Machine-Assisted Reference Section
MARS Handbook

MARS Planning Committee
Summer 2004 Revision

This version of the Handbook is designed as a stand-alone equivalent of a print publication on the Web. It could be edited in future into an interactive site by web editorial changes.

New Series, Version 3, 2008.

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INTRODUCTION

This Handbook is a compilation of policies and procedures to assure continuity and smooth functioning for the MARS infrastructure and to provide guidance to officers, committee chairs, and members. Suggestions for additions or revisions to this Handbook should be forwarded to the MARS Planning Committee.

Approved by:

MARS Publications Committee, San Antonio, January 1988
MARS Executive Committee, New Orleans, July 1988
MARS Executive Committee, via e-mail, June 1999
MARS Executive Committee, June 2005

Revised by:

MARS Planning Committee, November 1995
MARS Planning Committee, March 1998
MARS Planning Committee, June 1999
MARS Planning Committee, June 2003
MARS Planning Committee, August 2004
MARS Planning Committee, January, 2005
MARS Planning Committee, July, 2008

HANDBOOK DISTRIBUTION AND UPDATING PROCEDURE

The MARS Web site will post the most current version of the Handbook. The MARS Planning Committee will review and discuss the Handbook at each Annual conference, or more frequently if necessary, supplying appropriate new content, updates and/or changes. The Planning Committee will forward any substantive changes (e.g. a committee description revision) to the MARS Executive Committee for their vote to adopt (voting may be at the conference or via email.) The Executive Committee will notify the Chair of Planning of any recommendations for Handbook content.

New editions and changes will be forwarded by the Chair of Planning to the RUSA Webmaster for posting.

The Chair of Planning will retain the most current electronic version of the Handbook, typically a Word document or equivalent. The MARS Secretary and the MARS Historian will retain copies of the most current print version (textual content) of the Handbook. Versions will be dated and numbered, beginning with this 2004 version. A copy of each formal revision of the Handbook (defined as a complete text of the Handbook voted on by the Executive Committee) will be retained by the MARS Historian in the Archives.

All members of the MARS administrative structure are also encouraged to become familiar with any appropriate sections of the RUSA Guide to Policies and Procedures: http://www.ala.org/ala/rusa/rusaourassoc/guidetopoliciesandproced/guidepolicies.htm

The MARS *Bylaws* provide for the functional operation of the Section within the Reference and User Services Association of the American Library Association. Click here for Bylaws text.

MARS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, OFFICERS AND LIAISONS

MARS OFFICERS AND LIAISONS

Executive Committee:
As outlined in the *MARS Bylaws*, the Executive Committee will be composed of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Past Chair, Secretary, and three Members-at-Large. Ex-officio, non-voting members are the editor of "Messages from MARS"/MARS-L moderator, the Section Historian, the Section Web Coordinator, the Section Scheduling Coordinator, the President of RUSA, and the Executive Director of RUSA.

Specific Duties of each officer include but are not limited to:

Chair:
Serves as the Coordinator for all Section activities. Appoints members of committees formed during his/her term of office or vacancies occurring during his/her term of office; conducts Executive Committee meetings; serves on RUSA Board; represents the Section as the need arises; prepares planning reports; chairs MARS program and membership meeting at Annual. Is a member of Planning Committee during Chair-Elect and Past Chair years. May be assigned to serve as Executive Committee liaison to one or more MARS committees.

Vice-Chair:
Appoints members of committees whose terms are to commence at the same time as he/she assumes role of Section Chair; serves ex-officio on MARS Planning Committee; organizes and conducts the orientation/open forum meeting at Annual; notifies RUSA Executive Director of all committee appointments and prepares and distributes the roster; with input from Planning Committee, prepares Section Goals for the following year; serves ex-officio on the RUSA Planning and Finance Committee. May be assigned to serve as liaison to one or more MARS committees.

Immediate Past Chair:
Serves ex-officio on RUSA Planning and Finance and MARS Planning Committee; chairs MARS Nominating Committee for the year following his/her year as Immediate Past Chair; serves on the corresponding RUSA Nominating Committee. May be assigned to serve as liaison to one or more MARS committees.

Secretary:
Prepares and distributes minutes of all Executive Committee meetings to Executive Committee members, committee Chairs, and all Planning Committee members; distributes handouts at meetings and ensures that copies of all handouts are attached to minutes of the meetings; prepares minutes for sectional business meetings, including the topics of conference and main speakers; works with the MARS Planning Committee, MARS Executive Committee, and the RUSA Executive Director to ensure the Handbook's update, and distribution; transmits copies of approved bylaw amendments to the RUSA Executive Director; works with the MARS Web coordinator to ensure that

appropriate parts of the written record are made available to members through the Section Web site; coordinates the deposit of files from the Section into the ALA Archives. May be assigned to serve as liaison to one or more MARS committees.

Members-at-Large:
Participate in Executive Committee work; vote on motions; may be assigned duties such as project reports, committee coordination, and liaison to individual MARS committees. Serve on the MARS Achievement Recognition Certificate Committee.

Scheduling Coordinator:
Works with the ALA Conference Program Manager and the MARS Chair, Vice-Chair and committee chairs to coordinate and arrange Midwinter and Annual meetings of MARS committees.

Section Historian
Maintains and brings to conference a working file of past Section minutes, list of publications and projects, the official text copy of the Handbook, and other materials as directed by the Executive Committee.

Executive Committee Liaisons:
Each voting member of the Executive Committee is designated as a liaison to one or more section committees, to provide better coordination and communication within the Section. Some liaison appointments are automatic, as noted in assignments, while others are to be designated on an ad hoc basis, generally one committee each for the secretary and the past Chair and three for the Members-at-Large.

Standing and ex-officio liaisons:

Chair: Current Nominating and Program committees.
Vice-Chair: Upcoming year Nominating and Program committees.
Immediate Past Chair: Outreach Committee

Liaison Duties:
Executive Committee member: Contact committee Chair in between conferences; try to attend committee meetings and/or debrief with Committee Chair during conferences; provide Committee Chair with information about Executive Committee procedures, other MARS committee projects, and new items and issues on MARS agendas.

Committee Chair communications with Liaison:
Send copies of minutes, agendas, other documents to the Executive Committee liaison in advance of conferences. Include the liaison in any committee listserv or other communications within the committee. Inform liaison of project status and of any proposals to be presented for approval at the Executive Committee meeting. Seek advice from Liaison to accomplish committee work.

RUSA Functional Committee Representatives:
Sections have official representation on several division-level "functional" committees, as listed below. Some are provided for automatically in committee charges; others are appointed by the RUSA Vice-President in consultation with the Vice-Chair, or by the RUSA President in consultation with the MARS Chair if for the current year. A number

of these appointments are customarily individuals with specific duties in the Section, although such appointments must be confirmed by the RUSA Vice-President in consultation with the MARS Vice-Chair. All representatives are full voting committee members. Representatives are to support MARS interests and membership in the course of committee work and should report orally or in writing to the MARS Executive Committee on matters of concern to MARS.

Automatic and customary appointments are indicated; the asterisked (*) appointments are automatic ex officio appointments.

Access to Information Committee:

Conference Program Coordinating Committee: Chair of the MARS Section Program Committee for the following year.

Membership Committee: a member of MARS Outreach Committee nominated by that committee prior to spring appointments.

Nominating Committee: Chair of the MARS Nominating Committee for the corresponding year.

Organization Committee: may be the Chair or a member of MARS Planning.

Planning and Finance Committee: MARS Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect* and Past Chair

Professional Development Committee:

Publications Committee: Chair of MARS Publications Committee

Standards and Guidelines Committee:

Approved: July 1988
Revised: June 2005

MARS LIAISON GUIDELINES

A. Formal liaisons may be established between MARS committees and other committees throughout ALA, e.g., committees of RUSA, ACRL, LITA, AASL; between MARS and other ALA units, e.g., New Members Round Table, LITA, CLENERT, LIRT; or between MARS and other organizations, e.g., National Online Circuit. Position descriptions for these liaisons should be defined and approved by the Executive Committee before the liaison is established. A model description is included in this Handbook.

B. A liaison may be established only by action of the MARS Executive Committee, but may be proposed by any member of MARS. The term and conditions of appointment are specified at the time of establishment. No MARS Committee Chair may formally establish a liaison without prior consent of the MARS Executive Committee.

C. Liaisons report to the MARS Executive Committee but are not Executive Committee members. Liaisons to MARS from other organizations are not members of the Executive Committee.

D. The MARS Planning Committee should aid the Executive Committee in determining the need for creating liaisons and in the writing of role descriptions for liaisons.

E. Committees are encouraged to maintain informal contact with other appropriate units in ALA, but may not make commitments on projects or programs without Executive Committee approval.

F. When a formal liaison has been established with other units, three copies of that unit's newsletter are to be received, one each for the section Chair, the liaison, and the editor of "Messages". Copies of our newsletter will be distributed to the corresponding officers of the other unit.

Approved: January 1987

MARS LIAISON MODEL DESCRIPTION

Purpose:

To establish organizational linkage with____; establish and maintain liaison efforts with ____; establish a MARS presence at appropriate _____meetings; establish cooperative programs, publications and activities with _____.

Procedure:

Each year, the Chair of MARS will communicate with the President (or Chair) of _____ to communicate the appointment of a MARS Liaison and encourage a _____ Liaison to MARS.

MARS _____ Liaison will:

(1) Maintain appropriate direct communication with the _____ President (or Chair) and other _____ units, as appropriate.
(2) Attend _____ unit meetings, such as Executive Board or Executive Committee and others as appropriate, to represent the interests of MARS.
(3) Report to the Chair of MARS, the MARS Executive Committee and other appropriate MARS committees concerning activities of _____.
(4) Submit appropriate information items concerning _____ activities to the editor of “Messages from MARS.”
(5) Submit appropriate information items concerning MARS activities to the editors of _____ publications.
(6) Ensure that the MARS Chair and the editor of Messages from MARS receive copies of the _____newsletter, and forward copies of Messages from MARS to the corresponding officers of the other unit.

(7) Work directly with the _____MARS Liaison, if one exists, in coordinating cooperative efforts between MARS and _____.
(8) Monitor program plans of _____ and alert MARS to possible conflicts or areas of potential cooperation.

Approved, June 2005. Based on MARS LITA Liaison Description (Approved July 1988)

MARS HISTORIAN

1. **Position Description:** The Historian maintains and brings to conference a working file of past Section minutes, lists of publications and projects, a reference copy of the MARS Handbook as instructed in the MARS Archives Guidelines, and other materials as directed by the Executive Committee.

2. **Appointment, Term of Office:** The Historian is appointed by the Vice Chair/Chair-elect for a two-year term and may be reappointed indefinitely. When the Historian intends to resign or not accept reappointment, she/he will formally notify the Chair-elect, giving at least six months notice. The Vice Chair/Chair-elect will appoint a Historian-in-training for an indefinite overlap, the Historian-in-training will continue as Historian upon the ultimate resignation of the Historian. The overlap may continue for a number of terms. The Historian is a non-voting, ex-officio member of the Executive Committee.

[New position description for MARS Archivist (approved January 1994)]
Approved as MARS Historian June 2003

MARS SCHEDULING COORDINATOR

1. Position Description

The Scheduling Coordinator communicates with the ALA Conference Programs Manager and the MARS Executive Committee to arrange Midwinter and Annual Conference meetings of MARS committees, including the Executive Committee itself.

The Scheduling Coordinator also works with the RUSA Program Officer and the RUSA Executive Director to arrange for the inclusion of promotional material for MARS events in the RUSA literature baskets near the conference registration area.

Other duties include informing MARS committee Chairs of scheduling procedures and deadlines, troubleshooting schedule conflicts, and providing interim and master lists of MARS meetings.

2. Appointment, Term of Office:

The Scheduling Coordinator is appointed by the Vice Chair/Chair-Elect for a two-year term and may be reappointed indefinitely. When the Scheduling Coordinator intends to

resign or not accept reappointment, she/he will formally notify the Vice Chair, giving at least six months notice. The Vice Chair will appoint an intern for a 6-12 month overlap; the intern will continue as Scheduling Coordinator.

a. Meeting Requests: Contact the ALA Conference Programs Manager to learn when online meeting-registration for an upcoming conference will be made available. A couple of weeks before meeting-registration is posted online, the Scheduling Coordinator should email MARSEXEC to tell members that meeting-registration is imminent; to remind them to notify the Scheduling Coordinator of their intent to register for a meeting, with date(s) and time(s); and to stress the importance of completing the meeting-registration process by deadline. The Scheduling Coordinator should also remind Chairs of no-conflict time slots imposed by ALA, RUSA and MARS, and should make sure that MARS committees are planning to schedule meetings in the time slots designated in Appendix B of the Handbook.

Whenever the Scheduling Coordinator receives an intent to register message from a Chair and determines that everything is in order, s/he will let the Chair know that it is OK to proceed to the online meeting-registration form and will provide instructions on how to use the online utility. The Scheduling Coordinator will also request that the meeting registrant note the control number of a given request, and submit that to the Scheduling Coordinator.

b. Schedule Checking: Upon receiving preliminary schedules from ALA, the Scheduling Coordinator checks to make sure that all of the MARS committee meetings are listed in the proper time slots. If the Scheduling Coordinator sees that a meeting is missing or seems to be improperly scheduled, s/he should immediately notify the meeting registrant and provide contact information for the Conference Programs Manager.

c. Completed Schedules: Once the schedule is finalized, with hotel and meeting room assignments, the Scheduling Coordinator will create a final list of all MARS committee meetings, to be distributed online to all committee Chairs and Executive and Planning

d. Literature Distribution Center: Each ALA division has one or more baskets available at the Literature Distribution Center for fliers. All MARS fliers must be coordinated with the RUSA Office. The Scheduling Coordinator should contact the RUSA Program Officer or the RUSA Executive Director to find out the deadline for materials to be included in the RUSA literature distribution center. The Scheduling Coordinator should contact committee and discussion group chairs to find out if any have fliers for the literature distribution center. The Scheduling Coordinator then must coordinate with the committee chairs and the RUSA office to ensure that camera-ready copies of all fliers arrive in the RUSA office prior to the deadline for the literature distribution center materials.

e. Disseminating Scheduling Information: The Scheduling Coordinator is responsible for dissemination of the final schedule and information about MARS programs through all available channels, including but not limited to Messages from MARS and MARS-L.

f. Disseminating Program Information: The Scheduling Coordinator will ensure that programmatic information on the Section activities is available prior to each conference, preferably on the web and announced via MARS-L.

Approved: January 1987

Revised: June 2001, June 2005

MESSAGES FROM MARS EDITOR/MARS-L MODERATOR

Position Description

Responsible for the quarterly publication of Messages from MARS, the official newsletter of the Machine-Assisted Reference Section of ALA's Reference and User Services Association (RUSA). This newsletter is published on the MARS Web site and disseminates news of section and committee activities to those concerned with computer-based reference and information services in libraries. This person is also responsible for management and operation of MARS-L, the section's electronic information resource; MARS-L serves as an electronic distribution medium of Messages from MARS and as a discussion list for Section and other related business.

Responsibilities

1. Gather, solicit, write, and edit copy for the quarterly Messages from MARS newsletter according to the deadline schedule provided by the editor of *RUSA Update*.

2. Establish a deadline schedule for receiving copy from MARS officers and Committee Chairs and circulate to appropriate persons.

3. Serve as moderator of MARS-L with responsibility for management and operation, including publicity.

4. Participate as a non-voting, ex-officio member of the MARS Executive Committee.

5. Participate as a non-voting, ex-officio member of the MARS Publications Committee.

Appointment and Term

The Messages from MARS Editor/MARS-L Moderator will serve a one-year internship upon appointment followed by a one three-year term as editor/moderator.

The MARS Publications Committee Chair will appoint a Search Committee in accordance with the PROCEDURES FOR SELECTION -- Messages from MARS Editor/MARS-L Moderator.

Approved: January 1987
Revised: June 1995, June 2005

MARS WEB COORDINATOR

Position description: The MARS Web Coordinator is responsible for the official MARS Web site, which is located on the American Library Association's Web server at:

http://www.ala.org/rusa/mars/

The Web site serves as an electronic forum for MARS and ALA related business, and disseminates information and maintains archives on MARS and its activities. Contents may include committee projects and publications, Web sites, rosters, official documents of the Section, announcements of programs, meetings, conference activities, and, in general, news and resources for those concerned with computer-based reference and information services in libraries. This is a four-year commitment: one year as an intern, followed by a regular three-year term. Will ensure, with the Messages from MARS Editor/MARS-L Moderator, the appropriate distribution of MARS information via print, discussion list and the Web site.

1. Gather, solicit, write and edit MARS information of both short-term and on-going interest to MARS and ALA membership.
2. Serve as coordinator of the MARS Web site with responsibility for its management and operation, including publicity, and act as liaison with those responsible for the ALA Web site.
3. Participate as a non-voting, ex-officio member of the MARS Executive Committee.
4. Participate as a non-voting, ex-officio member of the MARS Publications Committee.
5. Advise and provide support for MARS committees in preparing Web pages or documents to place on the MARS Web page.

Appointment and Term:

Upon appointment, the MARS Web Coordinator will serve a one-year internship with the incumbent, followed by a three-year term as coordinator.

The MARS Publications Committee Chair will appoint a Search Committee in accordance with the PROCEDURES FOR SELECTION -- MARS Web Coordinator (see Appendix H.)

