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# Refining the Government Relations Program: The Final Report of the Task Force on AALL's Government Relations Activities

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## **Refining the Government Relations Program: The Final Report of the Task Force on AALL's Government Relations Activities\***

### **Introduction\*\***

During the summer of 1993, Kay Todd, President Elect of the American Association of Law Libraries, named a special task force to review the Association's government relations activities, presenting it with a goal of achieving a better coordination of such activities. The charges to the Task Force on AALL's Government Relations Activities and the processes that the Task Force utilized in fulfilling these charges are outlined in the final and interim reports of the Task Force, which follow this introduction. The Interim Report of the Task Force was submitted to the AALL Executive Board prior to its April 1994 meeting for information purposes only. The Final Report, issued on June 21, 1994, outlined nine recommendations relating to AALL's government relations activities. This report was considered by the Executive Board at its July 7-8, 1994, meetings.

This introduction details the Executive Board's actions on the nine recommendations of the Final Report. It is followed by the text of the Final Report, as submitted to the AALL Board but with added footnote information to facilitate access to material cited in the Report. The Interim Report is included as an appendix to the Final Report.

### **Task Force Recommendations and AALL Executive Board Actions**

The AALL Board adopted all but two of the Task Force's recommendations. The adopted recommendations were<sup>1</sup>:

- The Washington Affairs Representative should determine when the Assistant Washington Affairs Representative may speak for AALL [Recommendation 1];

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\* The Task Force members were Laura N. Gasaway; Sarah K. Wiant; Robert L. Oakley, ex officio; and Timothy L. Coggins, Chair. AALL President Kay M. Todd served as the board liaison to the Task Force.

\*\* The introduction to this report was prepared by Timothy L. Coggins, Chair of the Task Force on AALL's Government Relations Activities, and Director and Assistant Professor of Law, University of Alabama School of Law Library, Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

1. Letter from Kay M. Todd, President of the American Association of Law Libraries, to Timothy L. Coggins, Chair of the Task Force on AALL's Government Relations Activities 1 (August 16, 1994). See MEETINGS OF THE AALL EXECUTIVE BOARD, BOARD NOTEBOOKS, July 1994, Book 1, Tab 12. The report of all actions taken on the Task Force Final Report by the AALL Executive Board also appears in MINUTES OF THE AALL EXECUTIVE BOARD, July 7-8, 1994, at 1933-34, American Association of Law Libraries Headquarters, Chicago.

- A meeting of individuals involved in AALL's government relations activities should be convened each year at the Annual Meeting [Recommendation 2];
- The National Legal Resources Committee should be charged to define its role more clearly [Recommendation 4];
- A process for resolving conflicts related to AALL's government relations policy should be adopted [Recommendation 6];
- The Washington Affairs Representative should attend all AALL Executive Board meetings [Recommendation 7]<sup>2</sup>;
- The responsibilities of official representatives to groups involved in government relations activities should be transferred to the Washington Affairs Representative [Recommendation 8]; and
- The Washington Affairs Representative should develop an ongoing effort to educate the members of AALL about the Association's government relations activities and positions on issues [Recommendation 9].

President Kay Todd indicated that the recommendations would be implemented, and, in fact, the recommendation related to other representatives has been implemented already from a budgetary standpoint.<sup>3</sup>

The AALL Board did not adopt two of the nine recommendations. Those recommendations were:<sup>4</sup>

- Funds should be budgeted to support travel for those other than the Washington Affairs Representative to testify before Congress [Recommendation 3]; and
- Preservation activities should be the responsibility of the Technical Services Special Interest Section, and, consequently, the Preservation Committee should be terminated [Recommendation 5].

