISO 2788 and is probably better suited to automated online information systems, which allow for relatively simple coordination of keywords using Boolean operators. It was important, though difficult, to establish some rules to determine this.

## **Principles of factoring**

ISO 2788 recommends *syntactical* factoring i.e. breaking up compound terms into their grammatical constituents e.g. Cancer patients into Cancer and Patients.

It does not recommend the use of *semantic* factoring i.e. breaking up a term into definitional elements which do not appear in the term itself e.g. Thermometers should not be expressed as Temperature + Measurement + Instruments.

### **Impact of factoring**

The impact of factoring terms includes:

- Reduction in the number of Preferred terms in the thesaurus
- Increase in the number of keywords to be used by both indexers and searchers
- Reduction in precision, increasing the possibility of retrieval of irrelevant items
- Increase in the recall of documents
- Greater flexibility. For example, splitting Cancer patients into Cancer and Patients allows the indexer or searcher to be more specific if required e.g. Leukaemia or Outpatients could be selected

### **Factored keywords**

Categories of terms to be factored were drawn up. These included combinations of different people types or combinations of people and diseases.

### **Non-factored keywords**

Other categories of terms not to be factored were also drawn up. These included people related services or disease related services. The two principal reasons for not factoring these terms were:

- Some of the terms are in common usage e.g. Child protection, Child care.
- Some of the terms have Narrower terms, which cannot be syntactically factored, e.g. Quality assurance in health services has NT Clinical audit. Factoring of these terms would be structurally unworkable.

# KEY FEATURES OF THE THESAURUS

## KEYWORD TYPES

There are two main types of keyword in the thesaurus:

### Preferred terms

The Preferred terms are the keywords that are used consistently to represent a given concept.

### Non-preferred terms

These are included in the thesaurus to point the user to the Preferred term. Non-preferred terms may be synonyms, abbreviations, or alternative spellings to the standard spelling.

Two additional types of term have been introduced to the DH thesaurus:

- Specifiers

These are similar to Non-preferred terms but point the user to a combination of Preferred terms to express a concept e.g.

Student nurses

USE Nurses

[AND] Students

Specifiers are multiple concepts, which have been syntactically factored into unitary concepts. They require post-coordinate use of Preferred terms when indexing or searching, and have been introduced to replace some of the pre-coordinated terms originally in the DH/DSS Data Thesaurus.

- Indicators

These are similar to Non-preferred terms but point the user to a selection of possible Preferred terms e.g.

Immunity

SEE Crown immunity

Disease immunity

Natural immunity

## FORM OF TERMS

The form, including the choice of singular or plural, of all terms follows the conventions laid down in ISO 2788 i.e. all terms are expressed as nouns e.g. Hospitals, adjectival phrases e.g. General hospitals or, in limited cases, prepositional phrases e.g. Cause of death.

## KEYWORD RELATIONSHIPS

Thesaurus keyword relationships fall into three groups:

### Equivalence

This is the relationship between Preferred and Non preferred terms where two or more terms are regarded, for indexing purposes, as referring to the same concept e.g.

Holland  
USE Netherlands

Specifiers and Indicators (see above) also perform quasi-equivalence functions.

### Hierarchical

This is the relationship based on degrees or levels of super ordination and subordination, where the super ordinate term represents a class or whole, and subordinate terms refer to its members or parts. It allows search strategies to be modified, either when the thesaurus is first consulted or during the course of a search, by moving up or down the hierarchy until the appropriate level of specificity is obtained.

In the alphabetical thesaurus display these relationships are represented by the following conventions:

BT - Broader term                      Indicates the next level up in a hierarchy to which the present term belongs as a class, part, etc., e.g. Animals in relation to Dogs.

NT - Narrower term                    The reverse of BT.

e.g.

DOGS  
BT        Animals  
ANIMALS  
NT        Dogs

Many terms in the DH thesaurus have poly-hierarchical relationships i.e. they appear in more than one hierarchical structure and have more than one Broader term. In such cases they appear as follows e.g.

CANCER HOSPITALS  
BT Cancer services  
Specialist hospitals

### **Associative**

Associative terms or 'Related terms' (RT) help the user whether indexing or searching to find other keywords which are conceptually related to the keyword(s) currently in use but belong to different hierarchical structures.