Responsibilities:

1. Serve as editor of MARS Web site and manage operation of the site as necessary. The Web site will include, but not be limited to:

a) MARS Section Home Page
b) Preconference information
c) Committee products
d) MARS Goals, Strategies, Objectives
e) MARS Executive Committee Minutes (Draft and Final)
f) Achievement Awards winner
g) Committee and Discussion Group descriptions
h) MARS Handbook
i) Recent MARS publications
j) Instructions for using MARS-L
k) MARS Roster
l) Section forms including Interest Form
m) MARS Best lists/links

3. Provide technical instruction/assistance/information/FAQs to Section officers and committee chairs.

4, Arrange for posting of Web items within one week of receipt from the Messages from MARS Editor/MARS-L Moderator and MARS membership.

5. Publicize Web site via MARS-L and related discussion lists as appropriate.

6. Monitor activity of related ALA Web sites.

7. Monitor progress of site and keep MARS Publications Committee and MARS Executive Committee apprised of activity and make recommendations as appropriate.

Created by the Publications Committee by 1999, with revisions 2001 and 2003.
Approved June 2005

MARS COMMITTEES, DISCUSSION GROUPS

MARS COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

Committee charges and membership expectations, including those for virtual members, are in the individual committee descriptive statements in the HANDBOOK. Special and ad hoc committees may be established by the Executive Committee. A new committee to meet a unique need may be proposed to the Executive Committee through the legislative process. Membership in ALA and RUSA/MARS are required for committee appointments.

Committees reporting to MARS Executive Committee:
Topical committees

- Education and Training
- Local Systems and Services
- Management of Electronic Resources and Services
- Products and Services
- Public Libraries
- User Access to Services
- Virtual Reference (Joint with RSS)

Functional committees:

- Achievement Recognition Certificate
- MARS Best Free Websites
- Outreach
- Planning
- Publications
- Conference Program Planning (two will run concurrently)
- Nominating

Discussion groups:

- Hot Topics in Electronic Reference
- Virtual Reference

Special Categories of Committee Members

There are several ways to expand committee membership to work on large projects, ensure continuity, and keep good members active without formally requesting a change in the committee's charge or composition.

Interns: Appointed by MARS Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect as part of committee assignment process. See RUSA Guide to Policies and Procedures for philosophy.

Consultants: a MARS member can be appointed to a committee for a one year term by the MARS Vice-Chair because of special circumstances. A typical situation would be when a committee member may be completing a second term but his/her expertise is valuable for completion of a project.

Virtual members: Appointed by the MARS Chair/Chair-Elect as part of the committee process. ALA encourages virtual membership on committees to broaden the pool of involved members. Virtual membership can be a powerful support structure for committees who embark on projects that lend themselves to work between conferences. A virtual member is encouraged, but not required, to attend conferences, and is expected to contribute to committee activities throughout the year.

Subcommittees: Any committee may create an ad-hoc subcommittee with the approval of the MARS Executive Committee. Subcommittee members need not be members of the main committee; this can be a way of bringing new people in, or keeping previous members (such as a past Chair) around to advise on a project.

Liaisons: Committees are encouraged to maintain informal contact with other appropriate units of ALA, but may not make commitments on projects or programs without Executive Committee approval. (See MARS Liaison Guidelines.)

MARS Executive Committee and RUSA "functional" committees: See MARS Officers and Liaisons section of the HANDBOOK for duties. Be aware of which RUSA functional committees affect MARS committee work. If needed, request assistance or advice from Executive Committee liaisons to get committee work forwarded and approved.

Approved: July 1988
Revised: November 1995; July 2005
To volunteer for a MARS Committee or to learn more, contact MARS through our electronic form at:
http://www.ala.org/ala/rusa/rusaourassoc/rusavolunteers/marsonlinecommittee.htm , or contact the ALA/RUSA office for information and referrals.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF MARS COMMITTEE CHAIRS

This brief overview of the tasks of Committee Chairs should be used in conjunction with the *RUSA Guide to Policies and Procedures* available at
http://www.ala.org/ala/rusa/rusaourassoc/guidetopoliciesandproced/guidepolicies.htm .
Special projects, publications, and programs may involve additional work; consult with the MARS Chair and/or the RUSA Executive Director.

At the ALA level:

- Schedule Conference Meetings: Meeting Request Forms will be sent to MARS committee chairs from the ALA Conference Arrangements Office. Committee chairs should complete the electronic forms in accordance with MARS meeting policy and times (Appendix B) and communicate the times requested to the MARS Scheduling Coordinator, who will monitor requests for possible conflicts and other problems**.**
- Use services from ALA: During conference, ALA offices offer support services. These include typewriters, photocopying and printing services, and personal computers. Many up-to-date documents are distributed here during conference,

for example skeleton schedules of future conferences and ALA Council proposals. RUSA has its own table where you can get specific help, leave messages and reports for RUSA leadership, etc. Photocopying for MARS committee business can be charged to the RUSA account numbers, which can be obtained at the RUSA table or directly from the RUSA Executive Director. This service can take several hours so plan ahead.

At the RUSA level:

- Be knowledgeable about RUSA procedures and policies; obtain and read RUSA handbooks and manuals. As a section of RUSA, MARS must comply with all divisional policies. Consult with the MARS Executive Committee and/or RUSA Executive Director.
- May attend RUSA Board meetings as an observer: The MARS Chair is a member of the Board and reports on all MARS activities and budget requests. Committee Chairs may attend as observers but generally may not speak at the meeting unless invited by the Board to comment on an item directly related to their work, or with other prior arrangements.

  The Board usually has a lengthy agenda set in advance. If a MARS committee has a project such as a program or publication which will need Board approval, it must first be approved by the MARS Executive Committee in time for it to get placed on the RUSA Board agenda. MARS committees, via the Executive Committee, may suggest items of new business to be brought before the RUSA Board through the MARS Chair.

- Help staff the RUSA booth at Annual. This is coordinated by the RUSA Membership Committee. Individuals are usually recruited to work shifts of an hour or two.
- Suggest appropriate appointees for RUSA committee positions to the RUSA Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect.
- Use services from RUSA: Help and advice from RUSA Executive Director; RUSA stationery, documents and brochures; reimbursement for committee expenses under $50 per year; names and addresses of other RUSA divisional and sectional officers and Chairs.

At the MARS level:

- Read the Handbook, including the Bylaws and scheduling information.

- Attend a meeting of the Executive Committee at Midwinter and Annual and report on your committee's activities. Oral reports must be given at Executive Committee meetings. The first Executive meeting of each conference is a joint meeting of the Executive Committee, Committee Chairs, and MARS Planning members. Chairs should plan to be present at this meeting for an orientation and to share what each committee has been doing and is expecting to accomplish at the conference. At the Annual Conference, incoming chairs are encouraged to attend as well. The Executive Committee usually meets at least two more times for general business. A Committee Chair should notify the MARS Chair in advance regarding which meeting he/she will attend. If absolutely necessary, the

committee Chair may designate another committee member to make the report. Depending on the status of projects, you may need early approval to move ahead, or may wish to report at a later meeting when you have had a chance to complete an assignment. You are encouraged to attend all Executive Committee meetings in order to stay abreast of MARS activities and related RUSA information. Committee Chairs are not voting members of the Executive Committee but may participate in discussions. Each MARS Committee has a liaison from the Executive Committee. You should know who on the Executive Committee is your liaison and keep him or her informed of your work.

- The MARS Committee and Discussion Group Reporting Form is completed during the conference and preferably given to the chair of the Planning Committee before the end of the conference, or soon after the conference.
- After the conference, written copies of committee agendas, minutes and other documents should be sent or given to MARS Chair, Vice-Chair, Planning Committee Chair, and liaison from the Executive Committee.

- Submit material for Messages from MARS and MARS-L:

"Messages" appears quarterly on the RUSA Web site as part of RUSA Update. Reports on committee activities should be submitted to the editor at or immediately following every conference; progress reports, announcements, and requests for input from members can also be sent for the issues that come out prior to conference. "Messages" may also be used by committees and discussion groups to inform members of new developments, ideas, etc., in informative articles describing such in "Messages."

- Submit budget requests. If you expect your committee to need more than the automatic allocation (currently $50.00), you should notify the MARS Chair early in the fall of the year prior to the fiscal year in question (ALA's fiscal year begins September 1). This clearly requires a lot of advance planning and would be for major projects. Conference programs are handled through a separate budget process.

- Use services from MARS:

  The MARS Secretary distributes the Executive Committee minutes to all committee Chairs, generally over the MARSEXEC listserv.

  Committee appointments: The Vice-Chair makes appointments for the coming year and conducts all formal correspondence with appointees. You will be sent a copy of the revised roster when the process is complete, usually shortly before the Annual Conference. The Chair will make any short-term or interim appointments to fill out a current vacancy.

At the level of your committee:

- Make recommendations for committee appointments:

  Appointments are made by the Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect during the spring. Soon after the end of the Midwinter Meeting, you must send the "MARS Committee

Membership - Status Report" form to the Vice-Chair to suggest names for new appointments, to note which current members should be reappointed, and to recommend the next committee Chair. Feel free to consult with the Vice-Chair by phone or email about any concerns you may have. Pass on to the Vice-Chair any copies of letters of inquiry which you receive, or the names of visitors to your committee who may be interested in appointment; be aware of ALA policies on committee service and of the availability of intern appointments. Avoid guaranteeing someone an appointment; the Vice-Chair makes all decisions. Vacancies occurring mid-term are filled by the MARS Chair.

- Maintain up-to-date roster:

  Your committee roster is derived from ALA's membership database and from RUSA's record of committee appointments. Make sure that committee members update their personal information with ALA, and communicate to the Chair changes such as resignations, and any discrepancies in appointment information.

- Lead and monitor committee work between conferences:

  You should report regularly to committee members between conferences: to remind people of tasks and decisions, to continue discussions that were begun at conference, to follow up on assignments, and, before each conference, to announce meeting times and outline the upcoming meeting agenda. Send copies of all agendas and formal correspondence to the MARS Chair and to your Executive Committee liaison.

- Run meetings at conferences:

  Be aware of ALA policies on running meetings (such as those for open/closed meetings, smoking, etc.); check the ALA Handbook.

  Have everyone introduce themselves and sign an attendance sheet. Take minutes or designate someone to do so, and review and approve them by the next conference. Pass out the Committee Interest Forms. Encourage all committee members to participate; keep meeting on schedule. Bring extra copies of agendas and working documents for observers and forgetful committee members. Think ahead to new projects or directions. Send the attendance sheet to the Chair of Outreach, but remember to convey the names of potential committee members to the Section Chair and Vice-Chair.

  Committees are encouraged to hold a discussion forum at least once every two years. See "Tips for Discussion Forums" (this Handbook).

  If meetings are canceled or changed, post a notice or have a committee member at the assigned meeting room to inform visitors.

- Ensure transition from year to year:

  Brief the incoming chair on the status of projects.

Document and date the work of the committee. Pass on files as per "MARS Archives Guidelines" (this Handbook). Send agenda for Annual to newly-appointed members.

- Maintain Committee Web page:

  Administer or delegate development and maintenance of committee's web page. The web page shall include a description of current committee projects, recently-completed projects that remain timely, contact information for the Chair, and a pointer to the master MARS roster. The "current projects" section of the committee page may reside on the official MARS Web site or on a site managed by a committee member to ensure timeliness.

Approved: July 1988
Revised: November 1995; June 1999; July, 2005.

COMMITTEE DESCRIPTIONS

MARS Achievement Recognition Certificate Committee

Descriptive Statement

1. Establishment

Established by the MARS Executive Committee, January 1993.

2. Purpose

To recognize excellence in service to MARS. The MARS Achievement Recognition Certificate is given to an individual who is a current member of MARS, and has been an active member for the past two years. The recipient must have made either (1) sustained contributions toward attaining the goals of MARS, or (2) a single, significant contribution that has resulted in a positive impact upon the work of the section.

3. Composition

At the Annual conference, the Executive Committee shall appoint a committee of 4-5 members composed of the Members-At-Large of the Executive Committee, the most recent available recipient of the certificate, and a 5th member (such as a previous recipient or a previous Executive Committee member) if needed for continuity. The chair of this committee should be the senior Member-at-Large unless the Executive Committee recommends otherwise.

4. Terms of Office

Members-at-Large serve on the Achievement Recognition Certificate Committee during their tenure in office. Any other appointments are for one year.

5. Specific Duties

a. To solicit nominations.

b. To select the recipient.

c. To inform the MARS Chair of the selection.

d. To prepare citation and/or other appropriate items.

e. To provide vita of recipient.

f. To announce the name of the recipient.

1. Announce the recipient around the time of the ALA election results to:

- RUSA Headquarters.
- Messages from MARS editor for immediate posting on the MARS-L list

2. To provide a press announcement release, which includes the award citation, prior to or soon after the Annual conference to:

- RUSA Headquarters.
- Messages from MARS editor for inclusion on the MARS-L list and in RUSA Update.
- Web Coordinator for inclusion on the MARS Web site.

6. Procedures and Timetables

A. Establishment of the committee

At the Annual Conference, the Executive Committee shall confirm the membership of the Achievement Recognition Certificate Committee and appoint a fifth member if necessary. The chair of the committee shall also be determined at the Annual Conference.

B. Solicitation of recommendations

1. The call for nominations should take place in September/October of each year. The call should go out in RUSA Update/Messages from MARS, MARS-L, RUSA-L, and other appropriate print and electronic communication as determined by the Achievement Recognition Certificate and Executive Committees.

2. The Executive Committee of MARS and the MARS committee chairs are encouraged to help solicit nominations. The chairs should be reminded at their meeting with the Executive Committee at the Annual conference to solicit nominations by the members of their committees.

3. Members of the committee may submit individual nominations, but the committee should not make nominations as a whole.

C. Selection of the recipient

1. The committee should meet at Midwinter to evaluate the nominations and make the selection if possible. If not, selection should be finalized by March 15. The committee members may work via e-mail for discussion and voting.

2. The selection shall be initially announced only to the recipient, the MARS Chair, and the Executive Director of RUSA. Additional announcements will be made around the time ALA elections results are announced.

3. The chair of the committee is responsible for assigning responsibilities such as: obtaining vita of the recipient, preparing the press release, drafting the official letter that is sent to the recipient by the MARS Chair, preparing the citation/certificate and assisting the MARS Chair with language for the presentation.

4. Ordinarily only one certificate will be awarded annually.

5. Nominations not selected will remain active nominations for two additional years.

D. Presentation of the award

1. The awardee should be informed of his/her selection in person or by a personal phone call from the MARS Chair within 30 days, to be followed by a formal letter from the MARS Chair.

2. The certificate shall be presented by the MARS Chair at the Annual MARS Program.

3. The certificate shall consist of a citation, to be read at the presentation and then presented to the recipient. Other appropriate items may be awarded but are not required.

4.. The committee shall be responsible for the wording on the certificate, which should be based on the justification for the recipient's nomination.

5. The committee shall convey to the MARS Chair all materials for the presentation prior to the annual meeting.

6. An article on the recipient shall be submitted to RUSA Update, Messages from MARS, and MARS-L.

Approved: June 1994
Revised: May 1999; January 2002; June 2005

MARS Conference Program Planning Committee

Descriptive Statement

1. Establishment

Established with MARS in 1978 at the Annual Conference in Chicago.

2. Purpose

To plan and coordinate the Section program meeting for the Annual conference and present the plan to the Executive Committee of MARS for approval.

3. Composition

The size and membership of the committee is determined by the MARS Vice-Chair. It typically ranges from four to nine members.

4. Terms of Office

The members of the committee shall serve two-year terms. Appointments continue through the conference at which the program is presented. The members are generally appointed in the spring two years before the program by the newly-elected Vice-Chair of

MARS. At any one time, because of the time needed to plan a program, there will be two program committees, one working on the current year's conference program and the other on the next year's.

5. Specific Duties

a. In accordance with the procedures outlined in the document, RUSA Program Planning, to work within established timetable and present a program plan and budget including equipment needs to the Executive Committee of MARS in a timely fashion so that it may be forwarded to the RUSA Conference Coordinating Committee and RUSA Board. (Note: Audiovisual equipment no longer needs to be part of the budget, as these costs are now covered by Headquarters. Costs which the committee may incur include non-librarian speakers' travel expenses and honoraria, handout duplication costs, etc.)

b. To identify a program topic, develop a program plan, and identify speakers in accordance with the suggested topic(s) and preferences of the MARS Chair.

c. To submit the "Request for Program Meeting Form" to the RUSA Program Coordinating Committee at or before the Annual conference preceding the program.

d. To submit the "Request for Special Allocation Form" to the RUSA Program Officer by deadline (which is usually September).

e. To arrange for speakers; reserve time and meeting space through the MARS Scheduling Coordinator by the ALA deadline. (Note: The deadline for programs is earlier than the deadline for regular committee meetings).

f. To develop handouts, as appropriate, and to develop and implement a publicity plan. Committee members should consider the following publicity vehicles: Messages from MARS, Cognotes, a flier to be distributed at related programs and meetings and the conference literature distribution center (work with the MARS Scheduling Coordinator), and notices on LISTSERVS.

g. To develop and administer an evaluation form for the program.

h. To assist in the presentation of the program (e.g., chairing the program) as needed.

i. To be familiar with the activities of other MARS committees and work with them as appropriate.

6. Additional Charges from the Planning Committee:

a. Refer to RUSA Program Planning for guidelines.

b. All programs are approved at the RUSA level, with funding provided by RUSA. Preliminary plans should be approved by the MARS Executive Committee and RUSA Board at the Annual meeting 12 months before the conference at which the program is to be presented.