The Board felt that travel funds for presenting testimony on behalf of AALL in Washington should be under the control and within the budget of the Washington Affairs Representative. Washington Affairs Representative Robert Oakley indicated to the Board that he recalled only two instances in which someone other than himself represented AALL at hearings. The Board also felt that the Preservation Committee was undertaking important activities for the Association and that it should be maintained as a separate committee.<sup>5</sup>

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2. The Task Force proposed the following: "The Washington Affairs Representative should serve as an ex-officio member of the AALL Executive Board and should attend all Board meetings." However, the Board amended this recommendation to the following: "The Washington Affairs Representative should attend AALL Executive Board Meetings." The amended recommendation passed. See MINUTES, *supra* note 1, at 1934.

3. Letter of Aug. 16, 1994, *supra* note 1, at 1.

4. *Id.* at 2. See also MINUTES, *supra* note 1, at 1933-34.

5. Letter of Aug. 16, 1994, *supra* note 1, at 1.

**American Association of Law Libraries  
Task Force on AALL's Government  
Relations Activities  
Final Report, June 21, 1994**

**I. History of the Task Force**

The Task Force on AALL's Government Relations Activities was appointed by President Kay M. Todd during the summer of 1993 and was charged with recommending guidelines and procedures that promote better coordination of AALL's government relations activities, more efficiency of committees' work, consistency of positions on issues, and better communication among the various committees and official representatives involved in the government relations activities.<sup>6</sup> The Task Force surveyed AALL officers and Board members, current and past chairs of committees involved in the government relations program, the Washington Affairs Representative (Robert L. Oakley), the Assistant Washington Affairs Representative (Susan E. Tulis), and selected official representatives to solicit their opinions and experiences.<sup>7</sup> The process is described fully in the Task Force Interim Report, which was submitted for information purposes to the AALL Board at its April meeting. A copy of the Interim Report is appended.

The Task Force is pleased to report that many recommendations about AALL's government relations activities that were included in the Special Committee on National Information Policy Report<sup>8</sup> and the recommendations in the Washington Affairs Representative's *Report on AALL's Government Relations Program and Recommendations for the Future*<sup>9</sup> have been adopted and currently are functioning very well. The Association is now represented effectively in Washington, D. C., by the Washington Affairs Representative and

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6. Letter from Kay M. Todd, President of the American Association of Law Libraries, to Timothy L. Coggins, Chair of the Task Force on AALL's Government Relations Activities 1 (June 2, 1993) (on file with the Chair of the Task Force).
  7. See Task Force on AALL's Government Relations Activities, *Compilation of Questionnaire Responses* (unpublished manuscript, on file with Chair of the Task Force).
  8. American Association of Law Libraries, *Special Committee on National Information Policy, Final Report, May 31, 1990*, 83 LAW LIBR. J. 177 (1991) [hereinafter *Special Committee Final Report*]. This is an edited version of the Special Committee's Final Report.
  9. AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF LAW LIBRARIES, *REPORT OF THE WASHINGTON AFFAIRS REPRESENTATIVE ON AALL'S GOVERNMENT RELATIONS PROGRAM AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE*, JUNE, 1992. This document is available at the Archives of the American Association of Law Libraries, managed by and housed at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Library. The Archives collection contains official records of the Association and its committees, officers, sections, and chapters. Additionally, personal papers of past officers and other active members of the Association are maintained. To transfer records to the Archives or to request a search of the Archives, contact William Maher, Library, Room 19, University Archives, University of Illinois, 1408 N.

the Assistant Washington Affairs Representative. Their work, along with the work of the AALL officers, committees, and members, has enabled AALL to participate significantly in the development and direction of government information policies. This Task Force Final Report offers additions to the earlier reports and enhancements to the current operations in order to create an even more effective presence and involvement in government relations activities.<sup>10</sup> The report also recommends methods to inform the AALL membership about its government relations activities.