These relationships are reciprocal and appear in the thesaurus as follows:

PATENTS  
RT Inventions  
INVENTIONS  
RT Patents

### **DISPLAY**

The thesaurus is displayed in four formats: Alphabetical, Hierarchical, Orphan terms, and Class marks

### **SOFTWARE**

The thesaurus management software system STRIDE, developed by Questans Ltd. In Oxfordshire was used to construct the thesaurus. It is a flexible package allowing a variety of outputs including hierarchical, alphabetical and classified displays. It supports all the terms and term relationships used in the DH thesaurus. The DH library uses the Unicorn library management system and it has proved possible to output the thesaurus from STRIDE in a compatible format for downloading into Unicorn.

### **CONSULTATION**

At every stage of the structural revision, reports were sent to, and advice and comments sought from the chief users of the thesaurus, in particular The Health and Social Services Unit of the Department of Health and the King's Fund Library.

## **KEY OUTCOMES**

- Thesaurus structure completely overhauled and revised
- HMIC thesaurus absorbed within this thesaurus
- Over 2000 new terms added
- About 400 terms deleted
- Orphan terms reduced from 1028 to 170
- Top terms reduced from 1631 to 552
- Two new forms of term, Specifiers and Indicators, introduced
- Introduction rewritten

## **CONCLUSIONS**

- It is essential to approach thesaurus construction and revision in a structured way with regard for the overall structure whenever changes are made. Piecemeal changes lead to the gradual disintegration of a thesaurus.
- Use of a standard, preferably ISO 2788, is recommended to establish guidelines and rules for thesaurus construction.
- Factoring of terms is an important issue. Rules for its application in any particular thesaurus need to be drawn up and applied consistently.
- Division of terms into broad subject areas, or facets, is an effective method of building thesaurus hierarchies.
- If using a dedicated thesaurus management software package, it is important to ensure that its output is compatible with the target library management software.

## **FURTHER READING**

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National Library of Medicine. Medical subject headings. Available on <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/htbin-post/Entrez/meshbrowser>

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***The views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views or policy of the Department of Health***

# Diary of a Move – A Library Move

**James Denmead**

You have just started a new job and are in the process of trying to work out who is who within your new team and where the toilets are when you are called in for “**the chat**”. This is *the* moment, (I’m sure you know the one I mean) when your eyes become open to the less positive things surrounding your new job revealing exactly what the small print of your contract is all about. It could cover any issue ranging from staffing, to in my case the physical move of the Department for Education and Employment’s (DfEE) London library. It had to happen so that the library area could be refurbished, and my line management thought that as the new reader services librarian, it would make sense if I coordinated the whole thing. Once I had eventually picked myself up from the floor I started on the task and what was to be some of the best (and worst!) months of my professional career.

## **Why?**

The management was keen to develop the library area, and use it as a working demonstration of the new cultural ethos they wanted DfEE staff to adopt. Their plan included clearing, re- planning and refurbishing to create an area with a new function and focus a showcase, which we were to share with colleagues from the Learning Academy (our in house training providers). The department was investing a lot of time and money into the project and we would, ultimately, be winners. This article is about how we got there.

People were feeling positive about the whole process rather than having any misgivings about being squeezed out of space they badly needed. This surprising good will bonus at the outset was an invaluable asset to the project, as we were not “fighting” our own team in order to get people to do all the things they were going to need to do to make it work.

## **The planning process**

It became obvious fairly early on in the planning process that a lot of time was going to be spent in meetings with the various stakeholders discussing the same issues several times over. Which brings to me to the first rule of any move: **always attend all meetings however insignificant they might appear to be**. As the law of averages dictates that the one meeting you miss will be where an important issue is discussed and key decisions are made. Make sure that you are at all related meetings so that your voice is heard and respected.

While going through it, the planning process had seemed to drag on forever but looking back I can see there was not enough time to do the job justice. Many decisions had to be made in a very short period of time. I was fortunate as I was given a lot of autonomy, which made me more flexible when making these decisions, re-adjusting as the schedule progressed so that it fitted into our overall strategy for the area. This helped my position at the move meetings, as I could quite often make decisions there and then, unlike other stakeholders who had to go away and consult. Obviously, there were times when it was helpful to pretend I needed the extra time as well. This gave me breathing space in which to more effectively plan my strategy, (unfortunately these occasions were rare).