Approved: January 1987
Revised: June 1992

MARS Executive Committee

Descriptive Statement

1. Establishment

Established with MARS in 1978 at the Annual Conference in Chicago.

2. Purpose

To provide leadership, coordination and direction for the Section and to act for and by the authority of the Section during the period between meetings of the Section.

3. Composition

The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers of the Section, i.e., the Chair, Vice-Chair, and secretary, the immediate past Chair, and three elected members-at-large. The editor of the Section newsletter, the Section Archivist, and the President and Executive Director of the Reference and User Services Association shall be ex-officio, non-voting members of the Executive Committee.

4. Terms of Office

Members-at-large shall serve staggered three-year terms. The terms of the other members of the committee are specified by office.

5. Specific Duties

a. To act for and by the authority of the Section during the period between meetings of the Section.

b. To report on its work at the regular meetings of the Section and communicate via Messages from MARS, MARS-L, and MARSEXEC-L.

c. To oversee the work of the committees, task forces, working groups, discussion groups, and liaisons and to charge them with tasks as appropriate.

d. To review and approve all proposals and documents produced by MARS and its committees.

e. To recommend action to the RUSA Board.

Approved: June 1988
Revised: November 1995

MARS Best Free Websites Committee

Descriptive Statement

1. Establishment

Established at ALA Annual Conference, June 19, 2001 in San Francisco upon the recommendation of the MARS Planning Committee, following action of the MARS Executive Committee as an outgrowth of the MARS Best of the Web Task Force.

2. Purpose

To research, identify, evaluate, and annotate free reference resources available on the Internet in order to advise libraries of all types of quality information. Publicize the lists on the MARS Web site and in RUSQ [Reference and Users Services Quarterly.]

3. Membership

The committee shall be composed to 12-20 members including the two Chairs. Virtual committee membership will be encouraged. All members except the Chairs can be virtual members. The majority of the Committee work shall be done outside of conference.

4. Terms of Office

The members of the committee shall serve staggered two-year terms. Individuals can be appointed for a second two-year term, but the maximum that can be served is four consecutive years.

5. Specific duties

a. Solicit nominations, search the Web and identify resources useful in a variety of reference settings.

b. Evaluate those resources by comparing and contrasting with other Web resources, and resources in other media.

c. Annually review criteria.

d. Announce the availability of the list at the ALA Annual Conference.

6/01/01
rev. 6/17/01 MARS Planning Committee
rev 6/19/01 MARS Executive Committee

MARS Education Training and Support Committee

Descriptive Statement

1. Establishment

Established as a MARS in 1990 at the Annual Conference in Chicago. Its predecessor, the MARS Education and Training of Search Analysts Committee, was established with MARS in 1978.

2. Purpose

To create, collect, analyze, and disseminate information and materials on the development, implementation, and evaluation of education, training and support for all groups of users of electronic reference services. These users include on-site and remote users; library staff; and library science educators and students.

3. Composition

The committee shall be composed of seven to nine members, plus one intern and/or one consultant if desired.

4. Terms of Office

Members of the committee shall serve staggered two-year terms. Individuals can be reappointed for a second two-year term, but the maximum that can be served is four consecutive years.

5. Specific Duties

a. To carry out committee activities which may include writing and recommending guidelines; planning, conducting and assisting in programs, workshops, discussions and forums; preparing annotated bibliographies, reports, or other documents as appropriate to the charge of the committee.

b. To consider ethical implications as appropriate.

c. To establish subcommittees to address specific concerns and projects as needed.

d. To be familiar with the activities of other MARS committees and work with them as appropriate.

e. To maintain contact with other ALA units engaged in related activities.

Approved: June 1990
Revised: June 1999

MARS Local Systems and Services Committee

Descriptive Statement

1. Establishment

Established as a MARS committee in 1990 at the Annual Conference in Chicago. Its predecessors, in part, were the MARS Nonbibliographic Databases Committee, established in 1982 (an outgrowth of an ad hoc committee on Nonbibliographic Databases established by the MARS Executive Committee in 1981); and the MARS Direct Patron Access Committee, established in 1982 (an outgrowth of an ad hoc Committee for the Education of Online End Users established by the MARS Executive Committee in 1981).

2. Purpose

To create, collect, analyze, and disseminate information and materials on the development, implementation, and evaluation of local and locally customized systems and services in any format; and to gather and share with the library profession information on new technologies and ethical issues relating to such systems and services. Local systems and services to be considered may include, but are not limited to, the following: provision of electronic reference services; document delivery; expert systems; locally developed databases; public access catalogs; non-bibliographic databases.

3. Composition

The committee shall be composed of seven to nine members, plus one intern and/or one consultant if desired.

4. Terms of Office

Members of the committee shall serve staggered two-year terms. Individuals can be reappointed for a second two-year term, but the maximum that can be served is four consecutive years.

5. Specific Duties

a. To carry out committee activities which may include writing and recommending guidelines; planning, conducting and assisting in programs, workshops, discussions, and forums; preparing annotated bibliographies, reports, or other documents as appropriate to the charge of the committee.

b. To consider ethical implications as appropriate.

c. To establish subcommittees to address specific concerns and projects as needed.

d. To be familiar with the activities of other MARS committees and work with them as appropriate.

e. To maintain contact with other ALA units engaged in related activities.

Approved: June 1990
Revised: June 1999; June 2005

MARS Nominating Committee

Descriptive Statement

1. Establishment

Established with MARS in 1978 at the Annual Conference in Chicago.

2. Purpose

To present a slate of candidates for election as officers of the Section and for the members-at-large of the Executive Committee of MARS.

3. Composition

The committee shall be composed of three members. The Chair and other members of the Executive Committee of MARS, with the exception of the immediate Past Chair, may not serve on the Nominating Committee.

4. Terms of Office

Members of the committee shall serve for one year and are generally appointed in the fall one and one-half years before the election for which they are to provide a slate by the newly-elected Vice-Chair of MARS.

5. Specific Duties

To present a slate of two candidates for each office to fill an anticipated vacancy on the MARS Executive Committee. The Committee shall send the Executive Director of RUSA all slates, in ballot order as determined by lot, and accompanied by the candidates' permissions, according to RUSA's instructions and timeline (usually the September or October before the election.) The Committee shall collect and forward candidates' statements and biographies to RUSA, or instruct the candidates to forward the materials directly to RUSA with a copy to a designated person on the Committee (generally the Chair) according to RUSA's instructions and timeline. RUSA arranges for the publication and distribution of the official ballot by the American Library Association. The committee shall forward candidates' statements to MARS-L and to the MARS Webmaster for inclusion on the MARS web page, except where a candidate explicitly requests the statement not be posted electronically.

Approved: June 1988
Revised: June 1999
Revised: June 2005

MARS Management of Electronic Resources and Services Committee

Descriptive Statement

1. Establishment

Established in 1990 at the Annual Conference in Chicago as the MARS Management Committee. Its predecessors, in part, were the Costs and Financing of Database Services Committee, established with MARS in 1978, and the Measurement and Evaluation of Services Committee, established in 1981 at the Annual Conference in San Francisco through the merger of the Measurement Committee and the Evaluation Committee, both established with MARS in 1978. Name changed to Management of Electronic Reference Services at the Philadelphia Midwinter Meeting, in 1999. Became Management of Electronic Resources and Services at the San Antonio Midwinter Meeting in 2006.

2. Purpose

To create, collect, analyze, and disseminate information on all aspects of management of electronic resources and tools for reference services. These aspects include planning, personnel, budget, organization, evaluation, facilities management, coordination and promotion, with emphasis on the role of the manager.

3. Composition

The committee shall be composed of seven to nine members, plus one intern and/or one consultant if desired.

4. Terms of Office

Members of the committee shall serve staggered two-year terms. Individuals can be reappointed for a second two-year term, but the maximum that can be served is four consecutive years.

5. Specific Duties

a. To carry out committee activities which may include writing and recommending guidelines; planning, conducting and assisting in programs, workshops, discussions, and forums; preparing annotated bibliographies, reports or other documents as appropriate to the charge of the committee.

b. To develop and regularly update models of planning documents which will assist librarians in the planning process for electronic reference services.

c. To serve as an information resource for library managers of electronic resources and services.

d. To consider ethical implications as appropriate.

e. To establish subcommittees to address specific concerns and projects as needed.

f. To be familiar with the activities of other MARS and RUSA committees and to work with them as appropriate.

g. To maintain contact with other ALA units engaged in related activities.

Approved, June 1990.
Revised: June 2005, May 2006

MARS Products and Services Committee

Descriptive Statement

1. Establishment

Established as a MARS committee in 1990 at the Annual Conference in Chicago. Its predecessor, the MARS Database Products and Computerized Search Service Vendors Committee, was established with MARS in 1978.

2. Purpose

To create, collect, analyze, evaluate and disseminate information on, and coordinate the concerns of individuals or organizations involved in selecting, acquiring, and evaluating electronic reference products and services.

3. Composition

The committee shall be composed of seven to nine members, plus one intern and/or one consultant if desired.

4. Terms of Office

Members of the committee shall serve staggered two-year terms. Individuals can be reappointed for a second two-year term, but the maximum that can be served is four consecutive years.

5. Specific Duties

a. To facilitate information sharing and communication between librarians and vendors of electronic reference products and services.

b. To influence the development of new products and services so that they meet the needs of their potential users.

c. To carry out committee activities which may include writing and recommending guidelines; planning, conducting and assisting in programs, workshops, discussions, and forums; preparing annotated bibliographies, reports, or other documents as appropriate to the charge of the committee.

d. To maintain contact with other groups and organizations that are concerned with technical standards for electronic products and services (e.g., the International Standards Organization, and the American National Standards Institute), and with ALA units engaged in activities similar to those described above.

e. To consider ethical implications as appropriate.

f. To establish subcommittees to address specific concerns and projects as needed.

g. To be familiar with the activities of other MARS committees and work with them as appropriate.

Approved: June 1990
Revised: June 1999
Revised: June 2005

MARS Outreach Committee

Descriptive Statement

1. Establishment

Established in 2000 at the Midwinter Meeting in San Antonio. Its predecessors were the MARS Outreach Task Force, created in late 1997, and the MARS Birthday Party Task Force, also created in late 1997.

2. Purpose

To promote membership in MARS. To promote attendance and participation in MARS programs, discussion forums, and events (e.g. Meet Martians happy hour), and committees. To promote MARS media (e.g. MARS-L, Messages from MARS, Web page.) To provide liaisons to other RUSA/ALA units as needed (for example, RUSA Membership, New Members Round Table).

3. Composition

The committee shall be composed of seven to nine members plus one intern and/or consultant if desired. An attempt shall be made for two members to be recent to MARS. At least three members must be able to attend assigned events.

4. Terms of Office

Members of the committee shall serve staggered two-year terms. Individuals can be reappointed for a second two-year term, but the maximum consecutive years that can be served is four years.

5. Specific Duties

a. To recruit new members.

b. To coordinate a "Meet MARtianS" gathering at midwinter meetings and annual conferences (identifying a location, advertising the location, serving as host). At least one member of the committee will be assigned to take responsibility for this activity during his/her tenure.

c. To forward the name of a committee member to the Vice-Chair for appointment as MARS Representative on the RUSA Membership Committee. One member of the committee will be assigned to take responsibility for this activity during his/her tenure.

d. To forward the name of a committee member to the Vice-Chair for appointment as MARS Liaison to the New Members Round Table. One member of the committee will be assigned to take responsibility for this activity during his/her tenure.

e. To coordinate MARS mentoring program, working with other RUSA mentoring programs as appropriate. At least one member of the committee will be assigned to take responsibility for this activity during his/her tenure.

f. To do outreach and publicity for the Section (e.g. MARS programs and discussion forums, committees, MARS birthdays, promotion of MARS-L).

g. To consider the needs and interests of MARS members who work in all types of libraries: special, public, academic, and school.

h. To use the MARS media (e.g. MARS-L, Messages from MARS, Web Page) to provide information about section activities and committee work; serve as a public relations tool for current members; and disseminate information for recruitment of potential new members.

Approved: July 10, 2000
Revised: June 2005

MARS Planning Committee

Descriptive Statement

1. Establishment

Established in 1985 at the Annual Meeting in Chicago by the MARS Executive Committee.

2. Purpose

To serve in an advisory capacity to the MARS Executive Committee regarding goals, objectives and priorities for the Section as well as helping to develop broad strategies for achieving them, and to evaluate the progress of the Section and its units towards these goals and objectives.

3. Composition

The committee shall consist of five to seven appointed members, plus two ex-officio, voting members: the Vice-Chair/Chair Elect of the Section, and the Past Chair.

4. Terms of Office

To ensure continuity, members of the committee not specified by office shall serve staggered two-year terms. Individuals can be reappointed for a second two-year term, but the maximum that can be served is four consecutive years.

5. Specific Duties

a. To meet jointly at Midwinter with the MARS Executive Committee for Section planning purposes.

b. To monitor new technology and its applications and to recommend appropriate action for MARS.

c. To review and update the Section's "Goals, Strategies, and Objectives," to set priorities with the MARS Vice-Chair at Midwinter, and to incorporate reports of the Section's progress in meeting these goals into the document.

d. To periodically review the Section's organizational structure and Bylaws. This review is to be done every five years during the year prior to review by the RUSA Organization Committee, and at other times as deemed appropriate by the MARS Executive Committee or Planning Committee.

e. To review the MARS Handbook every year in conjunction with the Annual Conference, and to revise it as needed. Substantive changes should be reviewed with the MARS Executive Committee.

f. To maintain communications with other RUSA groups (the RUSA Planning and Finance Committee, RUSA Organization, etc.) through MARS Section representatives.

g. To identify groups both within and outside ALA which have activities that have a bearing on MARS activities and concerns, and to recommend appropriate action.

h. To advise the Executive Committee on the need for liaisons and assist in their establishment.

i. To review the planning process and reporting mechanisms every two years on the odd-numbered years.

j. To carry out other duties as assigned by the MARS Executive Committee.

Approved: July 1988
Revised: November 1995; June 2005

MARS Public Libraries Committee

Descriptive Statement

1. Establishment

Established with MARS in 1978 at the Annual Conference in Chicago.

2. Purpose

To create, collect and disseminate information on all aspects of electronic reference services in public libraries, and to represent the interests of librarians concerned with planning, managing, or conducting electronic reference services in public libraries.

3. Composition

The committee shall be composed of seven to nine members, plus one intern and/or one consultant if desired.

4. Terms of Office

Members of the committee shall serve staggered two-year terms. Individuals can be reappointed for a second two-year term, but the maximum that can be served is four consecutive years.

5. Specific Duties

a. To carry out committee activities which may include writing and recommending guidelines; planning, conducting and assisting in programs, workshops, discussions, and forums; preparing annotated bibliographies, reports, or other documents as appropriate to the charge of the committee.

b. To serve as a resource for information related to the use of electronic reference services in public libraries and to maintain and update a list of consultants willing to provide information to librarians on various aspects of electronic reference services.

c. To consider ethical implications as appropriate.

d. To establish subcommittees to address specific concerns and projects as needed.

e. To be familiar with the activities of other MARS committees and work with them as appropriate.

f. To maintain contact with other ALA units engaged in related activities.

Approved: June 1990
Revised: June 1999; June 2002

MARS Publications Committee

Descriptive Statement

1. Establishment

Established at ALA Midwinter Conference, 1986, in Chicago, upon recommendation of the MARS Planning Committee, following action of the MARS Executive Committee as an outgrowth of the MARS Publication Subcommittee.

2. Purpose

To provide advice and recommendations regarding Section documents and publications to MARS committees and the MARS Executive Committee, and to facilitate the publication process.

3. Composition

The committee shall be composed of five to nine members including the Chair. The "Messages from MARS" Editor/MARS-L Moderator, the MARS Representative to the RUSA Standards and Guidelines Committee, and MARS Web Coordinator shall serve as non-voting, ex-officio members of the committee and liaisons to the MARS Executive Committee.

4. Terms of Office

The members of the committee shall serve staggered two-year terms. Individuals can be reappointed for a second two-year term, but the maximum that can be served is four consecutive years. The "Messages from MARS" Editor/MARS-L Moderator and MARS Web Coordinator each shall serve a one-year internship upon appointment followed by one 3-year term.

5. Specific Duties

a. To interpret RUSA and ALA publications policies and to establish publications procedures within MARS.

b. To serve as a liaison with RUSA Publications Committee regarding publications and policies of mutual interest.

c. To take an active role in the development of all Section documents, advise on appropriate avenues for dissemination, monitor their editorial progress, and advise the MARS Executive Committee and other appropriate Section and Division committees on their status.

d. To coordinate the recruitment and screening of candidates for the positions of "Messages from MARS" Editor/MARS-L Moderator and MARS Web Coordinator [See Appendix for Selection Procedures] and make ~~a~~ recommendations to the MARS Executive Committee and to serve in an advisory capacity to the editors.

e. To carry out such other assignments as the MARS Executive Committee may direct.

Additional charges from the Planning Committee:

f. Notify the Executive Committee of the need to update or revise any MARS documents.

g. Review the list of MARS publications and their availability annually. The reviewed list is to be published annually in "Messages" and also placed on the MARS Web page.

