SUMMARY
DALNET Steering Committee
Report to the DALNET Board

April 28, 1998

INTRODUCTION

In order that the University of Detroit Mercy can migrate from the NOTIS system to the Ameritech Horizon system on schedule, it is critical that the database structure for the new system be determined quickly. On April 22, 1998, the DALNET Steering Committee convened a task force to prepare a database structure recommendation for the DALNET Board.

Members of the Task Force were:
Botsford Hospital: Deborah Adams (for part of second day only);
Detroit Public Library: Randy Call, John Houser, and Robert Marcelain;
University of Detroit Mercy: Sue Homant and Mary Ann Sheble;
WCCC: Cindy Yonovich
Wayne State University: Karen Bacsanyi, Barbara Heath, and Jeff Trzeciak;
DALNET Office: Anaclare Evans, Ana Fidler, Jim Green, and George Marek;
Interim DALNET Project Leader: Louise Bugg, Chair

DALNET Board representatives (first day): Margaret Auer, UDM; and Phyllis Jose, Oakland County Library.

Ameritech Library Services representatives: Randall Jones, Horizon Project Leader; Harry Masek, Ameritech Project Leader for the DALNET Partnership; Steve Neilsen, Horizon Product Manager (first day); and Jan Sheppard, Horizon Automation Specialist.

TASK FORCE PROCESS

During two days of intensive meetings, April 22-23, 1998, the Task Force considered database structure options and their impact on cataloging, authority control, online catalog indexing and display, circulation, ease of use, and technical support. Discussion was guided by a four-page list of "DALNET Decisions for Horizon" developed by Mary Ann Sheble and Anaclare Evans on April 9th as part of UDM's Horizon profiling process.

On the afternoon of April 22nd, over 50 staff from all types of DALNET libraries heard about database design options and discussed advantages and disadvantages of various configurations. Participants were shown the web sites of various Horizon libraries and were given an Internet address where they could view more on their own. Participants' comments were collected via electronic mail by Ana Fidler and forwarded to the Steering Committee.

The Task Force spent April 23rd analyzing database configurations. Jan Sheppard (Ameritech) briefed the Task Force on the relationships between MARC maps, Horizon indexes, and record displays. It was concluded that decisions on database structure and indexing are needed quickly for UDM migration, but display and limiting options decisions can be made later. Ms. Sheppard also detailed tasks for UDM's migration and for the WSU and DPL migrations that will follow.

The Task Force developed three sets of recommendations for the Steering Committee:

1. DALNET Horizon Database Recommendations
2. DALNET Policy Recommendations
3. Recommendations for DALNET Task Forces

DALNET HORIZON DATABASE RECOMMENDATIONS

Assuming delivery of needed shared authority file and record sharing enhancements for Horizon, the DALNET Database Structure Task Force recommends that DALNET create

1. **a union database with shared authority records,**
2. **a shared patron database, and**
3. **individual databases for each library, or, where appropriate, each group of libraries.**

Furthermore, the Task Force recommends participation in the Sunrise Project (Ameritech/California State) to develop union catalog and authority file capabilities that will meet the needs of the Consortium.

EXPLANATION:
This hybrid design offers individual bibliographic databases for each DALNET institution, or group of institutions, as well as a union catalog of all DALNET holdings. Synchronization of the records in the union database and the individual databases will be done automatically, probably by batch process.

The union database will incorporate a shared authority file, which can include such resource files as the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH), the Anglo-American Authority file (names and series), and the Medical Subject Headings (MeSH). In this model, authority work will be done initially in the union catalog and copied, automatically, into each library's individual database.

A shared patron file is recommended to maximize opportunities for resource sharing among DALNET libraries.

In this model, library users will have the option of searching a union catalog as well as their own libraries' catalogs. Broadcast searching of patron-selected groups of DALNET libraries' or other libraries' catalogs will also be possible. One advantage of this model is that DALNET staff will be

able to search the union catalog with their Windows client software. If a model incorporating individual databases without a union file were chosen, library staff would have to search each library's database individually to find records of interest to them.

