DOBIS IN THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT
NATIONAL LIBRARY OF CANADA.

DOBIS in the Federal Government ·
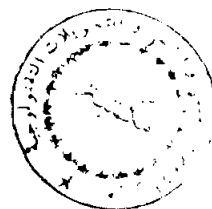
Presentation delivered

at the

BCUC Users Meeting

March 6-7, 1980

Mary Joan Dunn
Head, Library Systems Analysis Section
Library Systems Centre
National Library of Canada

Contents

1. Introduction and background

In some ways, the implementation of DOBIS as a shared system in the federal library community represents the culmination of a planning and systems development effort which began in the late 1960's. In many ways, of course, it is just the beginning. But in 1970, the report of the National Library's Systems Development Project recommended the development of an automated and integrated information system for the National Library. From that recommendation came, initially, the NL batch automated systems, and later, in response to the increasing need for more timely services and products, coupled with an increasing workload, the search for an on-line system.

In 1974, the Federal Library Survey recommended that the "National Library initiate a cooperative cataloguing system among federal libraries ..." and that that system be "designed as a node of the projected national bibliographic network ..." Two years later, the Canadian Union Catalogue Task Group, in its final report, supported this recommendation.

In 1975, the National Library evaluated a number of existing on-line systems. One of the main requirements of that evaluation was that the system be capable of supporting a number of libraries in a shared operation.

In 1976, the National Library, the Canada Institute for Scientific and Technical Information (Cisti) and Unicat/Télécat undertook a joint evaluation of the DOBIS System which was recommended by the initial study. From 1977 to September 1979, NL and Cisti, in what was called Phase II of the DOBIS Project, went on together to continue developing the system to meet their needs, and to operate pilot projects.

Also during Phase II, the federal library community became actively involved in DOBIS development, through the Integrated Library Systems Committee of the Council of Federal Libraries. The Committee conducted a survey, followed up with interviews, whose findings indicated that when all modules of the system were implemented, the DOBIS system would be capable of handling all of the functional requirements identified by the interviewed libraries.

Along with the National Library and Cisti Phase II reports, a federal library report was included as part of the Treasury Board submission which was approved in November of 1979. This approval means that DOBIS is now an on-going item in the operational budgets of the National Library and Cisti.

With that very brief historical summary, let me go on to address, and again, briefly, 5 topics:

* Objectives of DOBIS (in our installation)

* Status of the system (in the federal government)

* Some features of the system and related benefits, or implications

* Some organizational aspects of the system

and our

* Plans for the future

Let me also note that the best historical and functional description of the NLC/Cisti version of DOBIS is contained in an article in the August 1979 issue of the Canadian Library Journal.

2. <u>Objectives of DOBIS</u>

I'm going to start by reviewing the objectives of the federal government installation of DOBIS because they provide the context for everything we have done and are doing with the system.

The objectives of DOBIS are:

First,

1. To provide efficient and effective support of library operations, in order to improve services.

    DOBIS, like any automated or even manual library system, is not an end in itself. Rather, it is a tool — it exists to assist the National Library and other libraries to achieve their service objectives.

The second objective is:

2. To continue building and maintaining an authoritative and comprehensive data base of bibliographic records to support library functions.

    The existence and the continued development and maintenance of such a data base will be an important element in the design and implementation of a national library and information network.