Approved: June 1987
Revised: February 1995
Revised: June 2005

MARS User Access to Services Committee

Descriptive Statement

1. Establishment

Established as a MARS committee in 1990 at the Annual Conference in Chicago. Its predecessors, in part, were the MARS Nonbibliographic Databases Committee, established in 1982 (an outgrowth of an ad hoc Committee on Nonbibliographic Databases established by the MARS Executive Committee in 1981); and the MARS Direct Patron Access Committee, established in 1982 (an outgrowth of an ad hoc Committee for the Education of Online End Users established by the MARS Executive Committee in 1981).

2. Purpose

To create, collect, analyze, and disseminate information and materials on access to electronic reference services and their impact on users. Electronic reference services and their delivery systems include, but are not limited to, digital reference, database searching, automated systems interfaces, networks and gateways.

3. Composition

The committee shall be composed of seven to nine members, plus one intern and/or one consultant if desired.

4. Terms of Office

Members of the committee shall serve staggered two-year terms. Individuals can be reappointed for a second two-year term, but the maximum that can be served is four consecutive years.

5. Specific Duties

a. To serve as an information resource to the library and information community on issues related to the users of electronic reference sources.

b. To carry out committee activities which may include writing and recommending guidelines; planning, conducting and assisting in programs, workshops, discussions, and forums; preparing annotated bibliographies, reports, or other documents as appropriate to the charge of the committee.

c. To consider ethical implications as appropriate.

d. To establish subcommittees to address specific concerns and projects as needed.

e. To be familiar with the activities of other MARS committees and work with them as appropriate.

f. To maintain contact with other ALA units engaged in related activities.

Approved: June 1990
Revised: June 1999; June 2005

MARS/RSS Virtual Reference Committee

DESCRIPTIVE STATEMENT

1. Establishment

Established as a joint MARS and RSS committee in 2004 at the Annual Conference in Orlando.

2. Purpose

To identify and study issues relating to virtual reference services, and to evaluate and promote technological and service standards, guidelines, and "best practices" for virtual reference services in all types of libraries. Virtual Reference describes reference transactions that take place in an electronic medium.

3. Composition

The committee shall be composed of ten members, five from each section, plus two interns, one from each section. Two of the committee members, one from each section, shall serve as co-chairs. One consultant from each section may be appointed as needed. The Chair of the Virtual Reference Discussion Group is an ex-officio non-voting member of the committee.

4. Terms of Office

Members of the committee shall serve staggered two-year terms. Individuals can be reappointed for a second two-year term, but the maximum that can be served is four consecutive years.

5. Specific Duties

This section to be determined.
Revised July 2008

DISCUSSION GROUPS

Hot Topics in Electronic Reference Discussion Group

Descriptive Statement

1. Establishment
Established in 1991 at the Annual Meeting in Atlanta by the MARS Executive Committee as the Hot Topics Discussion Group. Name changed to its current form at the San Francisco Annual Conference in June, 1997.

2. Purpose:
To provide a timely forum for discussion of current issues related to the provision of electronic reference services.

3. Composition
Officers shall consist of a Chair, a Vice-Chair and a Secretary. The MARS Chair-elect shall appoint a Secretary.

4. Terms of Office
The Vice-Chair shall serve a one-year term and assume the role of Chair for one year after the Annual meeting. The Secretary shall serve a one-year term and assume the role of Vice-Chair after the Annual meeting.

5. Specific Duties
a. To sponsor one discussion forum at each Annual and Midwinter meeting.
b. The Chair and Vice-Chair are responsible for planning discussion group meetings. This includes identifying (a) topic(s), selecting (a) facilitator(s), if desired, requesting a meeting time through the MARS Scheduling Coordinator, promoting the meeting in "Messages from MARS" and MARS-L, Cognotes, and through a flier (working with the MARS Scheduling Coordinator). The Chair should seek input concerning future discussion topics from discussion group participants. The Secretary shall produce a summary of the discussion forum.
c. To maintain contact with MARS committees and serve as a vehicle for furthering committee activities.

Approved: June 1992
Revised: March 2000 by Executive Committee via email; June, 2006.

Virtual Reference Discussion Group

Descriptive Statement

1. Establishment
Established 2002 at the Midwinter Meeting in New Orleans by the MARS Executive Committee.

2. Purpose
To provide a timely forum for discussion of issues related to the provision of virtual reference services. Virtual Reference describes reference transactions that take place in an electronic medium.

3. Composition
The Discussion Group officers shall consist of a Chair, a Vice-Chair and a Secretary. The MARS Chair-elect shall appoint a Secretary. The Chair serves as an ex-officio non-voting member for the Virtual Reference Committee.

4. Terms of Office
The Vice-Chair shall serve a one-year term and assume the role of Chair for one year after the Annual Meeting. The Secretary shall serve a one-year term and assume the role of Vice-Chair after the Annual meeting.

5. Specific Duties

a. To sponsor one discussion forum at each Annual and Midwinter meeting.

b. The Chair and Vice-chair are responsible for planning discussion group meetings. This includes identifying (a) topic(s), selecting facilitator(s), if desired, requesting meeting time through the MARS Scheduling Coordinator, promoting the meeting in Messages from MARS and MARS-L, Cognotes, and through a flier (working with the MARS Scheduling Coordinator). The Chair should seek input concerning future discussion topics from discussion group participants. The Secretary shall produce a summary of the discussion forum.

c. To maintain contact with MARS committees and serve as a vehicle for furthering committee activities.

Approved June 2002
Revised, June 2006
Revised July 2008

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS AND APPENDICES

Appendix A: BYLAWS

MACHINE-ASSISTED REFERENCE SECTION

Article I. Name.

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the Machine-Assisted Reference Section of the Reference and User Services Association of the American Library Association.

Article II. Objectives.

Section 1. The Machine-Assisted Reference Section of the Reference and User Services Association represents the interests of those concerned with attaining the highest possible quality in planning, developing, managing, teaching, or conducting all forms of computer-based reference and information services in libraries.

Section 2. The responsibilities of the section are:

a. To conduct activities and projects within the section's areas of interest.
b. To be a means of sharing experience and information among interested librarians from all types of libraries and information services.
c. To seek to synthesize the activities of other units within the American Library Association that have a bearing on machine-assisted reference services.
d. To be a forum for discussion between libraries and the producers and suppliers of computerized reference and information services in a variety of formats.
e. To represent the needs and interests of the wide diversity of library users.

Article III. Membership.

Section 1. Members of this Section shall be those members of the Reference and User Services Association of the American Library Association who designate the Machine-Assisted Reference Section according to the American Library Association Bylaws.

Article IV. Officers and Duties.

Section 1. **Officers.** The officers of the Section shall be a Chair, a vice-Chair who shall be Chair-elect, and a secretary.

Section 2. **Terms of Office.** The terms of office for Chair and vice-Chair shall be one year; that for secretary shall be two years.

Section 3. **Duties.** The duties of the officers shall be those customarily performed by such officers, as specified in *Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedures*, unless otherwise specified by a vote of the Section.

Section 4. **Vacancies of Office.** A vacancy in the office of Chair shall be filled by the vice-Chair, who will then complete both the terms of his/her predecessor and his/her own. In the case of a vacancy in both the offices of Chair and vice-Chair, or of a vacancy in the office of secretary, the Executive Committee shall appoint one of its members to serve until the next regular election.

Article V. Nominations and Election.

Section 1. **Nominating Committee.** The Chair shall, with the approval of the Executive Committee, appoint a Nominating Committee of three members to present a slate of candidates for election to offices of the Section and for the three elected members-at-large of the Executive Committee. The Chair and the other members of the Executive Committee, other than the immediate past Chair, may not serve on the Nominating Committee.

Section 2. **Nominations.**

a. **Slate.** The Nominating Committee shall present a slate of two candidates for each office to be filled. The committee shall file the nominations and the written consent of the nominees with the Division's Executive Director who shall arrange for publication and distribution of the official ballot by the American Library Association.
b. **Additional Nominations.** Other nominations may be made by petition of 25 members of the Section, and submitted with the written consent of the nominee to the Executive Director of the Division by the final deadline specified by the American Library Association for inclusion on the ballot.
c. **Eligibility.** No person may be nominated who is not a personal member in good standing of the Section at the time of nomination.

Section 3. **Elections.** Elections shall be held by official ballot in accordance with the procedures of the American Library Association. For each office, the candidate receiving the largest number of votes cast shall be elected. In the case of a tie vote, the successful candidate shall be determined by lot. At the first election following the adoption of these Bylaws, in order to establish staggered or overlapping terms of office, the candidate for member-at-large of the Executive Committee who receives the greatest number of votes shall be elected for a three-year term; the candidates who receive the second and third number of votes shall be elected to two- and one-year terms, respectively. Thereafter, one member at large shall be elected annually.

Article VI. Meetings.

Section 1. **General Meetings.** The Section shall hold an annual business meeting in connection with the annual conference of the American Library Association.

Section 2. **Special Meetings.** Other meetings may be called by the Executive Committee or by the Chair upon request of twenty-five members of the Section. Notice of at least one month shall be given, and only the business specified in the call for the meeting shall be transacted.

Section 3. **Quorum.** Twenty-five members of the Section shall constitute a quorum.

Article VII. Executive Committee

Section 1. **Composition.** The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers, the immediate past Chair, and three members-at-large elected by and from the Section for three-year terms, as provided in Article V, Section 3. The editor of the Section newsletter and moderator of the Section's electronic discussion group, the Section Web coordinator, the Section scheduling coordinator, the Section historian, and the president and executive secretary of the Reference and User Services Association shall be ex-officio, non-voting members of the Executive Committee.

Section 2. **Duties.** The Executive Committee shall act for and by the authority of the Section during the period between meetings. It shall report on its work at the regular meetings of the Section, and publish minutes of its meetings on the Section's Web site.

Section 3. **Meetings.** The Executive Committee shall meet at both the Annual Conference and the Midwinter Meeting of the American Library Association.

Section 4. **Quorum.** A majority of voting members shall constitute a quorum of the Executive Committee.

Section 5. **Vacancies of Office.** In the case of a vacancy in the Executive Committee not provided for in Article IV, Section 4, the Executive Committee shall appoint a member of the Section to fill the vacancy until the next regular election.

Article VIII. Committees.

Section 1. **Authorization and Discontinuance.** The Executive Committee or the membership of the Section by direction to the Executive Committee may create all standing, special and ad hoc committees, as defined by the American Library Association Handbook. Special and ad hoc committees shall continue in existence until their purpose is accomplished or the committee is discharged by the Section or the Executive Committee.

Section 2. **Duties.** The duties, name and size of a committee shall be determined at the time of its creation, but the Section Chair may temporarily add any pertinent and relevant duties necessary to carry out the work of the Section.

Section 3. **Appointments.**

a. **Members.** The vice-Chair and Chair-elect shall appoint those members of committees whose terms are to commence at the same time as he/she assumes the Chair. The Section Chair shall appoint members of committees formed during his/her term in office and shall make appointments to fill vacancies which may occur during his/her term of office. Each committee appointee shall be a member of the Section at the time of appointment or be appointed provisionally, contingent upon become a member at the next opportunity.
b. **Chairs.** The Chairs of committees shall be appointed in the same manner as members, except that no one shall serve concurrently as Chair of a committee and member of the Executive Committee. Exceptions to this last rule may be made in

cases where the immediate past chair serves as chair of the Nominating Committee, or when a committee's charge specifies that a specific member of the Executive Committee chair that committee, or in other cases as the Executive Committee may approve.

Section 4. **Terms of Appointment**

a. **Members.** Members of standing committees shall be appointed for terms of two years, and may be re-appointed for one additional term. Members of special and ad hoc committees shall be appointed for terms of two years, or less depending upon the Committee's charge. Appointments shall be made in such a manner as to provide continuity in membership.
b. **Chairs.** Chairs of committees shall be appointed for one-year terms and may be re-appointed for one additional term. In exceptional cases, and with the approval of the Executive Committee, a chair may be appointed to a third consecutive term.

Article IX. Discussion Groups.

Section 1. **Establishment.** Any group of 25 or more members of the Section interested in discussing common problems which fall within the purposes of the Section may form a discussion group upon written petition from the group to the Executive Committee of the Section and the Committee on Organization of the Division and upon approval by the Board of Directors of the Division. The petition shall include the purpose of the group and the requirements for membership. Petition signatures must be gathered during one meeting of the Section (either Annual Conference or Midwinter Meeting).

Section 2. **Membership.** Membership is open to members of the Section who are interested in the purpose of the group and who fulfill the requirements for membership as determined by the group.

Section 3. **Officers.** Officers shall consist of a chair and a vice-chair, and a secretary. The MARS Chair-elect shall appoint a secretary who shall take office after Annual Conference, and shall succeed to vice-chair in a year's time. The vice-chair shall succeed to chair in a year's time. The MARS Chair shall fill any vacancy that shall occur. The Chair shall preside at meetings of the group during the next year, make a report to the Executive Committee of the Section after each meeting, and ensure that a summary of the discussion is distributed in the Section's newsletter and posted on the Section's Web site. The Secretary shall produce the summary of the discussion.

Section 4. **Activities.** A discussion group may:

a. Meet together to discuss common problems;
b. Establish a means of communications among its members;
c. Recommend action to the Executive Committee of the Section;
d. Incur no expenses except as authorized and make no declaration of policy.

Section 5. **Discontinuance.** Each group shall continue in existence until it be dissolved by action of the Executive Committee.

Article X. Parliamentary Authority

Section 1. The rules in the latest edition of *Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedures* shall govern the Section in all cases to which they are applicable, provided they are not inconsistent with the Bylaws of the Reference and User Services Association of the American Library Association.

Article XI. Amendments.

Section 1. **Proposals.** Amendments to the Bylaws shall be proposed by the Executive Committee or by petition of ten members of the Section.

Section 2. **Notice.** The complete text of any proposed amendment shall accompany an official ballot. In cases where a vote is to be taken at the annual meeting of the Section, the text of any proposed amendment shall be distributed to the membership of the Section not less than one month before the meeting at which it is to be acted upon.

Section 3. **Voting.** A vote to amend the bylaws shall customarily be taken by official ballot. Amendments may also be presented for a vote at the annual meeting of the Section with notification as in Section 2 above. Bylaws amendments shall be passed by a majority of those members voting.

Section 4. **Effective.** Unless otherwise specified, amendments to the Bylaws shall become effective upon their approval by the membership.

Article XII. Adoption and Review.

Section 1. These Bylaws shall be adopted and take effect immediately upon their approval by a two-thirds majority vote at an annual meeting of the Section. They shall be reviewed every five years after adoption.

Article XIII. General Provisions.

Section 1. Wherever these Bylaws make no specific provisions, the organization of and procedures in the Section shall correspond to those set forth in the Bylaws of the Reference and User Services Association.

Effective June 1978
Amended: June 1986, June 1987, June 1991, June 1994, March 2000, May 2004.

Appendix B: CALENDARS

Usual Meeting Times for the MARS Executive Committee

Midwinter

Saturday afternoon: Executive Committee, Planning Committee, Committee Chairs

Monday morning: Action items, reporting

Tuesday morning: Action items, reporting

Annual

Friday afternoon: Executive Committee, Planning Committee, incoming and current Chairs; orientation; meeting run by Vice-Chair/Chair Elect; may be moved to an early Saturday morning slot such as 8:00 - 9:00 when MARS has a preconference.

Sunday morning: Business meeting and program

Monday morning: Action items, reporting

Tuesday morning: Action items, reporting

Approved 6/92; Revised November 1995; June 2005.