The Task Force Final Report deals with individuals, committees, and others who are involved in the Association's government relations activities. This group includes the AALL President and Board, the Government Relations Committee (GRC), the National Legal Resources Committee (NLRC), the Copyright Committee, the Preservation Committee, the Washington Affairs Representative (WAR), the Assistant Washington Affairs Representative (Assistant Representative), and the official representatives who have government relations related roles. The Final Report is divided into two sections: General Comments and Continuing Initiatives, and Recommendations for New Initiatives.

## II. General Comments and Continuing Initiatives

This section of the Task Force Final Report clarifies some issues and briefly discusses current initiatives to emphasize the importance of continuing attention to and discussion of these issues.

### *A. Government Relations Policy Development and Official Statements*

AALL's processes and procedures for the development of government relations policies work well. Committees freely and independently review issues, develop proposals, and submit those proposals for consideration by the President, the Board, and ultimately the membership at the AALL Annual Meeting business meeting, if necessary. Committees are assisted by the WAR and his office. This system permits the flexibility necessary to involve many members and to develop policies based on collaborative efforts.

In some instances the procedures outlined above are not necessary. If a statement is consistent with and reflects an existing policy, the issuing committee and individuals may present the statement as the policy of AALL. Committees and individuals may not, however, make statements about new

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Gregory, Urbana, IL 61801. A list of processed record series is posted on AALLNET, the Association's electronic information system at Washburn University School of Law Library. The REPORT OF THE WASHINGTON AFFAIRS REPRESENTATIVE ON AALL'S GOVERNMENT RELATIONS PROGRAM AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE is placed in R.S. 85/1/180—Representatives' Annual Reports File. The report is also available in MEETINGS OF THE AALL EXECUTIVE BOARD, BOARD NOTEBOOKS, Apr. 24–25/Jul. 16–17, 1992, Book 1, Tab 8.

10. The Final Report of the Task Force on AALL's Government Relations Activities also is available at the Archives, R.S. 85/1/428—Government Relations Committee File.

policies that are not founded on existing policies. These statements must be approved by the President, the Board, and the membership where appropriate. The Copyright Committee is the only committee that is exempted from this procedure.<sup>11</sup>

There has been some discussion recently about the use of a "House of Delegates" in AALL to develop and approve government relations policies, positions, and statements. The Task Force does not support this concept because it is unnecessary to create this layer of bureaucracy, which obviously would increase the time necessary to decide issues. Government relations issues normally must be decided in a timely manner. Additionally, a "House of Delegates" as a decision-making process is too unwieldy for an organization of AALL's size.

The drafting of letters and testimony on behalf of AALL currently is working well. The WAR normally contacts the appropriate committee chair with a request for assistance and/or for review of documents drafted in his office. One of the clear responsibilities of the Assistant Representative is to draft letters and testimony for review by the WAR, committees, and other involved individuals. Occasionally, the President, the WAR, and a committee chair may decide that a committee member is the most appropriate individual to draft the letter or the testimony. Again, the flexibility of the current system works well and allows the Association the opportunity to take advantage of the talents of many members.

### *B. Committees and Committee Composition*

The committees that are involved in government relations activities require members who are committed to the work and eager to learn the issues, and in some instances, members who already have substantial subject matter knowledge. The Copyright Committee requires members who have expertise in copyright law if the committee is expected to function effectively. There is little time for new members to learn the subject matter; they need to contribute immediately to the Copyright Committee discussions and evaluations. Past and current chairs of the Copyright Committee recommend that members who are appointed to this committee have more than just a basic knowledge of the subject. The individual who is appointed to chair the Copyright Committee must have *substantial* knowledge of and experience with copyright law. The individuals who are appointed to chair the GRC and the NLRC should have experience with government information issues and, ideally, experience on the committee.

The Copyright and the Government Relations Committees are authorized to speak on behalf of AALL.<sup>12</sup> The Copyright Committee is authorized to develop

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11. AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF LAW LIBRARIES, COMMITTEE HANDBOOK 4 (1988, revised Apr. 13, 1991) [hereinafter AALL COMMITTEE HANDBOOK].