Through the planning meetings I was able to get to know the people from facilities (building/space/estates) management really well. Any move involves spending time with these contacts; they are crucial to the success or failure of such a project. They are also the people who have the power to make your life hell if they do not like you. Which leads me on to the second rule for moving: **Make friends with your facilities management team**. We did this very successfully and were soon getting on very well with the other members of the project team. In particular we went out of our way to make sure that the moves coordinator knew us, and was completely aware of and understood our business needs. *At this point in the process, the modest outlay of the price of a couple of pints could prove a very wise and sound investment.*

## **Communications**

During the planning stage good communication was a key factor. It is quite a big job just planning a move without the added responsibility of keeping everyone informed of what was going on. I soon realised it was a relevant part of the process as well, however I could not communicate every minor decision to everyone and still carry out my "day" job effectively. It would also have resulted in a torrent of emails creating an info overload to which all staff would have turned off and not read. Instead I filtered out the key details to make sure that everyone knew what they were and how they impacted on their area/work. These included obvious points such as when physical moves happened and where people were moving (but common sense will tell you what is important and what is not). We hold regular staff meetings for people at all levels within DfEE. The move became a regular item on the agendas for these meetings and this made me think about what were the latest updates since the last meeting and put together a quick report covering the highlights of the last week.

## **Negotiations**

One skill that you have to develop for this job is the ability to handle hard negotiating. However nice people might seem you have to be aware of how vulnerable you and your working space is. They will want to save some space and your stock will look very tempting to them. From the start I had to battle long and hard to keep the same space the library had been originally allocated, so much so I soon went round muttering about linear metres of shelf space to anyone who would listen. You have to work out how much space you realistically need. Once you have this figure add 10% to it and then go and try and negotiate for this amount of space. If that first bid fails, knock 5% off and go back in with that. Remember in all of this you have to be realistic. If you come up with a fantasy estimate of the amount of space you need then expect to be caught out. In the course of our move we disposed of about a third of our book stock. Everyone knowing that we had done this gave me a stronger position in which to negotiate from. Be aware of the dangers of making unrealistic demands as it can lead to you losing credibility, which ultimately weakens your overall bidding position.

## **The Great Day**

Finally "*the day*" arrived which was when it suddenly dawned on staff

that something was about to happen. First a lot of crates appeared and nothing else. (At this point you need to hold your nerve and know exactly what is happening, not to have a crisis of confidence or attempt to retire to the country for the next few days!). My role for the day was to be highly visible and approachable for both staff and contractors. Making sure everyone knew what was expected of him/her. In preparation I had sent emails, put notices up everywhere, and talked to all affected staff, to ensure they understand what they needed to do. Yes all this is obvious but you cannot ignore it, as individual people perceptions are so very wide. Next nasty surprises should be expected and dealt with effectively. You will know the moment when it happens. Someone suddenly discovers they have three filing cabinets of material they have got stored away that will need moving. My advice is to keep your cool and think on your feet. Getting annoyed about the situation at this stage is wasted energy. Instead you will need to start to pull in the favours you have been building up for just such a rainy day. This is when knowing the plans inside out really pays off enabling you to competently manage anything else that might be thrown at you.

It is amazing how quickly professional movers work. A job that I thought would take days was done in hours. It also meant that the possibility for errors was increased. You have to be aware of this. If books packed incorrectly were to go on shelves in the wrong order or sequence then the chances of picking this up before too much has been unpacked are not that good unless you are being vigilant. This brings us to rule number three: **someone who knows what they are doing needs to be around all the time**. Doing this alone was not enough. My team needed to know the plans equally as well as myself as they had to be confident to question what was happening. They were available throughout the move, and worked through Saturdays and Sundays. As the project manager I also ended up working three straight weeks as the move was spread over two weekends. This is when our team dynamics and sense of humour were really put to the test. Establishing tolerance levels early on was very necessary as there is no point in forcing someone against his or her will to carry out any one action against their will. Conversely anyone who does not need to be around should be sent away as early as it is practical to do so. Spending some time on your own in the area which is about to be moved without distractions can be profitable to ask and answer the following questions. Has everything been properly crated up? Has it all

been clearly labelled? Are you completely sure about what is going and what is being thrown out as rubbish? If the answer to any of these questions is no then you need to take immediate action to rectify the situation. You can only really do this on your own without any distractions.