MARS Basic Schedule

Summer:	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
8:00-10:00		MARS Planning	MARS All-Committee Meeting	MARS ExComm	MARS ExComm
10:30-12:00		MARS Hot Topics Discussion Forum	MARS Business Meeting and Program	MARS ExComm	MARS ExComm
2:00-4:00	MARS ExComm, Planning, and Chairs	RUSA Board		RUSA Program	RUSA Board
4:30-5:30		Virtual Reference Discussion Group	MARS Discussion Forums		RUSA Board
5:30-7:30	MARS Happy Hour				

Midwinter	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
8:00-10:00			MARS All-Committee Meeting	MARS ExComm	MARS ExComm
10:30-12:00		MARS Hot Topics Discussion Forum	MARS Discussion Forums	MARS ExComm	MARS ExComm
2:00-4:00		MARS ExComm, Planning, and Chairs		MARS Planning	RUSA Board

4:30-5:30		Virtual Reference Discussion Group	RUSA Board
5:30-7:30	MARS Happy Hour		

Revised: June 1995; June 2005; July 2008

Vice-Chair and Chair-Elect Calendars

Vice-Chair Calendar

Responsibilities:

- Appoints members of committees to serve at the same time as s/he assumes Chair
- Serves ex-officio on MARS Planning Committee
- Organizes and conducts the Orientation meeting at Annual
- Serves on RUSA Planning and Finance Committee

July	August	September	October
Begin term as Vice-Chair	Appoint Nominating Committee for year as Chair	Appoint Nominating Committee for year as Chair	
Serve as a member of MARS Planning Committee, MARS Executive Committee, and RUSA Planning and Finance Committee*	Appoint Program Committee for year as Chair	Appoint Program Committee for year as Chair	
Chair Orientation Meeting. Inform chairs of procedures documented in the Handbook. Highlight and discuss the priorities for the Section chosen from the "Goals, Strategies, and Objectives."			
Begin term as Chair			
Begin term on RUSA Board			

November	December	January	February
	Prepare Committee interest forms	Prepare Committee interest forms	Report to the Executive Committee about next year's program topic
		Report to the Executive Committee about next year's program topic	Visit MARS Committees to distribute committee interest forms
		Visit MARS Committees to distribute committee interest forms	Receive MARS Committee Status Reports from current Committee Chairs
		Receive MARS Committee Status Reports from current Committee Chairs	Receive and **respond** to call from RUSA Vice-Chair to recommend MARS Section Representatives to RUSA Committees (copy to RUSA Executive Director)
		Receive and **respond** to call from RUSA Vice-Chair to recommend MARS Section Representatives to RUSA Committees (copy to RUSA Executive Director)	Receive updated roster from current MARS Chair

March	April	May	June
Receive updated roster from current MARS Chair	Appoint volunteers to MARS Committees. Send confirmation notices to all appointees.		Create new MARS roster; print and distribute to the Executive Committee, Planning Committee, and MARS Committee Chairs; make roster available electronically
Appoint volunteers to MARS Committees. Send confirmation notices to all appointees.			Plan Executive Committee/Planning/Chairs' Orientation Meeting

			Create and distribute Agenda for Orientation Meeting
			Chair Orientation Meeting. Inform chairs of procedures documented in the Handbook. Highlight and discuss the priorities for the Section chosen from the "Goals, Strategies, and Objectives."
			Chair of Program submits budget for next years Program

*****Task during entire term as Vice-Chair.

Chair Calendar

Responsibilities:

- Make committee appointments as vacancies occur.
- Conducts Executive Committee meetings (except Annual's Orientation meeting)
- Serve on RUSA Board
- Represents section as need arises
- Prepares budget and planning reports
- Chairs MARS annual Program and Membership meeting at Annual

July	August	September	October
Write column for Messages from MARS- appears in July/Sept issue. Check with "Messages" Editor for deadline.	Return corrected Roster to ALA for ALA Handbook of Organization		Write column for Messages from MARS - appears in Oct/Dec issue. Check with "Messages" Editor for deadline.
November	**December**	**January**	**February**
	Distribute Annual minutes via e-mail to Executive Committee	Write column for Messages from MARS - appears in	

	and Chairs for approval. Allow 10 day window for approval if no substantive changes. Send Midwinter Agenda to Executive Committee and Chairs for changes and additions. Send publicity reminders to Chairs and Members-at-Large for panels, forums and DGs.	Jan/March issue. Check with "Messages" Editor for deadline.	
March	April	May	June
	Write column for Messages from MARS - appears in April/Jun issue. Check with "Messages" Editor for deadline.	Distribute Midwinter minutes via e-mail to Executive Committee and Chairs for approval. Allow 10 day window for approval if no substantive changes. Send Annual Agenda to Executive Committee and Chairs for changes and additions. Send publicity reminders to Chairs and Members-at-Large for panels, forums and DGs.	

Approved, June 1992
Revised, November, 1995; June, 2005; July 2008

Discussion Group Leaders Calendar

After Annual -- Outgoing Chair
1. Submit a summary of meeting to Messages from MARS editor and MARS-L.
2. Forward pertinent group records to new Chair.
3. Send pertinent permanent records to Archives. (See "MARS Archives Guidelines," this Handbook).

After Annual -- Incoming Chair
1. Schedule meeting time for Midwinter and Annual (with MARS Scheduling Coordinator), in accordance with the schedule in Appendix B.
2. Identify a topic for discussion at the Midwinter meeting and make any necessary arrangements.
3. Prepare announcement flyer and give to MARS Scheduling Coordinator (who will arrange for dissemination at the literature distribution center at the registration area).
4. Submit announcements of discussions to appropriate listservs (see “Publicity avenues for MARS activities” on the MARS Web Site.)

After Annual – Outgoing Secretary
1. Produce a summary of the discussion.

At Midwinter
1. Make sure flyers are distributed to other MARS Chairs, committees, and appropriate ALA groups.
2. Give an oral report to Executive Committee.
3. Submit "MARS Committee and Discussion Group Reporting Form" to Planning Committee Chair.

After Midwinter
1. Submit a summary of meeting to "Messages from MARS" editor and to MARS-L.
2. Recommend to the MARS Vice Chair a new candidate for Discussion Group Secretary, if an individual has been identified.
3. Develop a topic for discussion at the Annual Conference.
4. Prepare an announcement flier to give to the MARS Scheduling Coordinator for dissemination in the literature distribution center at the registration area.
5. Submit announcements of discussions to appropriate listservs (see Martian to Martial Transmissions)

At Annual
1. Make sure flyers are distributed to other MARS Chairs, committees, and appropriate ALA groups.
2. Give an oral report to Executive Committee, including the name of the newly appointed Vice-Chair of the group.
3. Submit "MARS Committee and Discussion Group Reporting Form" to Planning Committee Chair.

Approved: July 1988
Revised: November 1995; June 2005; June 2006.

MARS Achievement Recognition Certificate Committee

Tasks and Timetable after the winner is chosen

Initials	Task
_____	1. After the awardee is selected (typically at the Midwinter Meeting, but at least by February 15), notify the MARS chair, who will call the awardee to notify him/her of the decision. The awardee information is still not public knowledge, but the awardee is notified shortly after the decision is made so that s/he has time to make plans for ALA Annual—family and friends may want to come, etc.
_____	2. Draft letter for the MARS Chair to send awardee. The letter should go to recipient in early April and is copied to RUSA Headquarters. Draft should be done in February.
_____	3. Obtain awardee's CV to assist in writing press release.
_____	4. Write announcement to be given to the MARS-L Moderator to appear in the Web version of Messages which will be posted in early April. The official announcement is posted to MARS-L as a separate item early in April, about the time of the announcement of ALA election results, and after the awardee has received the official letter. The MARS Chair may wish to post the announcement.
_____	5. Write award citation and prepare with appropriate special paper. Frame the citation to give to the MARS Chair at ALA Annual for presentation at MARS Program (usually Sunday morning). Frame should be "openable" because Chair has to sign. There is funding for reimbursement for frame and paper.
_____	6. Promptly after Annual write the press release, including award citation. Distribution is to RUSA Headquarters and to the MARS-L Moderator for MARS-L list and Web version of Messages.
_____	7. The press release should be submitted to the Web Coordinator to be posted on the MARS Web site under *News and Updates*.
_____	8. Send full press release to the recipient's hometown newspaper.
_____	9. Send announcement to recipient's Library School, if not defunct.
All	Attend MARS Program at ALA Annual Conference to see award given. Standard time is 10:30am Sunday.

Format: Naomi Lederer, Chair of Achievement Certificate Award Committee, 2003-4
MARSAwardComm.Tasks&Timetable.104

Approved, June 2005

Appendix C: MARS SECTION GOALS

The RUSA Strategic Plan is available at
http://www.ala.org/ala/rusa/rusaourassoc/rusastrategic.htm .

See also the MARS Section Review in the Handbook for the Report of the Task Force, August 26, 2002, which includes a section on setting goals.

MARS Goals 2006-2007

1) Complete the five-year section review.

2) Draft Strategic Goals for MARS in concordance with the RUSA 2006-2009 Strategic Plan.

- Following the RUSA model, begin planning for a SWOT analysis either at Midwinter 2008 with input virtually before that date to determine areas of opportunity and change for the next 5 years. Participants in this SWOT will be all interested section members.
- Write an introduction to the process written and implement a timeline.
- Identify a facilitator for the 2008 SWOT.
- Appoint a task force to plan and coordinate the Strategic Goals process.
- The SWOT (conducted during the next Chair's term) will be used with the completed section review to determine if there are areas for retreat as well as growth. What is being done elsewhere in RUSA/ALA? Do we partner, do it better, or stop doing it?

3) Meet the continuing education needs of members. CE was identified in the RUSA Value survey as the 5th most important function of RUSA (out of 11 categories) and 10th in the successfulness of RUSA in meeting member needs.

- Ascertain the skills needed by reference services personnel in the future and ways of preparing both new and experienced reference personnel to fulfill these needs.
- The MARS Continuing Education and Publications Task Force is at work on determining member interests, areas of need, and methods of delivering continuing education content.
- Develop at 3-5 plan for continuing education and publication activities for both conference attendees and non-conference attendees

4) Continue to develop the MARS Web Site as the public face for the section – both for members and non-members.

- Determine and distribute deadlines for various content (committee rosters, program announcements and content, etc) and a "nag schedule" for committee chairs to ensure appropriately current content on MARS-level and committee-level pages.

- Recognizing that most members and non-members will not visit the MARS page every week, current and accurate content is vital to return visits as well as the smooth functioning of the section.
- Determine archiving mechanism and schedule for aged content. Determine if ALA has standard procedures and mechanisms for archiving. In the absence of organization standard, create our own. Determine what content should be archived.
- Appoint an intern or assistant for the webmaster so that this person has assistance and has an heir-apparent. This may require a change in the bylaws?

5) Encourage a broader and more active membership in the MARS section

- Seek ways to promote wider active participation in committees and discussion groups. Identify the MARS committees where virtual membership will be effective and develop a set of guidelines to assist chairs in working with virtual members. Encourage and support virtual membership wherever appropriate.
- Explore use of technologies such as Web broadcasting and meeting software to expand MARS programming to reach more members and potential members.
- Write a guide for working with virtual members. This is something that RUSA has talked about. Need to include in minutes of meetings work which has done virtually, particularly any actions that were taken.

6) Focus on current issues in technology and the provision of electronic reference through the work of MARS committees and ad hoc groups.

- Explore the impact of new technologies such as linking services, metasearch, and NextGen library catalogs on users, on library reference services, and on reference collections. Stay abreast of emerging standards for reference technologies and assisting RUSA in the development of those standards. Advocate for the needs of users, especially those with disabilities or with limited access to technology.
- Keep informed of legislation that affects access to electronic products, including copyright and licensing, archiving and fair use guidelines.

2005-2006

1. Work to find the most effective ways to communicate with MARS members and non-members.
    A. Redesign the MARS web site to meet the needs of users and to fit the information MARS committee and task forces wish to make available. Develop goals and measurable objectives for use in an ongoing program of evaluation. Ensure that the web site is accessible to users with disabilities.
    B. Review Messages from MARS in the current technology environment and identify ways to keep it fresh.
    C. Review MARS-L and look at ways to use other, complementary, technologies such as RSS and blogging to keep members up-to-date.
    D. Experiment with ALA's new communications software for meetings and sharing with members.

2. Continue to work to identify and articulate the unique role of MARS as an organization that supports and encourages innovation in reference and user services in libraries. Identify at least one committee project that can be marketed to members and non-members as a MARS accomplishment.

3. Continue to collaborate with the Reference Services Section and STARS to make RUSA a comprehensive resource for public services practitioners in libraries.

4. Encourage a broader and more active membership in the MARS Section
    A. Seek ways to promote wider active participation in committees and discussion groups. Identify the MARS committees where virtual membership will be effective and develop a set of guidelines to assist chairs in working with virtual members. Ensure that virtual membership on committees is provided where possible. Look at the ALA guidelines for virtual membership. Stay informed about work being done in ACRL and PLA so as to develop a plan to include more members who cannot attend all conferences and volunteer to participate in any projects started by RUSA.
    B. Create an audit of current and possible MARS activities to attract new members and retain current members, even if they cannot attend conferences in person.
    C. Explore use of technologies such as satellite and Web broadcasting and instruction/meeting software to expand MARS programming to reach more members and potential members.

5. Focus on current issues in technology and the provision of electronic reference through the work of MARS committees and ad hoc groups in the following areas:
    A. Defining the skills needed by reference services personnel in the future and looking at ways of educating and preparing new and experienced reference personnel to fulfill future needs.
    B. Exploring the impact of new technologies such as linking services and metasearch software on users, on library reference services, and on reference collections. Staying abreast of emerging standards for reference technologies and assisting RUSA in serving in a leadership role in the development of those standards. Advocating for the needs of users with disabilities or with limited access to technology.
    C. Identifying trends and best practices in developing the library web site as a reference resource and in creating other library reference services to serve the autonomous user, keeping in mind the needs of users with disabilities or with limited access to technology.
    D. Keeping informed of legislation that affects access to electronic products, including copyright and licensing, archiving and fair use issues.

6. Begin work to develop a 3-5 year plan of continuing education and publication activities to help reference personnel keep up with emerging issues and changing technologies and to provide opportunities for members to gather information that can be used in their daily work lives This plan will provide a mix of activities to benefit those who come to national conferences and those who are not able to attend.

7. Continue to enhance the MARS Handbook and continue to update the MARS Bylaws to meet the changing needs of the organization.

2004-05

1. Explore the most effective ways to communicate with MARS members and non-members through Messages from MARS and the MARS Web site and establish procedures for utilizing and maintaining these communication tools to provide the most value for MARS and its constituents. [RUSA Obj. 3, 4 & 5]
2. Identify and articulate the unique role of MARS as an organization that supports and encourages those who are innovators and early adopters of new technologies that advance reference and user services in libraries. [RUSA Obj. 3 & 5]
3. Continue to collaborate with the Reference Services Section and STARS on structural and programmatic issues to ensure that RUSA serves as the best and most comprehensive resource for public service practitioners in libraries. [RUSA Obj. 1]
4. Encourage a broader and more active membership in the MARS Section. [RUSA Obj. 3 & 5]
    A. Seek ways to promote more active participation by the membership in committees and discussion groups; ensure that virtual membership on committees is provided whenever possible.
    B. Examine staffing patterns in libraries and identify underserved groups such as those in the field of access services whose needs could be fulfilled by MARS; target these groups for outreach.
5. Focus on current issues in technology and the provision of electronic reference such as:
    A. Educating and preparing reference service personnel for the future. [RUSA Obj. 1]
    B. Evaluating reference services, including virtual reference and networked electronic reference service. [RUSA Obj. 6]
    C. Exploring the impact of commercial reference services and new technologies such as linking services on library reference services. [RUSA Obj. 6]
    D. Examining the impact of legislation such as the USA Patriot Act and new technologies such as RFID on patron privacy. [RUSA Obj. 7 and 6]
    E. Keeping informed of legislation that affects access to electronic products, including copyright and licensing, archiving and fair use issues. [RUSA Obj. 1]
    F. Exploring the meaning of "equity of access," 2004 ALA President's initiative, for electronic resources and services, including aspects such as access for people with disabilities and access for those without technology skills and those who do not have access to networks, hardware and software. [RUSA Obj. 2]
6. Continue to enhance the MARS Handbook and continue to update the MARS Bylaws. [RUSA Obj. 3]
7. Explore future use of technologies such as satellite and Web broadcasting and instruction/meeting software to expand MARS programming to reach more members and potential members. [RUSA Obj. 1, 3 & 4]

2003-04

1. Address issues raised by the 2001-2002 MARS Section Review.
   a. revisit focus of MERS w/ Planning & MERS
2. Explore possibilities for future RUSA MARS preconference and encourage committee-sponsored programs that promote the mission of MARS.
3. Encourage committees to explore publications -- both digital and print.
4. Explore feasibility of a fee-based reference resources "best" list akin to the MARS Best Free Reference Web Sites.
5. Address issues surrounding disappearance of information from the digital domain.
   a. Commercial publishers (Elsevier, Time, Tasini)
   b. Government content and services (PubScience, ERIC)
6. Nurture nascent MARS Mentoring program through Outreach.
7. Continue to enhance the MARS Website.
8. Continue to enhance the MARS Handbook and to update the MARS Bylaws.

2002-03

1. Complete the 2001-2002 MARS Section review, addressing any issues raised and implementing appropriate changes suggested by the results.
2. Explore possibilities for future RUSA/MARS pre-conferences and encourage committee-sponsored programs that promote the mission of RUSA/MARS.
3. Establish a discussion group dealing with digital reference issues.
4. Explore feasibility of a fee-based reference resources "best" list similar to the MARS Best Free Reference Web Sites.
5. Encourage a broader and more active membership in the MARS Section.
   a. Look at membership roster and consider the need for targeted outreach.
   b. Seek ways to promote more active participation by the membership in committees and discussion groups.
6. Focus on current issues in technology and the provision of electronic reference, such as:
   a. Educating and preparing reference service personnel for the future, especially digital and live reference.
   b. Discussing the role of direct-to-the-consumer electronic services such as Ask Jeeves or refdesk.com. How do we define ourselves with respect to these services? Do they supplant or do they supplement library reference services?
   c. In light of recent heightened security concerns, ensuring that technological safeguards do not disenfranchise our users.
   d. Keeping informed of legislation that affects access to electronic products, including copyright and licensing, archiving, and fair use issues.
   e. Defining the needs of distance learners and using technology effectively to meet those needs.
7. Continue to enhance the MARS Web site.

8. Continue to enhance the MARS Handbook, and continue to update the MARS Bylaws.

2001-02

1. Conduct the MARS Section review scheduled for 2001-2002.
2. Focus on critical areas of change in machine-assisted reference, such as:
    a. Examining methods, standards, and effectiveness of the delivery of live reference over the Internet. *(Priority Area F)*
    b. Helping to ensure that technology is implemented in a user-centered way, in such areas as the negotiation of licenses and the development of interfaces. *(Priority Areas C, A)*
    c. Supporting the role of public services librarians as advocates for the user both within their organizations and in relations with vendors. *(Priority Areas G, C)*
    d. Examining issues of the continuing access to and preservation of electronic materials as they affect users today and in the future. *(Priority Area A)*
    e. Looking at the competencies, skills and knowledge needed by public-services librarians in the emerging library, and examining methods for helping librarians to attain these skills. *(Priority Area B)*
    f. Exploring the relationship of services offered by libraries with those of the various commercial services increasingly perceived as alternatives to the library. *(Priority Area G)*
3. Improve communication between the Executive Committee and the committee chairs by establishing of a listserv for this purpose. *(Priority Area F)*
4. Build on the work of the "MARSBest" Selection Task Force by:
    a. Considering the establishment of a permanent committee to compile an annual list of the best free Web reference resources.
    b. Investigating the creation of a comparable task force for fee-based Web reference resources.