12. *Special Committee Final Report*, *supra* note 8, at 186. For Copyright Committee authorization, see AALL COMMITTEE HANDBOOK, *supra* note 11, at 4.

and speak about AALL's position on new copyright issues without prior approval of the President and the Board. However, this seldom occurs. Most Copyright Committee chairs have reviewed carefully positions supported by the committee with the President and the Board before issuing any statements.

The GRC, on the other hand, can speak about established positions that are consistent with the AALL government relations policy,<sup>13</sup> but must seek the approval of the President and the Board before issuing a statement or speaking on a new policy. Additionally, the official representatives to various groups and associations, such as the AALL Representatives to the National Commission on Libraries and Information Service and the Library of Congress Network Advisory Committee, may speak for the Association as long as their comments reflect their official capacity and are within the scope of their responsibilities.<sup>14</sup>

The Task Force members and the respondents to the Task Force survey feel that the current methods used to appoint new committee members and the official representatives work reasonably well. The Task Force encourages the President-Elect to continue seeking a balance of experienced and less experienced members and representation from the various law library types for most committees. The Task Force also encourages the President-Elect to seek specific expertise in certain areas, especially copyright law, before making appointments. One survey respondent commented, "While I fully support the concept that [committees] should reflect the composition of the Association, I believe that interest and knowledge of at least some of the issues is more important than the type of library in which one works." The President-Elect should consult the WAR to solicit information about issues that his office might be facing during the coming year. For example, a member with some knowledge about telecommunications issues is crucial for the GRC since telecommunications issues affect many information access issues facing the Association and the WAR.

The Task Force recognizes the difficulty of satisfying all AALL constituencies and applauds the efforts of AALL Presidents for their commitment to balance committee compositions. The Task Force also stresses the importance of subject matter and issue knowledge for some committees, and encourages the Presidents to consider all these factors when selecting AALL members to serve on committees. The Task Force asked a question about the appropriate size of committees on the survey. Survey respondents generally believe that the committees have sufficient members to accomplish the charges of the committees. Therefore, the Task Force makes no recommendations about

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13. For a copy of the Government Relations Policy, see AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF LAW LIBRARIES, *Government Relations Policy*, in AALL DIRECTORY AND HANDBOOK 1994-95, at 713-16 (34th ed. 1994).

14. *Special Committee Final Report*, *supra* note 8, at 186-87.

committee sizes, especially since this issue was addressed last year by the AALL Special Committee on Committees in 1992–1993.<sup>15</sup>

### *C. Washington Affairs Representative and the Washington Presence*

At its April, 1994 meeting, the AALL Board approved a motion to change the status of the Washington Affairs Representative position to an “indefinite, continuing term, serving at the pleasure of the President and the Executive Board.”<sup>16</sup> The Association has benefitted tremendously from the work of the current WAR. He has brought substantial recognition to the Association, and AALL is now viewed as an active and valuable participant in the development of government information policy. The Task Force survey responses indicated some interest in an educational role for the WAR, helping other AALL members learn lobbying techniques, letter-writing skills, and related activities. The WAR already performs an educational role, making presentations at national and chapter meetings. During these presentations, the WAR discusses issues substantively and recommends various methods for the membership to become involved in lobbying efforts. Since the WAR is a volunteer, it is unlikely that he can increase his activities in this area.

On the other hand, it appears that there has been little broad based interest in lobbying instruction. The workshop planned by the Government Relations Committee and the State, Court and County Special Interest Section last year prior to the AALL Annual Meeting did not receive sufficient participation and was canceled. The GRC and the WAR stand ready to offer these types of educational programs when the association membership requests and supports the programs.

The Task Force Final Report includes some specific recommendations about the Washington Affairs Representative and the Washington Office in Part III. C.