## **Unpacking**

If you have been lucky then staff should be moving into a new area with all their possessions around them. If not, then you will be preparing to move lots of crates around like musical chairs. A good practical tip is not to pack the scissors so that you are able to get into crates. You also need to be alert to the fact that people can get very worked up about what you consider to be the most trivial of things. It may seem trivial to you but to the person concerned it could be a major issue. Indeed getting upset about something minor could in fact be a symptom of deeper upset about the change the person is going through. Be as sympathetic as you can be and make sure that things are sorted out quickly. If something cannot be done then make sure that the person concerned knows this. Again be very visible in order to make sure that minor things do not get blown out of all proportion. As the person who knows the plans best you are in the best position to know what needs doing and what the priorities are. You do not want key personnel to be distracted by small things when large jobs still need doing. All things being equal, you should be able to settle back down again and resume your normal peaceful (?) existence safe in the knowledge that you will not have to do this again for a while. In our case we needed to do it all over again three months later but that is another story...

## **The aftermath**

It is all too easy to sit back and congratulate yourself on a job well done. Before doing this you need to consider if the job is really finished. In our case there were several quite big jobs which needed doing as a direct result of the move and we eventually completed them. Looking back it would have been better to keep the momentum going whilst we were still in "moving mode" and completed them immediately rather than putting some things off. Once you have lost the momentum that you have built up during the move it is very difficult to get it going again so think carefully before you finally draw a line under the experience.

## **Customer reactions**

In all of this we have not really mentioned the customers. I think we were quite lucky, as we only needed to move the enquiry service a small distance. This meant that we were on the spot and our customers did not need to go very far to find us. The library was moved into a conference room, (which felt like something close to the black hole of Calcutta). We expected a lot of our customers to abandon us but they remained remarkably loyal. On our part during this time we made extra efforts when picking up on their comments to do something about them. For example, we had a TV with Teletext on it, which was initially excluded from the plans. As soon as customers started to comment on its absence we made sure that it re-appeared as quickly as possible. We also made sure that the newspapers were available for everyone to read. Our customers liked this and appreciated the fact that they could still use this service. We made a conscious decision to let all of our customers know when we would be shut and when we would be open during the move. We were only closed for one day and so no one was seriously inconvenienced but good publicity is the key. We were very lucky as the DfEE library was split between two sites in London and Sheffield. Colleagues in Sheffield were able to help us out by taking on extra work and providing an enquiry service when we needed them and for this we were very grateful.

## **Conclusions**

I was amazed as to how well the whole process went. The key to it all is planning and preparation. If things have been properly planned then your chances of success are greatly increased. If there are gaps in the plan then they will be exposed very quickly.

### ***To sum up the three golden rules of moving a library are:***

- Attend every meeting, as you can be sure that important decisions will be made at the one you miss.
- Make friends with your facilities management team. They have the power to make you life hell if you upset them.
- During the move make sure that there is always someone around who knows exactly what needs to be done and who isn't afraid to speak up if they see things going wrong.

All that remains to say is that if you ever get involved in moving libraries look on it as a positive experience and if you are about to start, the very best of luck.

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# From Librarian to Media Hound in Three Weeks.

**Jessica Peel Yates**

## **Background**

A year after I took up my current post at the DfES, secondment opportunities with the departmental Press Office were advertised on the Intranet. I took the initiative and told my line manager that I was interested. I thought a secondment would offer the Library and Information Services Team (LIST) an excellent opportunity to find out more about the Press Office, in terms of how they work and what their information needs are. It would also enable me to build relationships within the Press Office and raise LIST's profile with them. Part of my role within LIST is to develop a liaison function with the Press Office. This meant that the secondment would fit in with our strategic aim to reach out to our customers more. It would also allow me to use my information skills in a new work context, and it sounded like good fun!

I spoke to contacts in the Press Office and we agreed a two-week secondment. However, once I had started in the Press Office, the secondment was extended for a further week – with the proviso from our Chief Librarian that I came back to LIST eventually!

Before it started, I had attended a couple of Press Office meetings in order to be introduced to the people I would be working with. Prior to the secondment, I had also given a presentation on LIST services and Info source, our virtual library, to a Press Office weekly meeting. Both were useful because people knew my face before I started working with them.

For background reading for the role I read the February 2001 Green Paper "Building on Success". This formed the basis of the White Paper that I would be helping to launch, and helped me to familiarise myself with current policy within the Department.

### **So, What did I do?**

My secondment was made up of two different roles: working on the Schools Desk and working on the News Desk.