    Both groups will make extensive use of virtual members. *(Priority Area A)*

5. Continue to enhance the MARS Web site. *(Priority Area F)*
6. Continue to enhance the MARS Handbook, and continue to update the MARS Bylaws *(Priority Area F).*

2000-01

1. With the establishment of the MARS Outreach Committee, focus on promoting and celebrating MARS membership and activities during this 25th birthday celebration year.
2. *(MARS Strategy A7)* Work with vendors and information providers in a proactive manner to encourage the availability, affordability, and standardization of quality information in electronic formats.

3. *(MARS Strategy C3)* Disseminate information on the needs of users and potential users of electronic products to libraries, electronic information producers, and providers.
4. Continue to enhance the MARS Website.
5. Continue to enhance the MARS Handbook on an ongoing basis.

1999-2000

1. Re-examine and identify the areas of emphasis that create a special and distinct niche for MARS activities within ALA.
2. Focus on the impact of technology on reference services, in areas such as:
    A. Implementing new integrated systems.
    B. Answering the "new" reference questions.
    C. Evaluating systems and databases.
    D. Involving reference expertise in license agreements to accommodate patrons' needs.
    E. Guiding successful patron interactions in the shift from print to e-journals.
    F. Empowering reference staff to form alliances at their institutions with all relevant areas (e.g., systems, serials, license negotiators) to assure patron-focused decision-making.
3. Continue to enhance the MARS Web site.
4. Continue to enhance the MARS Handbook on an ongoing basis.

1998-99

1. Expand MARS' repertoire for publishing and/or disseminating information about Section activities. Make good use of existing technologies; explore newer methods; evaluate which media are appropriate for what messages, and to reach whom.
2. Find additional / alternative models for active participation in MARS besides conference attendance.
3. Involve librarians from many different types and settings in the Section by:
    a. Looking at the existing MARS Committee structures to see where there's likely to be common interest.
    b. Targeted outreach.
    c. Looking at where the current issues / controversies in those library worlds converge with MARS' goals.
    d. Seeking out collaborative projects more aggressively.
4. Continue to evaluate electronic resources and on analyze user behavior. Communicate findings to the folks producing / publishing those resources.
5. Incorporate non-text information resources in MARS projects.
6. Issues for emphasis:
    a. What kinds of information aren't readily available in electronic form? How does this skew the informational services that libraries can offer? What can MARS do to provide a more complete answer, a wider range of resources?
    b. Who has access to electronic information, and who doesn't?
    c. How do we balance open access to information with our responsibilities to provide good information? Where does guidance on evaluating resources veer into censorship?

d. What about access to document delivery - the information, ultimately - and not just to a bibliographic citation?
e. How will some of these decisions be made for libraries by events in the "information marketplace"?

1997-98

1. Provide training information on electronic information sources.
2. Analyze and assess the role of electronic document delivery in an electronic reference service context.
3. Explore the user interface design process and identify ways to link the understanding of user behavior and the design process.
4. Develop program(s) on electronic service personnel issues.
5. Develop program(s) on information needs and information-seeking behavior of users and potential users of electronic resources and services.
6. Collect and disseminate information on user behavior, attitudes, knowledge and approaches to electronic information resources and services.
7. Develop program(s) on physical facilities and equipment for the provision of electronic resources and services.
8. Develop checklists and guidelines for electronic equipment and access for users of all abilities.
9. Increase membership in MARS and provide increased opportunities for participation.
10. Enhance the information provided to all MARS members and potential members through *Messages from MARS*, MARS-L and the Gopher for our members, including news of interest such as continuing education opportunities, conference programs, etc.
11. Develop and conduct surveys about emerging service patterns for the delivery of electronic information resources.
12. Develop and conduct program(s) on service patterns for the delivery of electronic information resources and services that are responsive to the needs of users and potential users.
13. Gather and disseminate information on management of electronic document delivery in reference services.

1996-97

1. Develop strategies for increased interlibrary and interinstitutional access to electronic resources.
2. Explore consortia arrangements for negotiating licenses, coordination of user interface design, and other opportunities for interlibrary cooperation relating to electronic resources.
3. Develop and publish lists of recommended electronic products or of bibliographies of articles critically evaluating electronic products.
4. Involve library educators in MARS initiatives related to teaching and training.
5. Provide the resources for information service personnel to acquire and improve skills in providing electronic reference services, particularly for staff who are geographically distributed.
6. Develop leadership within MARS.

7. Facilitate opportunities to participate in MARS committees outside of attending conferences.
8. Increase membership in MARS and provide increased opportunities for participation, especially by public, school, and special librarians.
9. Provide Section publications in appropriate formats while expanding the distribution channels.

1995-96

1. Provide training information on electronic information sources.
2. Promote an awareness of emerging electronic information sources such as WWW resources in the reference process.
3. Collect and synthesize information about existing models and modes of virtual reference services.
4. Collect and disseminate information on learning and teaching styles for "training the trainer" programs.
5. Develop, collect and disseminate information about how to evaluate and improve the electronic reference skills and competencies of personnel who provide electronic reference services.
6. Develop tools for educating users in how to identify and use electronic information sources and services.
7. Identify and increase awareness of locally-developed systems which respond effectively to users' needs.
8. Develop program(s) on physical facilities and equipment for the provision of electronic resources and services.
9. Develop programs or discussions to explore service patterns and issues surrounding the user-initiated electronically mediated document delivery.
10. Develop strategies for increased interlibrary and interinstitutional access to electronic resources.
11. Gather and disseminate information on management of electronic document delivery in reference services.
12. Gather and disseminate information on collection development policies for electronic information services and resources, e.g., electronic text archives and other forms of digital texts.
13. Provide MARS publications in appropriate formats while expanding the distribution channels.
14. Develop a plan to systematically monitor legislation and policy issues at the Federal and state levels that have an impact on electronic reference services and resources.
15. Increase effective communication within MARS through the development and maintenance of a strong MARS presence on the Internet, e.g., MARS-L, ALA Gopher, and a MARS WWW information server.

Appendix D: MISCELLANEOUS HELPS

Subscribing to the MARS Electronic Discussion List

Web interface to MARS-L information and archives

Purpose

MARS is the Machine-Assisted Reference Section of the Reference and User Services Association of the American Library Association and represents the interests of those concerned with attaining the highest possible quality in planning, developing, managing, teaching, or conducting all forms of computer-based reference and information services in libraries.

Primarily, the content of MARS-L will include Messages from MARS which will contain such items as:

- Comments from the MARS Chair and other current, outgoing, and incoming officers;
- Annual Conference Meeting Plans and Roster;
- Annual Conference Program Details and Report;
- Annual Conference Executive Committee Summary;
- Annual Conference Committee Reports;
- Midwinter Meeting Plans and Roster;
- Midwinter Meeting Executive Committee Summary;
- Midwinter Meeting Committee Reports;
- MARS Nominating Committee Report;
- additional MARS business such as achievement awards, proposals, announcements, calls for information, and other items.

MARS news items will be posted on MARS-L.

To Subscribe

To subscribe to MARS-L, visit http://lists.ala.org/wws/info/mars-l and follow instructions

We hope MARS members as well as MARS committee chairs and members and other interested individuals will play an active role in the development of this list, one of a growing number of lists started by various sections and divisions of ALA.

MARS is interested in your questions, comments and suggestions about this list. Please direct questions and comments about MARS-L to the MARS-L List Moderator.

In addition, the MARSEXEC Listserv is maintained to conduct official business of the Executive Committee between conferences, and to facilitate communication between the Executive Committee and Committee and Discussion Group Chairs. MARSEXEC

subscriptions are maintained by the Section Chair, and should include voting and ex officio members of the Executive Committee, Committee and Task Force Chairs, Discussion Group Chairs and Vice-Chairs, Section Liaisons and Representatives to RUSA Committees, and members of MARS Planning.

Approved: June 2005

MARS Discussion Group/Forum Guidelines for Planning

1. Read the MARS Discussion Group guidelines section of the MARS Handbook.
2. When requesting a room size from the MARS Scheduling Coordinator, keep in mind the recent attendance figures:
    - Midwinter: median of 75; range from 35-150
    - Annual: range of 30-200; established Discussion groups tend to draw more than committee discussion forums here.
3. If appropriate, request equipment and software by using the AV Request Form.
4. Consult the Publicity avenues for MARS activities page at http://www.ala.org/ala/rusa/rusaourassoc/rusasections/mars/marsprotools/publicityavenues.htm
5. Consider appointing or requesting a volunteer to serve as "guest moderator" for a forum. A guest moderator should have some expertise in the theme topic. Guest moderators may assist the Discussion Chairs in helping develop a theme or handouts, and/or by facilitating the discussion. Guest moderators benefit from opportunities to showcase their expertise or projects.
6. Remember that a discussion forum may not mimic a program. The bulk of a forum must consist of audience participation.
7. Create a handout and/or Website if appropriate.
8. Draw up a list of questions to throw out if the discussion lags.
9. Design sufficient attendance sheets in advance. Create columns with as little information as needed (e.g., name/institution/email). Report the number of attendees to MARS Executive Committee.
10. Arrange for someone to record "minutes." In the case of Discussion Groups, the Secretary records minutes. Decide in advance whether a blow-by-blow or minimal summary is appropriate for distribution to non-attendees.
11. Distribute the minutes or summary on MARS-L, the committee or discussion group's web page, and appropriate listservs.
12. Thank any guest moderators in writing after the event.
13. Stay on top of deadlines!

From Martian to Martian Transmissions (2001)
Revised and approved as part of Handbook, June 2005. Revised, June 2006.

Tips for Discussion Forums

A Discussion Forum is an open discussion meeting scheduled by a MARS Committee, including the Executive Committee. Such meetings may be held for the purpose of determining membership needs and interests, distributing the results of committee activities, gaining input from ALA and MARS members, soliciting involvement by members not current involved, and sharing experiences and concerns relating to the committee's charge. The forums are scheduled during the Midwinter or Annual Conference and are generally focused around a single topic or theme. See Appendix B of this Handbook for a list of times when Committees may hold discussion forums at Annual and Midwinter.

The MARS Executive Committee must approve all committee-sponsored Discussion Forums. The sponsoring committee should plan the Forum with adequate time to obtain Executive Committee approval. Typically the Forums require a planning period of six months (the time between one conference and the next.) so Executive Committee approval should be obtained before the end of the preceding conference. This six-month rule does not apply to the discussion groups, since it is assumed that they will have a discussion at every conference.

Depending on the topic or goals of the Forum the committee may choose to have one or more speakers and a moderator, or may have only a moderator who introduces the topic and guides discussion. The intent of the Discussion Forum is to permit participants to discuss issues and concerns; therefore, even when a committee schedules several speakers, one to one and one-half hours should remain for discussion. The moderator should assume responsibility for beginning, guiding, closing, and summarizing the discussion.

The committee may choose to hold a Discussion Forum in place of or in addition to one of its regularly scheduled meetings. The Scheduling Coordinator should be notified that the committee intends to sponsor a Forum. Care should be taken to avoid, wherever possible, scheduling more than one MARS Discussion Forum during a meeting time.

The committee is responsible for publicizing the upcoming Forum. Reimbursement for photocopying and postage is included within the committee's $50.00 annual budget. Typically a committee produces a flyer outlining the topic, speakers, time and location of the Forum. Fliers should be distributed to other MARS committee Chairs so that they can announce the Forum at their committee meetings. If the Discussion Forum takes place at the Annual Conference, and is scheduled after the MARS program, fliers can be distributed at that program. In addition, committee members should assume responsibility for distributing fliers to interested colleagues. The "Messages from MARS" editor should be informed of the Forum so that a notice can appear in "Messages." In addition, announcements should be distributed via MARS-L, RUSA-L and all other appropriate e-mail list serves. It is recommended that these announcements be sent out twice: once several weeks in advance of the conference and again no later than one week before the conference.

Committees which hold a particularly interesting and fruitful forum should consider whether the topic would lend itself to a program topic at an Annual Conference.

Revised: November 1995; June 2005; June 2006.

MARS Program Planning Advice

1. Several months in advance, arrange a conference call between the speakers and committee members before the conference to help ensure congruence on program content.
2. Several months in advance, ask speakers for biographical information for their introduction. Specify what would be helpful, or provide a template or example.
3. Consult the Publicity Avenues for MARS Activities information in the Handbook and Martian to Martian Transmissions.
4. Specify what software your speakers would like to have loaded, such as PowerPoint, using the AV Request form.
5. Arrange to have the program taped. Check with speakers as to whether they would allow their presentation to be taped.
6. Meet speakers before the program, e.g., take them to breakfast.
7. Ask speakers what they would like the committee to do if their presentation is running long, or have a committee member sit directly in front of the speakers to signal them if they run over.
8. Put program materials (e.g., PowerPoint presentations, handouts, etc.) on the MARS Website either before or after the conference. Get speakers' permission first.
9. Contact the ALA Conference Services if you need help. They are very responsive.
10. Thank the speakers in writing after the event.
11. Stay on top of deadlines!

(From MARtian to MARtian Transmissions, 2001)
Revised and approved as part of Handbook, June 2005.

Publicity Avenues for MARS Activities

Librarian-oriented mailing lists and e-mail discussion forums can be a very effective way to publicize MARS sponsored programs, discussions and projects, and to involve potentially interested people outside of our Section.

- The obvious first choices are within RUSA:
  - beginning with our own **MARS-L** http://www.ala.org/ala/rusa/rusaourassoc/rusasections/mars/marsprotools/marsl.htm
  - **RUSA-L** http://www.ala.org/ala/rusa/rusaprotools/rusadisclists/electronicdiscussion.htm
  - **RSS-L** http://www.ala.org/ala/rusa/rusaourassoc/rusasections/rss/rssprotools/rssedl.htm

- In addition to using MARS-L and RUSA-L as a matter of course, target as many other lists as would seem appropriate to reach either organizations or interest groups that might be interested in the announcement. (But also be sensitive to the potential annoyance of receiving the same announcement again and again; strike a balance between being selective and reaching the widest possible audience.)
- Post messages 3-4 weeks ahead of the meeting.

Below you will find a variety of other mailing lists you might consider for posting announcements, depending on the issues and themes you are addressing. It was selected from the section on Library and Information Science in the online version of *The Directory of Scholarly and Professional E-Conferences*, compiled by Diane K. Kovacs & The Directory Team.

Two other directories worth consulting are:
The Internet Library for Librarians http://www.itcompany.com/inforetriever/email.htm
Library Oriented Lists and Electronic Serials http://www.aladin.wrlc.org/gsdl/cgi-bin/library?p=about&c=liblists

From Martian-to-Martian Transmissions (2001)
Revised and approved as part of Handbook: June 2005.

Running/Attending MARS Executive Committee Meetings

Many people need to report, and there are many discussion topics to cover. Keeping these meetings on track requires some skills we may not use routinely. The following are some tips that may assist MARS officers and attendees in understanding their roles and the roles of others in progressing through the action-packed agendas.

For the Chair:

1. Create an agenda and circulate it in advance of the conference, requesting input from committee Chairs. Feel free to ask the past chair for an e-copy of his/her agenda or to adapt a previous printed copy. Usually, one agenda will suffice for each conference. The agenda always includes options for reporting by each committee chair, RUSA representative, and liaison. These attendees are generally expected to be prepared to report twice: once during the first Executive committee meeting, and then again at one of the Monday or Tuesday meetings. The agenda is also likely to include "old business", "new business", and "late-breaking business requiring action during this conference". Itemize these categories on the agenda if they are known in advance of the conference. Try to e-mail the agendas approximately 2 weeks before the conference; also bring plenty of paper copies to each meeting.

2. At the beginning of each meeting, and at periodic intervals, ask which people need to report soon. Alter the agenda schedule to accommodate comings and goings.
3. Ask for corrections to the MARS Roster, and remind everyone that changes in information must be submitted to ALA
4. Achieve a balance between letting each voice be heard and letting each report be aired. When a topic has been thoroughly addressed in another meeting or falls outside Executive Committee's scope, you may wish to control the amount of time spent again during Executive Committee. During the first meeting, you may wish to encourage all present to attend the meetings where topics of interest will be discussed or to contact the chair of that group to express concerns.
5. Schedule a break during the longer meetings, but note those items that need to be covered before a break, how long the break should last, and those items that will need to be covered post-break. Realize that a break primarily benefits the Executive Committee members who are expected to be present for the entire meeting; other attendees come and go (and break) throughout the meeting. You may need to balance the costs/benefits of taking a break vs. finishing the meeting.
6. Ask another Executive Committee member to help keep you and the meeting "on time" -- especially where you anticipate many reports in a brief time period.
7. Review formal actions taken by email since the last conference, so that these can be included in the minutes.

For the Secretary or Minute-taker:

1. Create and pass around a sign-up sheet. Ask for people's MARS committee/assignment rather than their address. Send the sheet back around when it returns to you and when people enter the room. Ask if everyone has signed the sheet during lulls in the meeting.
2. Record decisions and key reasoning. Don't try to record an entire discussion. Do try, though, to capture enough of the discussion so that the decision can be intelligently articulated later.

