

SOUTH AFRICA COUNTRY REPORT 1998 - 2000

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Introduction

LIASA was formally admitted to SCECSAL in 1998 at the General Assembly held in Nairobi, Kenya. Since then LIASA's first Representative Council was elected in November 1998. All the branches and interest groups have representation on the Council. Five national office bearers are elected directly by all paid-up members of the Association.

Membership

LIASA currently has a membership of 1510 members. We hope to increase this to 1700 during 2000.

Branches

Branches have been established in all of the 9 provinces - with 2 branches in the Gauteng Province. Thus a total of 10 branches.

Interest Groups and Committees

Various interest groups and standing committees have been formed.

Communication

An official newsletter was launched in 1999 - called LIASA-IN-TOUCH. Our website went live in September 1999. The site is generously hosted and maintained by NISC South Africa.

I received a copy of the Uganda Newsletter during the conference. I was very impressed - and will in turn forward copies of LIASA-IN-TOUCH to the Uganda Newsletter. I would like to propose that Associations share copies of their newsletters with member associations.

Membership and Other Associations

ASSOCIATIONS

LIASA is a member of COMLA and IFLA.

Activities

Two conferences were held since the Constituent conference in 1997 in Pretoria.

- 1998 - in Bloemfontein
- 1999 - in Bellville, Cape Town
- 2000 - will be in Durban
- 2001 - Johannesburg

1998

Provincial Summits were held in all the branches to discuss and collate data about the current status of LIS in SA. Summaries of these reports were presented at the Conference. A report on a LIS Renaissance for SA was compiled based on the discussions at the conference which was used as a guideline for various activities during 1999.

1999

1. SA's second general democratic elections were held in 1999. LIASA organised a pre-election campaign which focused on informing political parties of key LIS policy issues which LIASA wanted the elected parties to take up as part of their action plan over the next five years. A policy statement was drafted and sent to all the political parties who took part in the election. Was not very successful - two parties responded out of 30.

2. Seven Library Advocacy workshops were held around the country to train LIASA members and other information workers. The workshops were conducted by Mary Somerville, a former president of the American Library Association.

2000

- Strategic Planning Meeting
- Action Plan completed for 2000 - 2001
- Continue to campaign for the establishment of a National Council for Library and Information Service
- 2001 will most likely be declared as a national year of reading by the Minister of Education.
- The President of LIASA is a member of the planning committee who will be meeting with the Minister in May to spearhead the organisation of the project.

Representation

LIASA is also represented and involved in a number of other forums and related organization: eg.

- SchoolNet SA
- Copyright Advisory Task Group
- Multi-Purpose Community Centres (MPCCs)
- New National Qualifications Framework

SCECSAL XIV Conference: Information 2000: a Vision for the SCECSAL region. Safari Court and Conference Centre, Windhoek, Namibia, 10-15 April 2000

- Quality Assurance Evaluation at Technikons Libraries/Advisory Committees of Lis Science Department
- Members sponsored to attend the Zimbabwe International Book Fair.

Note: *LIASA had not been informed in advance that a country report would be required at the SCECSAL 2000 General Assembly meeting. This report was prepared on-site during the Conference.*