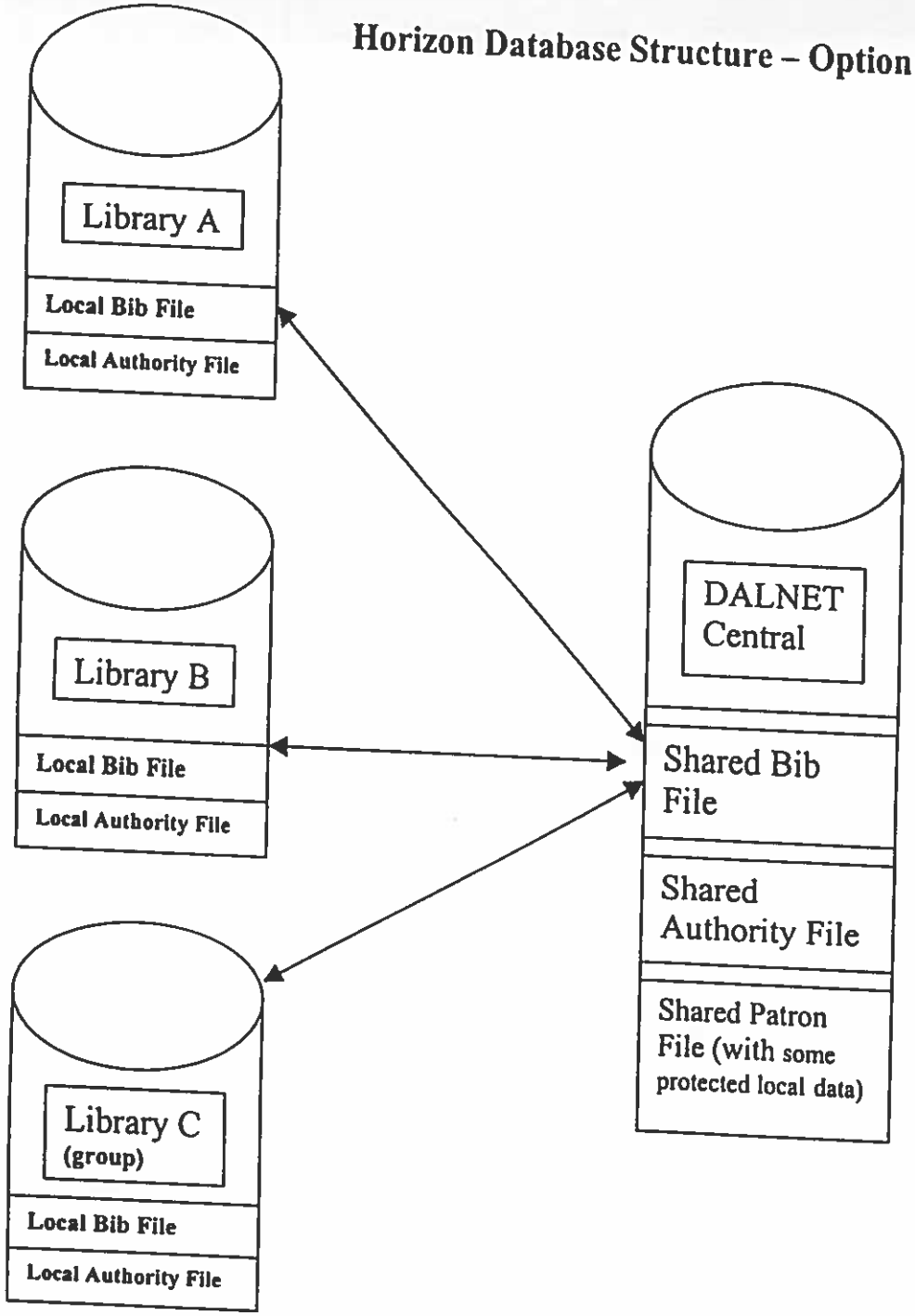
With a shared authority file, especially one containing authority resource records, DALNET libraries can continue to benefit from centralized authority control. Without a shared authority file, each individual library would have to duplicate authority work in its own database.

Concerns about this model include the potential for additional work in developing, creating and maintaining a union database, and the potential for additional work performing software upgrades for a union database as well as individual databases. In addition, there will be some additional expense in providing disk space for the union database. Critical to this database design is the automation of as much of the work of managing the union database as possible and the development of an efficient means of keeping individual databases in sync with the union database.

Academic libraries in the California State University System are developing a similar model for their shared system, in the Sunrise project. The Sunrise project also involves centralized authority work and creation of a union database. Jan Sheppard will explore DALNET participation in this development project because it may help provide the automatic database synchronizing needed for efficient maintenance of the system.

An advantage of this model is that adding individual library database files during the migration period will not affect system performance for libraries already in production.

Horizon Database Structure – Option B+



DALNET POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Force recommends these policies for consideration with the adoption of the database model described above.