Feel free to ask attendees to submit precise wording in writing for accurate recording in the minutes. (Options include handwritten submission during the meeting, email or snailmail submission to you within a week of the conference, assurance that you may lift the text from the MARS-L/Messages from MARS reports, or other negotiations.) Bring copies of the MARS Executive Committee Motion Form. Remind committee chairs to submit appropriate documents for you to bundle to RUSA Archives at the end of each Annual Conference. Refer them to the Archiving Guidelines in the Handbook. Draft and circulate the minutes as soon as possible after each conference. Attendees are more likely to offer helpful feedback if they still remember the conversations! You may ask MARS Executive Committee members to approve minutes via email in advance of the next conference. Your minutes help to unify and carry forward the work of the Section, and, as such, are very important.

3. Submit minutes to the MARS Web Coordinator for posting. You may ask to have draft versions of minutes posted, especially if the minutes are not likely to be approved before the next conference.

For Committee Chairs:

1. Skim the MARS Handbook before each conference, paying special attention to the Responsibilities of MARS Committee Chairs section. Note your responsibilities and the forms you'll need to submit at the end of each conference.
2. Respond when the Chair asks which attendees need to report in the next interval. Realize that you may have been skipped inadvertently as the Chair attempts to accommodate others, and assert your need to report if/when appropriate.
3. Use your reporting time to summarize current activities and to ask for feedback or direction from Executive Committee where appropriate. Prepare a "short form" of your report in case your time is limited.
4. Listen to the reports from other attendees so you can coordinate the activities of your committee.
5. Stay for as much of the Executive Committee meetings as your schedule permits -- it's the best way to understand MARS activities and procedures.

For Guests:

1. If you or your reporting area are not listed on the agenda: either introduce yourself to the Chair before the meeting is called to order, or speak up when the Chair asks which attendees need to report in the next interval.

For everyone -- How to make a motion:

Any member of MARS may bring a written motion (see the MARS Executive Committee Motion Form in the Handbook), so your motion is described efficiently and accurately to Committee. A motion is a proposal made for the purpose of eliciting a decision by Executive Comm. However, only a member of Executive Committee may "second the motion" and hence require that all eligible Executive Committee members vote on it. (Committee chairs and ex-officio members are not eligible to vote.) All in favor will be asked to reply "aye" and all opposed to reply "no". A simple majority of Executive Committee members present carries the vote, as long as a quorum is present. A quorum is at least half of the voting members.

From Martian-to-Martian Transmissions (2001)
Revised and approved as part of Handbook: June 2005.

MARS Chair's Program Agenda

This is a sample agenda that may be used for the MARS Chair's Program at the ALA Annual Conference.

Welcoming remarks. Introduce self as Chair, along with institutional affiliation and title.

Be honest with attendees. There is some Section business and it will be completed within ten minutes. You know everyone came for the program.

Greetings. What is MARS and what it takes to join.

Note membership brochures and committee volunteer forms are available.

Invite participants to join MARS-L. Information is available in the brochures. Note that MARS-L is a means of keeping up with Section business but one will not be overwhelmed with messages.

Acknowledge current board members and announce election results.

Presentation of "My Favorite Martian" Award.

Introduce program, and acknowledge and thank program planning committee.

Introduce speakers.

Note existence of handouts and evaluation forms. (Have committee members put them on chairs in the meeting room. Have additional copies at door).

Announce whether or not questions must be held until the end or if you entertain questions after each speaker.

Created April 2001.

From Martian-to-Martian Transmissions (2001)
Revised and approved as part of Handbook: June 2005.

Boilerplate Documents for Dealing with Unresponsive Committee Members

Unresponsive committee member problem addressed before it becomes a problem:

It is important to make sure that our expectations of committee members are clearly communicated. Suggestions follow for the appointment letter, for remarks of the chair of committee at first Midwinter Meeting and Annual Conference, and the reappointment form.

After it is a problem:

Since unresponsiveness in committee assignments can be a symptom of a variety of problems in an individual's work or personal life, it is important to try to contact the individual in order to try to resolve the situation in a way that is best for the individual and the committee. Sample email messages, phone conversations, and snailmail texts are provided toward this end.

<u>Appointment letter</u>

. . .

I'm delighted that you have expressed interest in serving on a MARS committee! Working on a committee can be very rewarding and also requires a certain level of commitment on your part. The *RUSA Handbook* specifies that regular committee members are expected to:

- attend all meetings of the committee at Midwinter and at Annual Conference.
- complete all assignments made by committee chairperson
- respond as promptly as possible to all correspondence from the committee or from the RUSA office (a growing amount of committee work is done via e-mail between conferences)
- inform the chair of the committee and the RUSA office immediately of any change of address

If a commitment conflict arises after your appointment to the committee, please inform both the Chair of your committee and the current Chair of MARS. Depending upon the activities of the committee and the length of the expected time conflict, various options could be considered. If you needed to resign, you certainly would be welcome to apply for a committee appointment once you are again able to take on committee responsibilities.

Because the work of each committee member is important, keeping your committee Chair and the Chair of MARS informed of your status is essential to the successful running of MARS.

. . .

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<u>Chair of committee</u>
Review of RUSA and MARS guidelines at meetings recommended.

Duties of committee members

The specific duties of a committee member vary according to the committee. However, all RUSA committee members are expected to:

- attend all meetings of the committee at Midwinter and at Annual Conference
- complete all assignments made by committee chairperson
- respond as promptly as possible to all correspondence from the committee or from the RUSA office
- inform the chair of the committee and the RUSA office immediately of any change of address
- forward any committee material of importance to the committee chair at the end of each committee assignment.

http://www.ala.org/ala/rusa/rusaourassoc/guidetopoliciesandproced/rusacomm/1committees.htm (as of 7-7-03)

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On reappointment form

Committee Chairs: please indicate next to the name of volunteers the level of participation that member has given to the committee during the past year: minimal, good, exemplary. This will help the Vice Chair in making next year's appointments. If there was a temporary reason for a minimal rating, please make a note of it ("work crisis now resolved" "family crisis now over"). Of course it is quite possible that everyone was "exemplary"!

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After it is a problem:

What to say in e-mail

e-mail #1 cc: Chair of MARS

Dear MARS Committee/Task Force Member,

As Chair of the MARS _____ Committee/Task Force I am concerned because I have not received responses from you during the past _____ weeks/months. Your feedback is important and it is needed so the committee can [make decisions/prepare for a program/discussion group, etc.] As a reminder, committee members are expected to:

- attend all meetings of the committee at Midwinter and at Annual Conference
- complete all assignments made by committee chairperson
- respond as promptly as possible to all correspondence from the committee or from the RUSA office
- inform the chair of the committee and the RUSA office immediately of any change of address
- forward any committee material of importance to the committee chair at the end of each committee assignment.

If for some reason you realize that you are unable to fulfill your committee assignment, please inform me (commchair@good.univ.edu) and/or the Chair of MARS (chair@fine.univ.edu) soon so that we can resolve the situation appropriately.

I look forward to hearing from you very soon!

_____ _____ Chair of MARS _____ Committee/Task Force

****

What to say in phone call

Voice mail/answering machine:

Hello. This is _____ _____, Chair of the MARS _____ Committee/Task Force in which you are a member. I haven't heard from you for the past _____ weeks/months and would like to confirm that I have your correct email address. Please contact me as soon as possible at (000) 000-0000 or via e-mail at commchair@good.univ.edu to let me know if you are receiving my messages. Thanks!

****

e-mail #2 (after unsuccessful phone call attempt) cc: Chair of MARS

Dear MARS Committee/Task Force Member,

I am writing to reach you because as Chair of the MARS _____ Committee/Task Force I am concerned that I have not received responses from you during the past _____ weeks/months. I tried to reach you via phone on _____ 200_ and earlier via e-mail. I have not received any replies to these messages.

I hope that you are well. Please let me know as soon as possible if there are circumstances preventing your participation on the committee at this time.

You can email me (commchair@good.univ.edu) and/or the Chair of MARS (chair@fine.univ.edu) or call me at _____.

If neither the Chair nor I hear from you by [date 4 weeks hence], we will assume that you are not able to continue to serve on the committee.

Sincerely,

_____ _____ Chair of MARS _____ Committee/Task Force

****

In person on the phone:

Hello. This is _____ _____, Chair of the MARS _____ Committee/Task Force in which you are a member.

I am wondering if you have received my emails and voicemails in the last few weeks?

If you can't participate any more, that is fine; we just need to know this so we can make other arrangements.

→I'll let the Chair of MARS (name) know that you can't participate for the rest of your term.
→I'll let the Chair of MARS (name) know that you'll be able to finish your term and will be able to fully participate in the MARS _____ Committee/Task Force beginning _____.

Thanks for letting me know your situation. I know these things can be difficult.

I'm glad I've had this chance to talk with you!

****

<u>What to write in snail mail letter (after trying e-mail):</u>

Dear MARS Committee/Task Force Member,

I have tried to send this message to you via e-mail at commmem@great.univ.com. Is this address correct? Please let me know and if my messages have gone astray I will resend them immediately.

This is the most recent message I have been trying to send:

As Chair of the MARS _____ Committee/Task Force I am concerned because I have not received responses from you during the past _____ weeks/months. Your feedback is important and it is needed so the committee can [make decisions/prepare for a program/discussion group, etc.] As a reminder, committee members are expected to:

- attend all meetings of the committee at Midwinter and at Annual Conference
- complete all assignments made by committee chairperson
- respond as promptly as possible to all correspondence from the committee or from the RUSA office
- inform the chair of the committee and the RUSA office immediately of any change of address
- forward any committee material of importance to the committee chair at the end of each committee assignment.

I am aware that there can be work or family time conflicts that you did not expect, but if you can briefly reply to me when you'll be able to fully participate again, I would appreciate it. The rest of the committee can then work around your temporary absence.

If for some reason you realize that you are unable to fulfill your committee assignment, please inform me (commchair@good.univ.edu) and/or the Chair of MARS (chair@fine.univ.edu) soon so that together we can resolve the situation appropriately.

If neither the Chair nor I hear from you by [use date from earlier email], we will assume that you are not able to continue to serve on the committee.

I look forward to hearing from you very soon!

Sincerely,

_____ _____ Chair of MARS _____ Committee/Task Force

Approved: June 2005

Appendix E: MARS SECTION REVIEW

Report of the Task Force, August 26, 2002

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Preface

The MARS Section Review Task Force believes that MARS is a productive and vital unit of RUSA. Membership in MARS remains strong. Members of committees have been actively supporting RUSA and MARS goals. The Task Force welcomes this opportunity to explore what we've accomplished and to plan our future.

Section Procedures for Creating and Updating Section Goals

MARS has instituted a broadly-based planning process to insure that the Section's activities are both founded on its established, published goals and responsive to changing concerns and evolving issues.

After the Section's major reorganization in 1990, the Planning Committee developed the document "MARS Goals, Strategies, and Objectives." Current goals are posted on the MARS Website, and earlier years' are archived at http://www.ala.org/rusa/mars/goalsold.html. It is updated each year, based on RUSA's own previously established seven priority areas. MARS Committees and Discussion Groups, and the Section as a whole, are expected to pursue and develop activities and projects that implement these goals. As a member of the Planning Committee, the Section Vice-Chair / Chair-Elect works with the rest of the Committee to establish which objectives are to be given priority during her or his term as Chair.

To promote implementation of Section goals and current priorities, and to learn whether new ones may become necessary, the Annual Conference begins with a "MARS Orientation Meeting," where the Planning Committee, Executive Committee, and both current and incoming chairs of all MARS committees and discussion groups discuss ongoing and planned activities. The Midwinter Conference begins with a similar, though less formal, joint meeting. During subsequent meetings at both conferences, Committee chairs further discuss their activities with the Executive Committee. At the end of Annual, each committee chair prepares a review of her or his group's accomplishments for the year, specifically addressing which goals and objectives have been targeted.

As the RUSA Priority Areas changed format in the late '90's to a Strategic Plan and Objectives, the MARS Priority Areas no longer parallel those of RUSA. The format of the Annual MARS Goals is still based on those early '90's Priority Areas. MARS needs to examine whether a new format for the Annual Goals should be used.

Activities of the Last Five Years that Fulfill the Section's Stated Goals and Objectives

Several themes emerge from the stated MARS goals and objectives over the last five years. Identifying and evaluating new technologies and resources has been an overriding theme, exemplified by development of the MARS Best Web sites and myriad program and discussion group topics. Digital reference has come to the fore as an important theme in the last couple of years and will be the topic of a RUSA/MARS preconference at the 2002 ALA Annual Meeting. User behavior has been an interest for several years and promoting user-centered decisions in libraries and in vendor systems and resources has been an emphasis in the last two years. Commercial competition facing libraries is a recent concern, as is archiving and preservation of electronic resources. Finally, MARS has made major efforts to reach out to members and potential members with its establishment of an active Outreach Committee and its successful incorporation of virtual membership in several committees.

The following outline details the ways that MARS activities and programs have supported the Section's goals and objectives.

New Technologies and Resources

Offered programs and discussion forums at conferences; noted innovation on the web:

a. Programs:

"Futurist" Perspective on Digital Libraries
The Art of Teleconferencing
Riding the Merry-Go-Round: Models for Training Public Services Librarians in a Continually Changing Electronic Environment
Technological Censorship: How Technology Blocks Access to Information
Technology, Reference, and Services to Patrons with Disabilities
Universal Access Tomorrow: Silicon Valley Meets the Library [*Co-Sponsored with LITA*]

b. Discussion Forums:

Hot Topics

Electronic Database Statistics
Electronic Resources Gateways
Electronic Resources Gateways and OPACs
AskJake: Aggregator Content
After-Hours Reference Service Using Web Chat and Contact Center Technologies
Open URL and Link Servers and the 'Appropriate Copy' Problem
MyLibrary@NCState and Its Impact on Reference Staff and Services
Pitfalls, Pratfalls, and Positive Potential of Personalizable Library Websites

Managers in MARS

Questia-ning the Future

Products and Services

Bringing Live Reference to our Users

Public Libraries

I'm Addicted to Google and I Feel Guilty about It!
Virtual Reference

Executive Committee

Internet Filters

c. Local Systems and Services developed a Website that describes selected "Innovative Web-Based Reference Services"

Digital Reference

a. Planning a pre-conference for ALA Annual 2002
b. Planned for establishment of Virtual Reference Discussion Group in 2002
c. Offered programs and discussion forums at conferences:

Hot Topics

After-Hours Reference Service Using Web Chat and Contact Center Technologies

Managers in MARS Discussion Group and Education, Training and Support Committee

Care and Feeding of the Virtual Librarian: Training and Support of Chat Reference Staff

Managers in MARS Discussion Group and Local Systems and Services Committee

Networking Reference Services beyond a Single Library or Institution

Products and Services

Bringing Live Reference to our Users

Public Libraries

Virtual Reference

User Behavior

a. Program presented in 1998: "What Are They Doing? Understanding Patron Behavior in a Digital Environment"

b. User Access to Services Committee published a bibliography: "Users' Information-Seeking Behavior: What Are They Really Doing?" in *Reference & User Services Quarterly* 40:3 (Spring 2001): 240-250 and is developing an expanded version for a RUSA Occasional Paper. The *RUSQ* article was preceded by a Web site containing the bibliography.

Training for Users and Staff

Offered programs and discussion forums at conferences; developed a Web site:

Program:

Public Libraries

RX for Reference: Providing Electronic Information for Health Care Consumers

c. Discussion Forums:

Managers in MARS Discussion Group and Education, Training and Support Committee

Care and Feeding of the Virtual Librarian: Training and Support of Chat Reference Staff

Managers in MARS

Position Available: Reference Librarian in an Electronic Setting

Public Libraries

Who Draws the Line? Staff Competencies and Public Expectations for Computer Assistance in the Public Libraries
Train in Vain: Is Your Public Internet Training Working?

d. Web site:

Public Libraries

"Internet Training and Learning: A Guide to Web Resources for Public Librarians"

Evaluating and Managing Digital Resources

a. Developed MARS Best, an annual list of the best free reference Websites

b. Local Systems and Services developed a Website that describes selected "Innovative Web-Based Reference Services"

c. Management of Electronic Reference Services developed a checklist of what elements should be on the reference Web page.

d. Offered discussion forums:

Hot Topics

Electronic Database Statistics
Web Page Design and the Visually Challenged

Hot Topics Discussion Group, Products and Services Committee

The Vendor's Vexation: Pricing from One to One Million Users

Managers in MARS Discussion Group

Printing from Public Workstations: A Changing Environment
How We Manage Printing
Values in the Digital Age
Electronic Resources on a Shoe String
Improving Service with Periodical Databases

Products and Services

Nuts and Bolts of Aggregating Journals
The Economics of Online Full-Text

Education Training and Support

Striking It Rich, or Finding Fool's Gold? Thinking Critically about Web Information

Preservation and Archiving

a. Guidelines were developed for MARS archiving, including electronic documents.
b. Offered discussion forums:

Hot Topics Discussion Group, Products and Services Committee

The Vendor's Vexation: Pricing from One to One Million Users

Hot Topics

Aggregator Content

Commercial Services

Offered programs and discussion forums:

a. Program:

Ships Passing in the Night: Librarian/Vendor Communications

b. Discussion Forums:

Hot Topics

How to Win Accounts and Influence Librarians

Hot Topics Discussion Group, Products and Services Committee

The Vendor's Vexation: Pricing from One to One Million Users

Managers in MARS

Questia-ning the Future

Products and Services

Nuts and Bolts of Aggregating Journals

The Economics of Online Full-Text
Pricing of Full-text Journals: The Publisher's Perspective

Public Libraries

I'm Addicted to Google and I Feel Guilty about It!