### *D. Role of the Government Documents Special Interest Section*

The Government Documents Special Interest Section (SIS) provides valuable expertise to the committees and individuals involved in AALL government relations activities. The Association should use this expertise and encourage considerable dialogue between the Government Documents SIS and the committees. The Government Documents Special Interest Section serves the association well as a training ground for future members of committees such as the

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15. AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF LAW LIBRARIES, SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES, 1992–93, FINAL REPORT, June 24, 1993. This document is available at the AALL Archives at the University of Illinois; the document is placed at R.S. 85/1/400—Committee Reports and Lists File. *See supra* note 9. The report also is available in MEETINGS OF THE AALL EXECUTIVE BOARD, BOARD NOTEBOOKS, Apr. 23–24/Jul. 7–8, 1993, Book 1, Tab 6.

16. Letter from Kay M. Todd, President of the American Association of Law Libraries, to Robert L. Oakley, AALL Washington Affairs Representative 1 (May 25, 1994) (on file with the Chair of the Task Force).

GRC and the NLRC. Another significant role for the Government Documents Special Interest Section is to assist with the publicity of policies, decisions, testimony, and information about the importance of lobbying efforts. The Task Force commends the Government Documents SIS for its cooperation several years ago with the GRC to form the state issues monitoring program. It is, however, difficult to ascertain an official role for the Government Documents SIS in the development of AALL policies and positions. It is the responsibility of AALL committees to develop policies, and it would be too unwieldy to involve formally the Government Documents SIS as a player in every policy determination. It is important, however, that the chairs of the various AALL committees which are involved in government relations activities actively correspond and exchange information with the Government Documents SIS chair.

### III. Recommendations for New Initiatives

This section of the Task Force Final Report focuses on new initiatives. The recommendations are designed to coordinate better the work of the various committees, the Washington Affairs Representative and his office, and the official representatives involved in AALL government relations activities; and to educate the AALL membership, including committee members, about government information issues and the work of AALL persons involved in these issues. The nine recommendations cover three different, but interrelated, categories: AALL operations, AALL committees, and the Washington Affairs Representative Office.

#### *A. Issues Relating to AALL Operations*

##### **Recommendation 1**

*The AALL Board should authorize the Washington Affairs Representative to determine when the Assistant Washington Affairs Representative may speak on behalf of AALL.*

Currently, very few individuals are authorized to speak on behalf of AALL. The Assistant Representative is not included on this list. As the Assistant Representative learns his/her role, develops visibility within the library and government communities as a representative of the Association, and develops expertise in the issues, he or she naturally will be asked to state the Association position. It is important that this individual be able to respond appropriately and in a timely manner. It is equally important that the individual in this role have the requisite knowledge prior to speaking for the Association. When the WAR feels that the Assistant Representative is sufficiently knowledgeable, the WAR should have the authority to designate the Assistant to speak for the Association on particular issues.

**Recommendation 2**

*The AALL President should convene a brief meeting of individuals involved in AALL government relations activities every year at the AALL Annual Meeting.*

A large number of individuals are involved in AALL government relations activities. This group includes the President and President-Elect, who serve as the Board liaison for the GRC, the WAR, the Assistant Representative, the current and incoming chairs of the Copyright, National Legal Resources, Preservation, and the Government Relations committees, and the official representatives to groups associated with government relations issues. Increasingly, these individuals must recognize the importance of the coordination of efforts. Additionally, the WAR and the Assistant Representative must have the opportunity to convey the importance of adherence to deadlines and the necessity for quick turnaround of drafts of letters and testimony and the critical evaluation of proposed legislation. The content of the brief meeting should be (1) a pep talk from the President for these individuals, (2) a description of how the Washington Office operates, and (3) a quick "process" discussion by the WAR to make certain that everyone knows how the process works, who is involved, and other related issues. This meeting is not designed to discuss issues substantively, although this could occur on occasions. The discussion of issues is handled more appropriately at the "Annual Legislative and Regulatory Update" program at each Annual Meeting.