1. **Software upgrades for the separate databases must be installed simultaneously.**

   Library patrons and staff may encounter problems when searching if client and server software packages are not the same version. Even if an individual library keeps its client and server software in sync, additional problems may be encountered when searching across multiple libraries, if DALNET libraries are running different versions of the client or server software. This means DALNET staff must upgrade client and server software for all DALNET libraries simultaneously.

2. **Separate databases should have at least a minimum number of commonly-structured indexes.**

   This will enable users to move easily and consistently from one catalog to another.

3. **The Library of Congress Anglo-American Authority file (names and series) and the MARC version of the machine readable Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) file should be purchased and loaded into the union database.**

   DALNET currently purchases LCSH. Adding the two files above will streamline authority work.

4. **In light of the Horizon system's patron empowerment features such as patron initiated ILL, DALNET libraries should re-examine resource sharing issues such as reciprocal borrowing while the shared Horizon patron database is being developed.**

   Specifically, the Task Force recommends re-examining the possibility of agreeing on reciprocal ILL at no cost to DALNET members and reciprocal walk-in borrowing for walk-in patrons at no cost. If universal agreement is not possible, subsets of DALNET libraries may wish to make such agreements. A uniform borrower's card also should be explored.

5. **Shared Horizon statistical categories should be created.**

   Creating shared categories across all DALNET databases will enable easier collection of statistics across all libraries.

6. **A commitment should be made to adhere to DALNET standards when doing name or subject authority work.**

These accepted nationally standards have proven important to DALNET in the past and will be even more critical in the Horizon database environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DALNET TASK FORCES

The following are not recommended as permanent task forces for DALNET, but should be created for the initial implementation steps. The Steering Committee wants to look at long-term issues before recommending permanent committees.

The Steering Committee will recommend to the Ameritech Project Leader that an Ameritech representative be available as a resource to each task force as needed.

If the Board approves the task forces listed below, the Steering Committee will recommend members. The *Task Force on Naming Conventions* needs to have its work completed by May 18th, so approval of its creation is needed immediately.

1. Horizon Indexes — **Completion needed in 2 months**

This group is responsible for recommending a base set of indexes for consistent searching across all Horizon databases. It will both select indexes and develop MARC maps for each index. Indexes selected should include key word, browsing, display, and limiting indexes for the public and staff. Indexes will likely include union ID number such as ISBN, ISN, or LCCN, call numbers, subject, and title indexes.

2. WebPAC Design — **Begin immediately, continue throughout migration**

This group will develop a design for DALNET's union WebPAC interface and guidelines for individualized WebPAC's among DALNET libraries. This group will also develop web pages for selecting and searching Z39.50-accessible library catalogs outside of DALNET and for selecting and searching other files such as DALNET's NOTIS, MDAS, and InfoShare databases.

3. Naming Conventions — **Begin immediately, completion by May 18**

This group will recommend consistent naming conventions for Horizon system location, collection and other codes, as well as guidelines for the longer descriptions that are associated with the codes.

4. Cataloging/Authority Design — **Briefing week of May 18, work during summer/fall**

This group is responsible for working with Ameritech to develop the union catalog and authority

resource database. It will provide input into the Sunrise project. It will also review and update DALNET's database standards for Horizon databases and propose master record concepts for the union database.

5. **Statistics Coding** **Completion needed in 2 months**

Responsible for developing common statistics coding in order to enable DALNET-wide data collection and reporting, this group will consider common DALNET institution reports such as IPEDS. Areas to include are item statistical classes, borrower statistical classes, and call number ranges (for all classification types).

6. **Shared Patron Database** **Completion needed in 2 months**

Responsible for recommending additional fields DALNET needs in its shared patron records, this group will consider parent names and addresses, student ID numbers, etc. Current DALNET patron record standards need review for Horizon. The group will also recommend patron record import matching criteria.

7. **Horizon StaffPAC Displays** **Completion in Fall 1998**

This group is responsible for designing union catalog displays for the Horizon StaffPAC. The union catalog would be put in place after the UDM migration.

8. **Horizon System Administration** **Completion in Fall 1998**

This group will consider which aspects of Horizon system administration would be handled by individual DALNET libraries and which would be the responsibility of DALNET central site staff. Areas to be considered are logon IDs and passwords, configuration tables, day's end processes, and reports.

CONCLUSION

The DALNET Database Structure Task Force spent two very productive days learning about Horizon database structure options and deliberating on the issues they present. Detailed notes from the working sessions are available, if needed, to supplement this report.