Each Minister has a Press Office team dedicated to them. The Schools Desk is responsible for two Ministers. The Desk liaises closely with Ministers' Private Offices and also briefing and policy teams. My role on the Schools Desk included arranging media interviews; arranging press coverage for Ministerial events; presenting departmental policy to the media; providing press briefings; tracking and responding to the media's coverage of the DfES and its policy areas; and ensuring Ministers were aware of developments in the media.

I was involved in organising a number of ministerial events. Preparation for them included the following; liaising with the briefing team, producing press releases and operational notes for the media, and visiting the location for a walk through. At the actual event, my role was to ensure the media got the information that they needed and putting across key departmental news messages. Every event was unique and they were a great opportunity to see how the work we do impacts on the public and also to see how interactions with the stakeholders we serve can feed back into the wider work of the department. The highlight was getting coverage of one event on BBC Newsround. (Alas, no John Craven).

Working on the News Desk proved to be similar to the enquiry work that I do as part of LIST. The News Desk handles around 50,000 phone enquiries a year from the media. It is staffed in a similar way to our library enquiry service, staff work on the News Desk for allotted periods of time, (but also have other duties they have to carry out). News Desk calls can range from a simple request for factual information to complex enquiries relating to departmental policy or departmental reaction to events. The News Desk work with policy officials to supply answers and provide up to date information on key policy areas. The departmental online Briefing Information System is also used. All calls are logged on a database.

## **Personal gains**

*Networking* - Being fairly new to government libraries, I have found that working in a special library is very different to working in academic and public libraries. Customer relationships seem stronger in the departmental community compared to the other customer groups I have served. There is more prolonged contact time while dealing with individual enquiries and also when giving training or providing profiled services. Working in the Press Office offered me the chance to build new relationships across the department; both within Press Office, but also the Private Office, and the policy and briefing teams with whom I worked. I used every opportunity to promote the library – for example my email signature for the three weeks read something along the lines of **“on secondment to the Press Office from the Library.”**

*How do you maintain relationships once they are forged?* In my case, since the end of the secondment, I pop up to the Press Office regularly to touch base. LIST has used contacts with the Press Office to identify other key Teams and Units within the department to whom we can target to promote our services. The Press Office is now also actively promoting us to other users.

*Context* - I developed a broader understanding of how the different functions within the Department fit together and a firmer understanding of our customers' needs. I am now more able to put into context the work that we do in the library. This has proved useful in terms of user education – it's much easier to train someone to use an information tool when you can link it to their specific needs and demonstrate how it can help their work. Also for LIST colleagues I have shared my knowledge/experience with other library staff, using it to train and motivate them to see how their work fits in with broader departmental aims.

*Information Skills* - While working in the Press Office many of my information specialist skills proved to be transferable. Such as customer service ethos; reference interviewing skills; negotiating deadlines; attention to detail and accuracy when providing responses; using resources to locate information; using language that is relevant to the customer; organising and presenting the information in an accessible way. Often when I was dealing with a media enquiry, I did not know the answer, but I knew the process to go through to locate it. I also promoted my IT based research skills when assisting other members of the Press Office staff to find acts of

parliament on the Internet, using databases of newspaper articles, and tracking down reports and statistics. This was a real bonus as it illustrated just how flexible our skills are in enabling us to operate effectively in a range of non traditional environments.

*Soft Skills* – Because the Press Office is such a busy environment, good time management, team working, communication and inter personal skills were essential. Journalists always want things yesterday and I became confident at negotiating deadlines with them and policy officials. I was often dealing with people from a range of organisations. Within ten minutes you could find yourself dealing with 6 different information requests. Juggling all of this and satisfying each request was a stimulating challenge, meaning that you had to be on your toes at all times.

*Acronyms!*- I picked up hundreds of acronyms and policy terms over the three weeks. I developed a much sounder understanding of policy areas within the department. This has helped me to provide a better enquiry desk service and also to support other members of LIST staff with their work. Recently, I was able to use the knowledge that I had built up in the Press Office to contribute to the review for updating our Thesaurus.

*Spin!* - In the library, we give out information freely. In the Press Office you have to put information in context, and think about the implications of giving out information to the media. You think about how you are presenting that information and how it reflects on the Department and the Government. Working back in the library, I am more conscious of the need for absolute accuracy when giving out information, and the importance of attributing sources and putting the information in context. Also, when someone comes in with what appears a simple enquiry I am more able to understand why they need that information. This enables me to “add value” to the answer that I give them.