**Recommendation 3**

*The AALL Board should budget travel funds for trips to Washington, D.C., by committee chairs and/or other individuals to testify before Congress and/or other appropriate entities.*

The Association must begin to consider the costs of supporting a lobbying effort. A step in this direction is to provide adequate funds for trips to Washington, D.C., by committee chairs and other AALL members who might be asked to testify before the U.S. Congress or other appropriate bodies. Funds were available in the GRC budget several years ago, and the funds were used occasionally. Although the WAR and the Assistant Representative will testify most frequently, there are occasions when it is important to bring in other members. The budget should permit this. The Task Force makes no recommendation regarding which budget line should be used for the funds. It does believe, however, that AALL must realize that trips to Washington, D.C., to testify are significant contributions and more than just discretionary.

The Association should begin to evaluate the funds necessary to support a fully developed government relations program. It presently benefits from the generosity of members who volunteer their time, efforts, and funds and from the support of Georgetown University Law Center. In the future, AALL may have to rely on salaried staff to represent its interest. The Association also must consider more active participation with other library associations to fund items

such as a retainer arrangement with a copyright law attorney who can represent the library profession's interests. The Task Force recommends the adoption of the specific recommendation, but also encourages the Board to discuss these broader and more far-reaching funding issues.

### *B. Issues Relating to AALL Committees*

#### **Recommendation 4**

*The National Legal Resources Committee should define its role more clearly, including a review of the continuing necessity for the Committee.*

Many respondents to the Task Force survey responded that they did not understand the role of the National Legal Resources Committee and did not know if there was a continuing role for this Committee within AALL. There is considerable overlap among the issues that are reviewed by the GRC and the NLRC. Several persons involved in the government relations program suggested that the NLRC should be merged with the GRC and/or become a sub-group of the GRC, reporting to the GRC Chair. These suggestions are based on the fact that the issues are similar and it would be easier to coordinate the AALL discussion and position on the issues if only one committee was involved in the evaluation. It is important that everyone within AALL understand the NLRC's role if it is to continue as a standing committee. The Task Force recommends that the AALL President charge the NLRC to investigate and evaluate its role, carefully reviewing the earlier report about the NLRC,<sup>17</sup> and report to the Board within one year concerning the role of the Committee and whether and in what form it should continue.

#### **Recommendation 5**

*The Preservation Committee should become a sub-group of the Technical Services Special Interest Section.*

The continuing role of the Preservation Committee remains a question for many respondents to the Task Force survey. Most preservation issues deal with the preservation of traditional library materials and should be addressed by the Technical Services Special Interest Section (TS-SIS). If this recommendation is adopted, cooperation and communication between the TS-SIS Preservation sub-group and the Government Relations Committee are encouraged when issues involve the preservation of government information.

#### **Recommendation 6**

*The Association should adopt a simplified process to resolve any conflicts that might arise about government relations policies and activities within AALL.*

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17. See generally SETTING THE LEGAL INFORMATION AGENDA FOR THE YEAR 2000: BASED ON A WORKSHOP OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF LAW LIBRARIES NATIONAL LEGAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE (M. Kathleen Price & Margaret Maes Axtmann, eds., 1993).

There is a degree of overlap among the committees and others who are involved in the government relations activities of the Association. Some duplicative discussions and efforts are important and beneficial for AALL. However, it is inevitable that differences of opinions regarding an AALL position will arise. The Association should develop internal procedures to resolve these differences; however, AALL does not need a complicated or bureaucratic system to resolve the few differences that might occur.

