

A. Evans

Wayne State University Libraries

Memorandum

To: Peter Spyers-Duran
From: Nancy Allen *NA*
Re: Various DALNET database quality issues
Date: June 1, 1988

I recently met with Anaclare Evans and Louise Bugg to follow through on previous discussions with you about the DALNET Database Standards Committee. We discussed 1) the existing draft of the "standards" document, 2) internal approval procedures for this draft and future drafts, and 3) options for distribution authority work to the DALNET partners:

1) Anaclare Evans will use the existing committee draft of a "standards" document to enumerate real standards, and to attach to these, related procedures and practice decisions. These documents will be further reviewed.

2) A. Evans will do preliminary content review of all Database Standards Committee documents prior to circulating drafts. This content review will involve WSU staff, and especially the Head of Technical Services, and the Director for Systems. Once the content is firm, the documents will then be submitted to the Head of Technical Services and the Director for Systems for administrative review of the salary, budget, and funding impact of the document. Once this is done, it will be submitted to you for review, and if you so desire, to Council.

3) There are really only two options for DALNET authority work: centralized control or decentralized control. To put it another way, either WSU does the work and adds staff, or we give the work to DALNET partners, who will have to add staff or absorb the work.

BACKGROUND: DALNET libraries will be responsible for bibliographic and authority record changes to any record uniquely held by that library. Only when there are shared records is there some concern. Bibliographic records are not shared--there are separate lists in the database for each DALNET partner. However, authority records are in a shared file.

NOTIS security tables are structured so that an individual is either authorized to change anything in an authority record, or nothing. We have asked NOTIS to develop a better system, but it looks like a fairly low priority.

CENTRALIZED WORK: At this time, DALNET libraries have agreed to centralize authority work on shared authority records, and procedures are in place for DALNET partners to submit heading change requests to A. Evans. She makes the changes and informs affected libraries of the changed headings. All agree this is fine in theory, and would result in the highest quality authority control, but that the workload cannot be absorbed without adding staff. L. Bugg included a half-time staff member in the DALNET budget request to assist with this work. We anticipate this would not suffice once the DPL is participating. Oakland University has sent about 500 updates and conflict reports in the last year.

DECENTRALIZED WORK: The alternative to this centralized model is to route authority record changes to DALNET partners. This could be done on the basis of subjects for subject and possibly series headings, and an alphabet distribution for name headings.

Drawbacks are: 1) This would have to be done on a trust basis, since if we authorized an individual to make authority record changes of any kind, this person would be able to change everything. 2) This would involve a greater staff training effort, since at this time, expertise is not evenly distributed among DALNET partners. 3) The size of the DALNET partners' Technical Services staffs are not all such that this work could be absorbed by all DALNET libraries.

cc: A. Evans
L. Bugg

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