## **LIST benefits?**

Almost a year ago, we launched our refurbished library. Departmental customers were invited for tours and a free lunch. I got talking to a customer from a briefing team, Jane, about her information needs and arranged training sessions for her and also set up some current awareness email alerts from our journals and newspaper databases for her and her team. On my first day in the Press Office, I found myself talking to Jane – she was using her LIST email alert to help her provide briefing information for

a ministerial press interview. This showed me immediately how LIST services contribute to the work of the department – and also how useful a free lunch can be!

## **Outcomes**

I was away from my team for three weeks. The impact of this on my home team should be commented on. Before I left for secondment, I cleared my in tray and negotiated with colleagues to cover my work. I had the full support of my team to go on the secondment. From a positive point of view, my absence created a learning and developmental opportunity for those I left behind. The graduate trainee in my section took on responsibility for the section while I was away. This was a great experience for him and increased his confidence.

Here's a quick list of some of the **outcomes** from my secondment –

- LIST's profile within the Press Office has been raised – I was a walking advert for our team!
- Press Office usage of the Library has increased. They trust us to deliver the goods on time.
- Press Office is now recommending us to other people. Word of mouth in a government department is a wonderful marketing tool.
- Press Office gets on average two new secondees a month from across the department. I am working with Press Office to support the information needs of these secondees. These secondees may then recommend us to others.
- New relationships have been built with customers – since working in the Press Office we have used contacts to identify other key teams and have given them presentations on how our services can support their work.
- I gained fresh ideas from our customers' perspective that I have been able to feed back into service development and provision. For example, I am much more conscious of how user friendly our Virtual Library is (or isn't!) having been a busy customer seeking information within it.
- I have shared my improved understanding of customer needs with LIST. This allows us to tailor service provision and training. People

learn much more effectively if the learning is placed within the context of their work and needs.

- My sounder policy and subject knowledge, developed on secondment, has led me to be much more effective when handling enquiries.
- When piloting new services, my contacts with Press Office have been used to good effect.

One negative aspect of my secondment could be that Press Office associates the library with me. I have found that sometimes Press Office staff phone me up with an enquiry rather than going through our enquiry service. However, as their News Desk works in a similar way to our enquiry service (in that it works on a rota system), they are happy to be passed to one of my colleagues where relevant. Other LIST members also have good relationships with people in Press Office.

I found my secondment a great developmental opportunity which I thoroughly enjoyed. Following the secondment, I produced a report on my experience and ideas on how we in LIST could develop links with both the Press Office and other customers in the future. I would recommend a secondment to any government librarian who wants to get out into their department to find out what actually goes on amongst their client base.

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# The Copyright Licensing Agency- A unique copyright clearance service to Government.

**Roger Bull**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA) has been providing licences to reproduce extracts from books, journals, periodicals and law reports to government, government agencies and public bodies since the early 1990's. In that time there has been significant development both within CLA, and I am sure in the diversity and sophistication of methods that information professionals use in distributing published information to colleagues.

On a personal level I was delighted to be asked to contribute this article to the **Circle of State Librarians** publication, as it provides an excellent opportunity to communicate some ideas and information to a comprehensive range of Government Librarians.

In deciding what I should say, I studied the Summer/Autumn 2001 publication with great care to gain some insights into the issues that are foremost on your own agendas. I noted with interest the comments made by the then Cabinet Office Minister for E-Government, Ian McCartney MP in respect of the Modernising Government Programme and the important part government librarians are playing in that initiative.

CLA for its part, is also aware of the need to constantly evolve and modernise its own services to government, and to that end I shall be referring at some length to the advent of the CLA digitisation licence to be launched in the first half of 2002. We are very much looking forward

to talking to government departments about how they use email and intranet as a means of communication, and tailoring copyright licensing solutions around that particular method of distributing published information.

For the benefit of the relatively few government librarians who have not dealt with CLA before, and for those of you who have forgotten, I would like to briefly remind you of the basic structure of the organisation and services we provide, and why, as I state in the title of this article, CLA's licence is **'unique'**.

### **Structure and remit**

CLA is a non-profit collecting society owned by its rights holders, namely authors and publishers. These rights holders are represented by two organisations The Authors' Licensing and Collecting Society (ALCS) and The Publishers Licensing Society (PLS). These two organisations in turn represent diverse groups of academic and professional authors and publishers respectively.