In situations where two committees, or one committee and an official representative, or any other combination of AALL constituencies differ regarding the position that the Association should take, the groups or individuals should submit a brief position statement and the reasons for taking the position to the AALL President. The chairs or individuals also may talk informally with the President, who should then discuss the issue with the WAR. If appropriate and necessary, the WAR might discuss the issue with the chairs or individuals. The President, in consultation with the WAR, is authorized to resolve the issue if the review reveals that one position is supported clearly by existing AALL government relations policy statements. The decision then should be reported to the committees and/or the individuals involved. If the President cannot resolve the issue, the President should solicit the advice of the Board, which has the final authority to resolve the conflict. No committee and/or individual should issue a statement of AALL position until the matter has been resolved by the Board. The Board may decide that the Association will take no position on the issue.

### *C. Issues Relating to the Washington Affairs Representative and the Washington Office*

#### **Recommendation 7**

*The Washington Affairs Representative should serve as an ex officio member of the AALL Executive Board and should attend all Board meetings.*

Crucial to the effective operations of the Washington Affairs Representative Office is an informed WAR and an informed Board. Attendance at and participation in AALL Board meetings guarantee that the WAR knows what the Board is doing, what issues it is discussing, its strategic directions, its goals, etc., and that the Board knows what the WAR is doing. Individuals holding similar government relations positions at other library associations attend their associations' board meetings. The WAR's role with the AALL Board should be similar to the roles of the Chair of the Council of Chapter Presidents and the Chair of the Council of SIS Chairs.

#### **Recommendation 8**

*The Washington Affairs Representative and the Assistant Washington Affairs Representative should assume the responsibilities currently assigned to the official representatives to groups involved in government relations activities.*

The Task Force recommends that AALL should discontinue its practice of appointing AALL members to serve as official representatives to groups that deal with government relations and government information issues: This recommendation only applies to the official representative positions that are involved in government relations activities, such as the representatives to the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, the Coalition of Government Information, the Library of Congress, the Library of Congress Network Advisory Committee, and others. As long as the WAR and the Assistant Representative are practicing law librarians and/or have experience as a law librarian, they should serve as the AALL representative to these committees, government bodies, and other entities. These two individuals will be identified quickly in the government relations arena as the contacts for AALL, which promotes better recognition for both the individual and the Association. The WAR and the Assistant Representative also possess more comprehensive knowledge of the Association's positions on many government relations issues. It is easier to get the information from these groups back to the appropriate individuals if there are two individuals who have this responsibility, rather than many AALL members who would handle the responsibility differently. There should be some cost savings as no travel expenses will have to be paid for meetings in Washington, D.C.

### **Recommendation 9**

*The Washington Affairs Representative and the Assistant Washington Affairs Representative should educate the AALL membership about the Association's government relations activities and positions on issues.*

It is crucial that AALL members become more aware of government relations and government information issues. It also is important that the AALL membership understands the importance of an Association presence in Washington, D.C. The members must understand the activities of the WAR and the Assistant Representative. To accomplish this recommendation, the Task Force recommends that the WAR and the Assistant Representative perform the following responsibilities:

1. Present a brief issue-oriented and substantive discussion of government relations issues at one of the business meetings at each year's AALL Annual Meeting. The President should determine at which business meeting this presentation should occur.
2. Post letters submitted to government officials, testimony drafted for the Association, and other related documents on the law library-related discussion lists.
3. Contribute informational articles and news items to the editor of the "Government News" column in the *AALL Newsletter*.
4. Submit and publish a Washington Affairs Representative report in the

*Law Library Journal* issue that includes the annual reports of committees and official representatives.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

The Task Force appreciates the opportunity to study and report on AALL's government relations activities. With the submission of this Final Report, the Task Force on AALL's Government Relations Activities has completed its evaluation and work. The Task Force members are happy to answer any questions that might arise regarding this report.

#### **Appendix American Association of Law Libraries Task Force on AALL's Government Relations Activities Interim Report, April 15, 1994**

AALL President Kay M. Todd created the Task Force on AALL's Government Relations Activities during the summer of 1993. The members of the Task Force are Lolly Gasaway (North Carolina), Sally Wiant (Washington and Lee University), and Timothy Coggins (Alabama). Bob Oakley (Georgetown University), AALL's Washington Affairs Representative and current AALL Board member, serves as an ex officio member.

