AALL Committee Activities and Action Plan

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Committee Name:  Price Index for Legal Publications Committee
Committee Charge:  CHARGE: The Committee shall:
  - establish the categories of material to be included in the index
  - collect data on pricing of legal publications
  - provide information regarding the methodology and data sources used to compile AALL’s Price Index for Legal Publications
  - monitor changes in legal publishing that affect the index

Major Activities for 2010-2011:
The Committee met at AALL, July, 2010, to begin work on the 2010 Price Index. Pricing standards were developed requiring vendors/publishers to submit annual supplementation costs, not full set or new subscriber costs, for all titles. The new standards were sent to AALL for inclusion in the solicitation letters sent to vendors and should be re-sent each year. (Standards are in annual report)
All vendors solicited participated this year in supplying prices for the Index, including Thomson/Reuters, and were prompt with responses. One committee member, however, has failed to complete assignment delaying data input. The pricing information received for 2010 conformed to the established standards, however, in many cases, could not be compared to the 2009 full-set prices supplied.
The Committee proposed 2 agenda items for the AALL Executive Board. 1) a request to add the past chair as an ex-officio member of the committee for 1 year following term as chair, for continuity. The motion passed. And, 2) to consider surveying the AALL membership to determine if the Price Index is still of value, and, if so, should the Executive Board consider adding an editor to compile the data and produce the Index. The Executive Board appointed a Task Force to study the issue. The Task Force has been charged as follows:
  CHARGE: The Task Force will investigate all aspects of the AALL Price Index for Legal Publications. This review shall include, but not be limited to:
  - Investigating if the need for the Price Index still exists and is a value to AALL members
  - If the Price Index is of value to members, should it be produced differently
  - How could the work of the committee be more equitably distributed
  - If AALL should partner with another organization or individual to produce the Price Index.

Proposed Activities for 2011-2012:
The Committee looks forward to the report of the Price Index Review Task Force. The Task Force has been assigned to review all aspects of the Price Index, which might impact the function and operation of this committee. Ideas under consideration include producing the Price Index differently, perhaps in partnership with another organization or with an individual editor. Action determining the Committee’s future is anticipated by July 2011.
While acknowledging this uncertainty, the Committee intends to cooperate and contribute to the production of the Price Index in 2010-2011 within whatever framework may emerge. Building on 2010-2011 successes, the committee intends to continue holding vendors accountable for compliance with well-defined, consistent price reporting standards established this past year. The committee also would like to increase its production efficiency if possible. Ideas include 1) eliminating double- or triple-entry of the same data at different production stages, and 2) developing mechanisms to bequeath know-how from departing committee members to incoming committee members. For example, each year certain publications account for a disproportionate share of effort and delay; the special techniques and contacts discovered to be effective in resolving these situations could be codified and passed along to new members.