Our particular remit covers works published in the UK and seventeen other countries in Europe, North America, Australasia and South Africa. That represents over 3 million UK titles and 16 million worldwide. I do not believe there is any licensing scheme in any area of intellectual property that provides such far reaching and simple access. In addition to this, since April 2000, CLA has added access to Artistic Works through our agreement with The Design and Artists Copyright Society (DACs). This means that rights holders and their picture/art library representatives of in copyright photographs, illustrations and works of art are also covered by the CLA licence and receive a share of the licence fee income. This also makes for a very comprehensive content coverage under the licence and peace of mind for users in the often difficult field of identifying the copyright owner of an artistic work within a publication.

### **LICENSE FEES**

When the government licence commenced in 1993, the fee level for public administration was set at £12.00 per annum per HEO or equivalent upwards. *More of the grading definition later.* This fee entitled the licensee to make up to nine copies of a journal article, book chapter **or** 5% of a publication, whichever the greater for any one purpose or occasion. Since 1997, there has been a nineteen and twenty-nine copies option in the

licence at an accordingly higher fee per HEO, and a negotiated concession of nineteen copies for the purposes of a designated committee, at no extra charge to the nine copies licence.

In simple language the fee level accommodates whatever copying level the particular government department warrants, without any record keeping other than an annual report of journals subscribed to and books purchased within the previous twelve months. It may be claimed with some justification that the CLA licence facilitates the distribution of published information, by virtue of the comprehensive access to copyright works it provides.

This is all well and good for a department that knows itself to be a regular copier of published information across its workforce, as a result of subject matter, resources and policy. The majority of licensees have shown themselves to be comfortable with the fee level of the basic licence, which currently stands at £18.58 per annum per HEO or equivalent, inclusive of Artistic Works.

## **STATISTICS AND SURVEYS**

But what of the government department that suspects that its copying requirement is more modest than the standard fee represents? CLA acknowledges that the fee level would probably differ department by department if a survey or sampling exercise were to be carried out across government.

The difficult question is by how much, and if the answer were to be not very much, the time and administrative effort taken up by both CLA and the departments in carrying out a statistically sound snapshot of usage may well be open to doubt. Accepting these limitations the CLA has carried out a number of surveys in the last seven years. These have shown three main themes.

Departments who have thought themselves to be modest copiers due to subject matter and policy have in the main been correct in their assumption. Departments who requested a survey to prove that the proposed fee was pitched at the right level found to their and CLA's satisfaction that the standard fee was within a few percent of that figure. Finally, there have been occasions where the survey has shown that a department and/or its agencies have copied published material to an extent in excess of the standard fee, and needed to compensate rights holders accordingly.

## **CLA /CLIENT RELATIONSHIP**

There are some important points to be made about surveys. CLA pays for them, but the methodology used is always *mutually* agreed in advance of commencement. In the case of a large government department this can mean a substantial amount of resources being required across a number of locations within the UK. These resources include CLA staff visiting locations weekly, collecting data, reading photocopier meters and assisting licence administrators if required. The data is then taken back to the office to be analysed and evaluated, before a meeting is set up with the relevant department to run through that evaluation and hopefully agree the fee level.

Together with the pre survey set up time, the whole process can easily take eighteen months, and in the fast moving world of library and information services, the set of circumstances under which the survey was set up well may have changed too.

Don't misunderstand me , I am not complaining about carrying out surveys. In fact they are hugely useful to both parties. CLA obtains distribution data specific to subject matter and the department obtains data in respect of who is copying what.

## **LATEST LICENSING NEWS**

In the last eighteen months, CLA has carried out surveys for two client groups, the councils local government in England & Wales authority in membership of The Local Government Association (LGA) and DEFRA and its agencies. These were rigorously scrutinised by both parties and lead to the drawing up of a model agreement with the Local Government Association (LGA) and a new three year licence for DEFRA and its agencies respectively.

The surveys benefited from the latest available methodology that enabled both parties to access the information and interpret it with a high degree of confidence and trust in what was revealed. Interestingly, the definition of a Professional Employee for the LGA survey was **'pay grade Spinal Column Point ('SCP') 39, or its equivalent, or above'**. Some departments believe pay scales are a defining point and others still retain an HEO, or equivalent definition. ***CLA would prefer to have a single definition that works for most, if not all licensees.***

The methodology for a CLA survey is mutually agreed in advance as is the employment use by CLA of an independent consultant statistician whose job is to constantly look for ways to improve the quality of data from a survey and the simplicity of taking part in it without in any way compromising its statistical soundness.

