AALL Committee Activities and Action Plan

Committee Name: Copyright Committee

Major Activities for 2011-2012:

The Committee concluded its work on a proposal that the AALL advocate for Creative Commons licensing of AALL, SIS, Chapter and other documentation. Having submitted proposals twice to the Board with no action, the Committee determined that further action at this time was not necessary. The Committee remains open to returning this to this issue in the future with additional interest or direction from the Board.

The Committee provided the Government Relations Committee with informational support in its advocacy against the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA). As of this writing, the advocacy of the AALL and other like-minded organizations has resulted it the defeat of SOPA and enhanced recognition of the complex and inter-related issues that underlie Internet copyright, censorship and piracy issues.

In a break from tradition, the AALL Annual Meeting program offered the Committee one "hot topic" program slot for the Boston 2012 Annual Meeting with the idea that the dynamic and ongoing issues within copyright are often "hot topics" which require the flexibility to address breaking issues. The Committee will use that time-slot to address three issues of current, critical importance: Orphan works and the challenges of locating copyright owners; Copyright coverage of state and local government documents; and "latest in the courts", a round-up of on-going developments in litigation and as of this writing, may include the GSU and Google books litigation, lawsuits recently filed over the publication of legal briefs in online databases, and threatened litigation over copyright in "prior art" submitted in patent matters. We expect this unique format will prove successful.

Proposed Activities for 2012-2013:

Next year's committee will initially have three focuses:

First will be to work with the AALL Annual Meeting Program Committee on a follow-up analysis of the "hot topic" concept for future annual meetings. While our committee's initial reaction to the Program Committee's decision was mixed (mainly focused on the decision to approve only one time-slot for the committee), upon further work and reflection, the Committee sees a lot of promise in this concept, that may inform future committees and the committee's proposals for future annual meetings.

Second is to review and update the AALL's Guidelines on the Fair Use of Copyright, and the Model Law Firm Copyright Policy. The Fair Use policy has not been updated in over 10 years and the Law Firm Policy has not been updated in nearly five years. The Committee sees this as a 2012-2013 project.

Third will be to continue to work with the Government Relations team and committee on issue briefs and other advocacy. The protracted litigation in the Google Books and GSU cases will raise a number of issues as they are ultimately resolved. Also, while SOPA may be dead for the moment, it is very likely that some form of anti-piracy legislation will be proposed and will need to be addressed.

The Committee will, of course, continue to work on programming, including non-annual meeting program such as workshops and webinars.