

Report from Japan Liaison submitted to the NCC Meeting
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1. Follow-up

Incorporation of national universities has had effects on library activities in a number of respects. For one thing, personnel administration changed to a great extent in national university library quarter both in initial employment and promotion policy. Librarians in national university libraries were employed from among successful candidates in the library and information science specialty category at the unified government employee qualification examination. That division was removed from the governmentwide scheme, as these days employment in this category were only by national university libraries. The existence of this category allowed for easy migration of librarians across universities, which was only possible for director/manager level employees in the other categories, and which somehow fostered the consciousness of the profession among librarians. In the new national university governance structure, all employees, both staff and faculty, are employed by each university, as opposed to the government which allocated them to universities.

Given this removal, senior national university librarians decided to keep intact the advantage of having one category and have been working hard to lobby university administrations to give it due recognition, while piggybacking on the unified national university employment qualification examination. Their efforts have been so far successful.

For another, while in the older system senior, director/manager level librarians were under the personnel management of the Ministry of Education, and then of the MEXT, they are currently employed by individual universities independently, which makes it much harder to keep them moving around the country with 2- or 3-year term appointment. Such migratory appointment has contributed to homogenizing the university library community in Japan in the past few decades. Those senior people already appointed to senior level positions by the government will still be under the control of the MEXT, some symptoms for change, better or worse, have already become visible. This change could be among the most important consequences of "Hozinka" on university libraries. For your information, private universities already do not employ "librarians."

2. University libraries

So, still as before, there were new appointments in national university libraries, replacing almost half of directors/associate librarians in major universities. Along with them, Director of Contents Division, who is in charge of NACSIS-CAT/ILL and other library cooperation changed. Budgets have been constantly cut, but in the

review of the Electronic Journal Task Force, JANUL, it was made apparent that the number of “foreign” journal titles accessible from national universities increased while the total expenditure on them dropped down from 2002 to 2005.

Coordination Committee for Japanese University Libraries has an oneyear appointment for its chair and this fiscal year, which begins August, Chiba University will be responsible for the committee’s activities.

As reported in the last report, the MEXT hosts three working groups on computer networks, university libraries and scholarly communication under its unexplicably highly structured council scheme. The interim report from the working group on university libraries, published in June, focused on the environmental shift from print to electronic and the necessity for coping with such new environments for research and learning. It also highlights and endorses the importance for universities to build institutional repositories.

The work will continue through this fiscal year and is expected to submit a final report in March.

3. National Institute of Informatics(NII)

NII’s Director General changed from Dr Suematsu to Dr Sakauchi, and Director for library cooperation and computer networks also changed from Professor Tokura to Professor Adachi, who was there from the start of the institution and has contributed to almost all of the projects there, though CAT is Professor’s Miyazawa’s.

It is hoped that NII will play a key role in the coordination of library activities in the new direction as well as maintaining NACSIS-CAT/ILL and other activities to support libraries and librarians.

4. National Diet Library(NDL)

Following the Legal Depositing Council’s recommendations, the NDL started to implement the systems and operations for legal depositing of networked resources, but they are having a hard time make a law which is consistent of the restrictions on the author’s rights for reproduction for migratory purposes by libraries.

5. Copyright issues

No big issue has been discussed in the regular meeting with libraries and copyright holders except the permission for borrowing libraries to make reproductions of borrowed materials/books and the removal of unnecessary practice of masking the rest of the copyrighted materials part of which is permitted to make reproduction of.

6. Global ILL Framework

Issues concerning GIF will be discussed in due course in this meeting.