## **THE FUTURE**

Looking to the future there are two aspects of the CLA relationship with government that are worthy of our mutual attention.

Firstly the work being carried out by the Committee of Departmental Librarians (CDL) and the potential impact it may have on government licensing, and secondly the introduction in the first half of 2002 of the CLA digitisation licence, and the contribution it may make to E-Government.

The fact that CDL exists is I believe wholly desirable and progressive in respect of government information services. A high degree of consistency in the means of access to and distribution of published information in government, based on research by information specialists must surely benefit the users, and CLA would like to make a contribution to this process.

Our experience to date has shown that there are departments at the low and high end of the spectrum of copying levels, therefore any desire to centralise the CLA government licence would need to be considered with great care and on a **totally reliable** statistical base.

## **Unresolved Licensing**

The great majority of government departments are licensed, and indeed have been for a number of years, however there are a few significant departments that have not taken a licence. Unless these departments urgently address the licence issue, they are standing in the way of meaningful progress for the **many** licensees.

90% of government departments accept without question, the legal and assurance role the CLA performs, encouraging **legal** copyright best practice, and acknowledge the agency is a useful resource.

## **NEW LICENSE TYPE**

Finally I turn to what I hope is good news, the introduction of the CLA Digitisation Licence. This will provide, in addition to photocopying, the ability to distribute by email or place on a secure intranet a scanned image from a paper original, either through your own paper holdings or as a result of a scanned image being sent to you by a CLA licensed third party.

In addition to this we recognise that there may be some desire to organise licensed material centrally. We hope to be able to fulfil such requests as an additional element to the core licence, and need to fully take on board the level of demand for this and any other 'add-ons' that may be on a wish list of the user community. We certainly intend to listen carefully to your views and learn more about developments in the networking of government personnel.

## **TO CONCLUDE**

In conclusion the challenge for copyright users, administrators and indeed rights holders in this rapidly evolving environment is to ensure that respect for copyright **remains intact**. To agree sensible licensing arrangements, by harnessing technology in capturing data, and all to continue to play their part in a relationship based on mutual respect and need.

My colleagues and I look forward to continuing our very worthwhile dialogue with government information professionals to achieve this.

*Roger Bull, Business Development & Marketing Manager-CLA.  
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# Book Review

**Planning Projects –  
Twenty steps to Effective Project  
Planning**

**Managers Pocket guide**

## **Trevor L Young**

I must confess to a less than altruistic reason for reviewing this book , particularly knowing it came out of the Industrial Society printing stable. It is not a new edition but a reprint first published in 1993, and has proven to be so popular this is the sixth reissue.

I myself am about to participate in some departmental projects as a team member with no previous experience. To that end I thought this guide would be worth checking out.

This particular book only outlines what is involved in the planning stage for starting a project, a second book called “Implementing projects” also by Trevor Young on physically managing a project is also available from the Industrial Society.

I have to begin my review by saying how readable this book is; the language used in the text is uncomplicated and the layout of the chapters is very simple to follow. I particularly like page X which contains a twenty step guide/list to effective planning linked to different pages within chapters of the book. A great way to cross reference subjects and procedures with a check list for anyone like me who is unfamiliar with the whole process. Diagrams throughout, a glossary of terms and appendices exercises all contribute to support the main text.

Described “as the function of establishing a predetermined course of action, including policies and procedures, to reach some specific corporate objectives”, the project is outlined through thirteen chapters. Starting with

the need for a planning process through to signing off the project base plan the author describes how to manage through the complete Who? What? Why? When? And How ? He looks at the risks being faced and how they can be handled and changed through the development of the project.

Communication is key though out the whole process to insure all relevant people are kept informed. Keeping people on side , interested and supportive.

This is not a book that I could pick up and read cover to cover, (but it does explain away some of the mysteries of the preplanning of the projects I am now involved in). The processes within it should not be followed religiously as each organisation will have it's own guidance/ preferred procedures. Any would be project manager/planner has to be aware of this and how up to date they are; plus how up to date this book is when working out a way forward .

To conclude I think this book is a very good place to start scoping what is being asked of you, just remember to set it in your organisational context.