President Todd charged the Task Force with recommending "guidelines and procedures that promote better coordination of AALL's government relations activities, more efficiency of committees' work, consistency of positions on issues, and better communications among the various committees and official representatives involved in government relations activities." The Task Force members met at the 1993 Annual Meeting in Boston, Massachusetts, to discuss the charge to the Task Force and to consider methods to solicit opinions and experiences from AALL members, officers, and committee chairs. Members of the Task Force participated in several teleconference calls to continue planning the Task Force's work.

The Task Force designed a questionnaire to solicit the views and opinions of committee chairs, officers, and official representatives. The draft questionnaire was reviewed several times by the Task Force members, the AALL President, the Washington Affairs Representative, the Assistant Washington Affairs Representative, the Executive Director, and several current and past committee chairs. The Task Force questionnaire was mailed on January 12, 1994, to the thirty-two individuals who are involved in the AALL government relations program, including current chairs of selected committees (Government Relations, Copyright, National Legal Resources, and Preservation), past chairs of the same committees, official AALL representatives involved with

government relations activities, AALL officers and Board members, the Washington Affairs Representative and the Assistant Washington Affairs Representative, the AALL Executive Director, and the current chair of the Government Documents SIS. An announcement of the Task Force's charge and a solicitation for input from other members appeared in the February 1994 issue of the *AALL Newsletter*.

The questionnaire consisted of twenty-three questions and was structured to solicit both opinions and experiences. The Task Force recognized that the questionnaire would be time consuming for respondents, but it was an essential step to permit the Task Force to complete its work. The Task Force sincerely appreciates the special efforts of respondents to provide complete and detailed answers. Thirty of the thirty-two individuals who received the questionnaire have responded; another AALL member submitted remarks as a result of the announcement in the *AALL Newsletter*. The work of the Task Force has been delayed temporarily because many of the survey responses were not received by the requested deadline of February 11, 1994. A compilation of questionnaire responses will be used by the Task Force members to complete the final Task Force report. To complete its work, the Task Force will review questionnaire results, will consider possible changes to coordinate the Association's government relations activities, and will make recommendations to strengthen consistency, communication, and effectiveness of committees and representatives. The Final Report will be submitted to the AALL President for consideration at the July 1994 AALL Board meeting.

This Interim Report is designed to report only the process used by the Task Force. There are some preliminary findings that the AALL Board might find interesting, however. Overall, most respondents and the Task Force members feel that the present system is working fine. There are some concerns about overlap among the committees and the continuing purpose of some committees, as well as some interest in merging certain committees. Additionally, there are some differences of opinion regarding who should speak for the Association, who should draft testimony for AALL, how official positions should be determined, and other similar issues. Many respondents also express concerns regarding how AALL will function in the government relations arena if the current Washington Affairs Representative should resign the position.

Although not a part of its review at this point, the Task Force supports the proposal by Bob Oakley, Washington Affairs Representative, that the appointment of the Washington Affairs Representative be analogous to the appointment of the *Law Library Journal* editor. The Washington Affairs Representative should serve at the pleasure of the Association until such time as a president and/or a board determines that it is time to appoint a different person as the Washington Affairs Representative, or until the current Washington Affairs Representative chooses to resign from the position. This type of appointment, rather than the current system of regular expiring terms, accom-

plishes several functions. It permits the Washington Affairs Representative the opportunity to develop the necessary expertise and provides U.S. Congress members and their staffs the opportunity to develop trust in and reliance upon the expertise of AALL's representative. Additionally, it offers stability for AALL and the Washington Affairs Representative. The Task Force members encourage the Board to adopt Bob's proposal.

The Task Force members appreciate the advice and comments received from the AALL Board and look forward to further recommendations and suggestions from the Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Task Force on AALL's Government Relations Activities

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