

A.4.3.18

A.4.3.18 Subdivision (NEW)

A subdivision is an ALA division or round table.

(See “Policy Reference File”: Committee on Organization Report, ALA CD#27.1, Item#1- Definition of Subdivision. Adopted June 28, 2016)

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NOTE TO THE READER:

At the 2016 ALA Annual Conference, the Committee on Organization (COO), ALA CD#27.1, Item#1, recommended and the ALA Council voted to define the word “subdivision” as an ALA division or round table.”

At the 2017 ALA Midwinter Meeting, the Policy Monitoring Committee, ALA CD#17, Item #1, recommended and the ALA Council voted to incorporate the definition of the word “subdivision” into the ALA *Policy Manual* as A.4.3.18 to read: “A subdivision is an ALA division or round table.”

(See “Policy Reference File”: Committee on Organization Report, ALA CD#27.1, Item#1- Definition of Subdivision. Adopted June 28, 2016)

2015-2016 ALA CD#27.1_62616_ACT
2016 ALA Annual Conference

American Library Association Committee on Organization Report to Council

2016 Annual Conference
Orlando, FL

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Definition of “Subdivision”:

The ALA Constitution and Bylaws Committee found a discrepancy between the ALA Constitution (Article X) and the ALA Bylaws (Article VI, Section 4c and Article VII, Section 4). Article X of the ALA Constitution discusses external organizations becoming an affiliate of ALA or its subdivisions. Article VI and VII of the ALA Bylaws discusses external organizations becoming an affiliate of an ALA division or round table, but do not use the word “subdivision.” “Subdivision” also appears in the ALA Policy Manual, policy A.4.3.6.1 and A.10.3.

Jim Rettig, chair of the ALA Constitution and Bylaws Committee, requested that COO define the word “subdivision” within the ALA context to be included in the ALA Policy Manual. After reviewing the instances the term is used in ALA governance documents, COO determined that “subdivision” should be defined as an ALA division or round table. COO based the definition of “subdivision” on the following information:

In defining “subdivision,” COO’s primary strategy was to determine the original intent of the word when first used in the ALA Constitution in 1959 (Article X: Affiliated Organizations and Chapters.) COO concluded that “subdivision” is defined as an ALA division or round table. Explanatory and contextual reasons are as follows:

- Divisions and round tables both existed in 1959 and operate in a similar fashion within the ALA structure in the sense that they are both organized entities with declared members who elect officers. In addition, both bodies have their own budgets, both may generate revenue, and both are created via Council approval.
- In the ALA Constitution and Bylaws, only divisions and round tables are granted permission to affiliate with outside organizations:

- Bylaws, Article VI, Section 4c: “A division may affiliate with itself regional, state, or local groups interested in the same field of library service or librarianship. Such groups may admit members who are not members of the division or of the Association.”
- Bylaws, Article VII, Section 4: “A round table may affiliate with itself regional, state, or local groups interested in the same field of library service or librarianship. Such groups may admit members who are not members of the round table or of the Association.”
- In the ALA Policy Manual, policy A.10.3 (Definition of Affiliate), the word subdivision is clearly equated with divisions/round tables: “An affiliate is a group having purpose or interests similar to those of the Association or its Divisions/Round Table which has made successful formal application for affiliate status to Council (national and international group) or Division/Round Table (local, state or regional groups). No subdivision of the Association may separately affiliate itself with an organization with which ALA as a whole is affiliated.”

Other bodies that might possibly be considered subdivisions are standing committees, chapters, and membership initiative groups (MIGs.) However, COO chose not to include them in the definition of “subdivision” for the following reasons:

- Standing committees: In the ALA Policy Manual, policy A.4.3.6.1 (Types of Committees: Standing), standing committees are clearly differentiated from subdivisions: “A standing committee is a committee with long-term objectives so closely interwoven with the total program and development of policy of the Association or its subdivisions that it should have a continuing life.”

Also, committees are differentiated from divisions, round tables and other membership units in Policy Manual A.4.3 Units, Committees, Etc.: “A unit is any membership group within the American Library Association which has a distinct organizational entity. Committees and subcommittees which are appointive groups are excluded from this definition of unit.”

- Chapters: Chapters are separate organizations that interact with ALA as dues-paying, affiliate members, rather than as a sub-section of the larger ALA structure (as divisions and round tables operate.)
- MIGs: With regard to the original intent of the word “subdivision,” MIGs could not have been part of that definition, because they did not exist at the time. In addition, they are informal structures that lack declared members, official officers, and budgets. In that sense, they share very little in common with divisions and round tables, particularly with

regard to forming affiliate relationships with other organizations. The lack of a formal leadership structure and declared members would make forming and maintaining affiliate relationships difficult, if not impossible.

ACTION ITEM #1: Resolved, that Council defines the word subdivision as an ALA division or round table.