MARS Outreach to Members and Potential Members

a. Created MARS Outreach Task Force, which then became the Outreach Committee. This group led planning for the celebration of MARS' 25th Birthday, updated MARS brochures, and began the tradition of organizing a Meet MARtianS party at each Midwinter and Annual.
b. Virtual membership has been successfully achieved in several committees, including, most notably, the MARS Best Committee.
c. Created Virtual Reference Discussion Group in response to defined need

MARS Communication, Internal and External

a. Began to use the MARS web pages as a formal means of publication
b. Created Executive Committee discussion list
c. Created Martian-to-Martian Transmissions, consisting of useful information for members and chairs in planning for conferences
d. Established Web pages for most MARS committees
e. Revised the MARS logo
f. Post MARS meeting and program schedules on Web

MARS Organization and Bylaws

a. Posted MARS Handbook on the Web to facilitate access and timely changes
b. Created Virtual Reference Discussion Group in response to defined need

MARS Contributions to RUSA Goals and Priorities

The RUSA goals changed format during this five-year period, evolving from seven Priority Areas into the following seven Objectives. For simplicity, the MARS achievements (lettered a., b., c., etc.) are listed only under the current Objectives (numbered 1-7). The Objectives of RUSA's current Strategic Plan, for 2002-05, are, however, similar to those over the entire time period of the MARS review.

RUSA's Current Strategic Plan

1. Provide **leadership in professional development** for reference and user services professionals

a. Offered programs and discussions as listed in #5 below. MARS provides significant and well-attended opportunities for professional development for those attending conferences

b. Developed web items and links as listed in #5 below. MARS provides 24/7 access to professional development products that reach well beyond conferences

c. Managed fast-track planning of a 2002 preconference in rapid response to a RUSA request

d. Created the new Digital Reference Guidelines *ad hoc* Committee to produce a RUSA Guideline

2. **Advocate** for the information disenfranchised

a. The 1999 MARS Chair's program on "Technological Censorship: How Technology Blocks Access to Information" enlightened participants to potential barriers to information provided only in electronic form.

b. The Hot Topics Discussion Group held a discussion on "Web Page Design and the Visually Challenged."

3. Seek ways to **improve participation** in RUSA by reference and user services professionals

a. Created the Outreach Task Force, subsequently established as the Outreach Committee. Outreach has sponsored a Meet MARtianS event at each Midwinter and Annual since Midwinter 1998. Approximately 10-25% of attendees have not been MARS members. These guests are welcomed, given brochures, and invited to join and participate. Outreach updated the MARS brochure and played a key role in planning the MARS 25th Birthday Party.

b. MARS has experimented with appointing virtual members to several committees, and the experiences are included in the RUSA Organization report. Some committees and some projects lend themselves successfully to some/many/all virtual members. The MARS Best committee is entirely virtual, and Nominating Committees perform most of their work outside of conferences.

c. MARS created the new Virtual Reference Discussion Group in response to defined need and looks forward to high attendance.

d. The Planning Committee developed Martian-to-Martian Transmissions, with the goals of helping members plan for conferences and of encouraging additional participation by documenting available support.

4. Ensure the **effectiveness of RUSA** in meeting its and ALA's mission, and
5. **Increase the visibility** of RUSA in the profession and society at large.

a. Began to use the MARS web pages as a formal means of publication.

b. Established web pages for most MARS committees, many with linked products:

MARS Best

Annually provides links and annotations to the "best" free reference Websites

Planning

Martian-to-Martian Transmissions

Local Systems and Services

(in process) Developing a directory of creative and innovative Web-based reference services in categories such as the following: expert systems, reference menu organization, reference FAQ databases, locally produced bibliographic or full text databases, general library tutorials, subject specific tutorials, personalized library services, and templates

Products and Services

Links to PowerPoint presentations from last 3 Midwinter discussion forums

Public Libraries

An annotated webliography of tutorial sites to teach library staff and patrons about the Internet

User Access to Services

Bibliography on the information-seeking behavior of our users in the current environment

Hot Topics Discussion Group

Summaries, handouts, and some bibliographic links from discussions

c. Offered discussion forums and programs at conferences:

Discussions:

Hot Topics

Electronic Database Statistics
Electronic Resources Gateways and OPACS
AskJake: Aggregator Content
After-Hours Reference Service Using Web Chat and Contact Center Technologies
OpenURL and Link Servers [and] the 'Appropriate Copy' Problem
Personalizable Library Websites
Pricing of Electronic Products
Web Page Design and the Visually Challenged
How to Win Accounts and Influence Librarians

Hot Topics Discussion Group, Products and Services Committee

The Vendor's Vexation: Pricing from One to One Million Users

Managers in MARS Discussion Group and Education, Training and Support Committee

Care and Feeding of the Virtual Librarian: Training and Support of Chat Reference Staff

Managers in MARS

Printing from Public Workstations: A Changing Environment

How We Manage Printing
24/7 Services
Electronic Resources on a Shoe String
Improving Service with Periodical Databases: More Than Just Plugging In
Position Available: Reference Librarian in an Electronic Setting
Values in the Digital Age
Questia-ning the Future

Products and Services

Nuts and Bolts of Aggregating Journals
The Economics of Online Full-Text
Bringing Live Reference to Our Users
Pricing of Full-text Journals: The Publisher's Perspective

Public libraries

Who Draws the Line? Staff Competencies and Public Expectations for Computer Assistance in the Public Library
Virtual Reference
I'm Addicted to Google and I Feel Guilty about It!

Managers in MARS Discussion Group and Local Systems and Services Committee

Networking Reference Services beyond a Single Library or Institution

Executive Committee

Internet Filters

Programs:

1997: (Public Libraries) Technology, Reference, and Services to Patrons with Disabilities
1997: The Art of Teleconferencing: How to Plan, Implement, and Deliver a Teleconference for Staff Training
1998: What Are They Doing? Understanding Patron Behavior in a Digital Environment
1999: (Education, Training and Support) Riding the Merry-Go-Round: Models for Training Public Services Librarians in a Continually Changing Electronic Environment
1999: (Public Libraries) RX for Reference: Providing Electronic Information for Health Care Consumers
1999: Technological Censorship: How Technology Blocks Access to Information
2000: A "Futurist" Perspective on Digital Libraries
2001: Ships Passing in the Night: Librarian/Vendor Communications

d. Developed useful products (with MARS and RUSA names attached):

Local Systems and Services

Innovative Web-Based Reference Services:
http://www.ala.org/rusa/mars/lsasinnovative.html

MARS Best

MARS Best List, for 3 years now

Management of Electronic Reference Services

Checklist on what elements should be on the reference web page

Public Libraries

Webliography: http://www.ala.org/rusa/mars/itlpub.html

User Access to Services

Web site: http://staff.lib.muohio.edu/~shocker/mars/bib.html
"Users' Information-Seeking Behavior: What Are They Really Doing?"
Reference & User Services Quarterly 40.3 (Spring 2001): 240-250

e. Collaboration with units outside MARS:

- Continuing to appoint effective MARS representatives to RUSA committees
- Continuing to appoint liaisons with LITA and NMRT (from Outreach)
- Connections fostered and maintained by committees:

Products and Services

Co-sponsored forum with ALCTS/CDER, and maintains a liaison with that committee. Products and Services is also seeking a liaison with a relevant PLA committee.

Public Libraries

Stays aware of other groups interested in development of virtual reference

User Access to Services

Stays aware of RUSA MOUSS Catalog Use Committee's complementary work. User Access to Services assumes similarity with LITA Online Catalog Interest Group and Human-Machine Interface Interest Group, but no recent collaboration.

e. Co-sponsorship of other units' programs:

2001 (ALCTS CDMS): Checked Out of the Process? The Library's Role in the Emerging Electronic Books Market

1999 (CODES, BRASS Preconference): Reviewing Electronic Reference Sources
1998 (LITA Internet Resources Interest Group): Critical Skills for Evaluating the Web and Virtual Library Sites
1997 (LITA Technology and Access Committee): Universal Access Tomorrow: Silicon Valley Meets the Library
1997 (GODORT): GILS, Government Information Locator Services
1997 (RUSA MOUSS): Patrons Are Free: The Changing Roles in Interlibrary Loan

6. Take a leadership role in developing the **vision for the future** of reference and user services

Because of the nature of its work with machine-assisted reference products and services, MARS has remained on the cutting edge of developing trends in reference librarianship.

Through continuing discussions, programs, and products, MARS expects to maintain its focus.

7. Advocate state and national **information policies** that maintain open access to information for all

Although MARS has not explicitly advocated policies, MARS Executive Committee did sponsor a discussion on Internet Filters.

Interest Level in MARS

In recent years there has been significant interest among newer members in becoming active in MARS. During 2000-2001 over thirty volunteer forms were received, many from librarians in front-line positions, most of whom specified the MARS committees that were of special interest to them. Filling the topically organized committees from volunteers has been a particularly easy task, and most committees are currently operating at capacity. Recruitment of public librarians and other non-academic librarians has traditionally been more difficult throughout RUSA, but MARS has been able to maintain a very active and productive Public Libraries Committee, and "tradition" may be changing. The current Chair-Elect of MARS writes happily, "I received an impressive number of public librarian interest forms this year—I'm not even sure where I will put all these volunteers!" The MARS Best Free Web Sites Committee was new as of 2001 and comprises a larger number of members than most other committees due to its task-intensive nature. It will be important for this committee to maintain its high level of interest and to recruit new members who have some background in the use of web-based reference sources at the Reference Desk. The fact that MARS Best is basically a virtual committee that can fully accommodate those who cannot attend conferences should make recruitment quite easy, and there has been a high level of enthusiasm among the members of this committee. It is also worth noting that a call for volunteers for the preconference in 2002 produced over forty volunteers, many of whom are new to RUSA, and several of whom are participating virtually.

High interest level in MARS is further demonstrated by notable attendance at MARS meetings and events, which has been impressive overall.

Executive Committee meetings are filled with current and former Executive Committee members (many of whom remain active one way or another).

Hot Topics has found that attendance at discussions has ranged from 30-200+. The discussions themselves have been lively and informative. It has not been difficult to find volunteers for the discussion group co-chairs, demonstrating that there is a great deal of interest in MARS' topics.

Management of Electronic Reference Services has noticed that there are visitors attending (and contributing to) their meetings. They are also co-sponsoring discussion forums and programs with others, so they are seeing value from other committees.

Managers in MARS Discussion Group notes that attendance depends on how heavily they advertise their sessions. One session, publicized heavily on listservs, was SRO. Normal attendance is about 12 to 14, a very good number for a discussion.

Outreach notes that the most recent Meet MARtianS event (in New Orleans) had 51 attendees, including 25 non-MARS. Twenty attendees requested committee volunteer forms at that event. The first Meet MARtianS event (in Washington, DC) drew approximately 40 attendees; the second event drew more than 60. Sign-in sheets were established beginning at Midwinter 1999. Attendance at the events has been:
Midwinter 1999: 28 attendees, 13 non-MARS (Philadelphia);
Annual 1999: 70 attendees, 23 non-MARS (New Orleans);
Midwinter 2000: 38 attendees, 12 non-MARS (San Antonio);
Annual 2000: 59 attendees, 17 non-MARS (Chicago);
Midwinter 2001: 34 attendees, 11 non-MARS (Washington DC);
Annual 2001, 25th Birthday Party approximately 100 attendees (San Francisco).
Outreach Committee meetings have been well attended by members, and there has been a small number of observers at the meetings. There is high level of participation among the committee members.

All Public Libraries Committee programs are well-attended. 30-50 attendees is typical. However, there are only rare observers to committee meetings. One concern is that the committee needs to see more public librarians.

User Access to Services notes that, in general, interest has been high. There are plenty of committee members, and observers often share in the discussions.

These activities show the wide range of activities that have generated interest in MARS. We anticipate an increasing interest in MARS in the future, both near and distant.

Where Do We Go from Here?

In 1997 the Section Review asked, "Where Do We Go from Here?" Following is the 2002 Task Force's response to that former task force's multi-part query:

Can we do anything organizationally to relax the requirement that committee members attend two conferences a year?
MARS has made an effort to address the goal of flexibility in its means of communication and work effort. In a few cases (Management of Electronic Reference Services, Outreach, Public Libraries, and User Access to Services) virtual members have been appointed to standing committees. In other cases, task forces and/or work groups have operated almost exclusively virtually (Best Websites and Nominating Committees). However, there still remain cases (discussion forums and Executive Committee) where conference attendance is necessary to conduct activities. In addition, there are issues related to mixing virtual and conference-attending members that need to be addressed.

What are the proper roles of the Managers in MARS Discussion Group and the Management Committee? Do we need both? How do they relate to MOPSS/MOUSS?
The current issue for MARS Executive Committee to address is the overlap among several committees. As the web has become the most significant deliverer of library-subscribed electronic services, the charges and directions of many topical committees, including Management of Electronic Reference Services, Local Systems and Services,

Products and Services, and User Access to Services as well as the discussion groups, must be examined for focus and overlap.

Do we need a Web Issues Discussion Group, or is Hot Topics sufficient?
On review, MARS never saw the need to create a distinct Web Issues Discussion Group. MARS has just created a Virtual Reference Discussion Group, however, in response to current demand.

Are issues surrounding the use of non-bibliographic text resources in machine-assisted reference work covered adequately by existing MARS groups?
MARS programs and products have dealt well with issues surrounding full text resources. MARS should consider, however, whether non-bibliographic, non-text resources merit more attention than MARS has given them recently.

Should the Program Planning Committee have some kind of oversight responsibility for the quality of audiovisual presentations at a MARS program?
No long-term solutions have been offered by Planning or any other group for oversight responsibility for the quality of audiovisual presentations at MARS programs. MARS should discuss whether the quality of A-V presentations remains a concern, or whether they have improved as our experience and standard presentation software have improved.

What's the best way to ensure that program proposals that come before the RUSA Program Committee are as strong as they can be and are benefiting from the experience of past program planners? Is the chair of the current PPC the best representative to the RUSA PPC?
MARS Planning developed a "MARS Program Planning Advice" page within Martian-to-Martian Transmissions to ensure that program proposals that come before the RUSA Program Committee are as strong as they can be (and are benefiting from the experience of past program planners). This page needs to be examined regularly to be updated and strengthened. Planning is also attempting to ensure that program evaluations are shared with the Planning Committee to facilitate this process. More work and incorporation are needed.

Should MARS have a closer relationship with the MOPSS/MOUSS Catalog Use Committee as to projects, activities, and communication in general?
User Access to Services states that they keep aware of the RUSA MOUSS Catalog Use Committee's complementary work, assuring a closer relationship with them than in the past.

How should the duties of the Publications Committee, MARS-L Coordinator, and "Messages from MARS" Editor best be allocated?
This issue of allocating the duties of the Publications Committee, MARS web page coordinator, and MARS-L coordinator and "Messages from MARS" editor was resolved by separating the positions of MARS-L Coordinator and Editor for "Messages from MARS" from the position of MARS web page coordinator. Both positions serve as ex-officio members on the MARS Publications Committee. This has proved successful.

Where Do We Go from Here? New Issues Raised in 2002

As the RUSA Priority Areas changed format in the late '90's to a Strategic Plan and Objectives, the MARS Priority Areas no longer parallel those of RUSA. The format of

the Annual MARS Goals is still based on those early '90's Priority Areas. MARS needs to examine whether a new format for the Annual Goals should be used.

The list of consultants formerly kept by the Public Libraries Committee has not been updated for some time. There is an equivalent list now kept by RUSA, so MARS is eliminating this item from the Public Libraries Committee's charge.

The overlap among topical committees needs to be examined and corrected as appropriate. For example, Management of Electronic Reference Services and Education, Training, and Support are co-sponsoring more and more; it was observed that it would be easier for them to work together as one committee, both in terms of meeting times and in having a larger number of people to attend to tasks.

In the next few years, as technology continues to develop, MARS will expand its role in monitoring the evolution of virtual reference and participating in its development as a service mode for traditional and distant/remote users. MARS members are well poised to lead the charge within RUSA, as evidenced by the planning for a new Discussion Forum on Virtual Reference and for a Preconference on Digital Reference.

MARS needs to be at the forefront of assisting RUSA in the exploration of satellite/web and other means of delivering programs and discussion forums to people who cannot attend conferences.

MARS sees a need to continue outreach to as many interested librarians as possible, including public and school librarians, while at the same time maintaining the Section's main focus on delivering to users the highest quality service using electronic reference tools.

Summary

MARS as it is currently constituted appeals to a wide range of librarians who are strongly interested in the applications of technology to reference and user services, broadly conceived. The Section has always been a natural home for those whose job focuses on electronic reference and the provision and organization of electronic resources from a public services perspective. These librarians may otherwise have trouble finding their niche within RUSA and ALA. As electronic services and resources have become very much an integral part of reference work, the Section has also appealed increasingly to front-line reference librarians, many of whom have a strong interest in electronic reference and in shaping the way services are developed and implemented. The range of job titles held by active members of MARS confirms the existing broad appeal of the Section. In addition, the Section's programming has been aimed to a considerable extent at helping front-line librarians make sense of the fast-changing environment that is reference today. While MARS has and will continue to have a great deal to offer the general, front-line reference librarian, it cannot represent the totality of those interests without losing what has made MARS the significant and vital section it is today. Electronics has an impact on virtually everything we do in reference today, but it is of course not the sum total of everything we do. There are general reference librarians for whom other aspects of reference are more interesting and engaging. The appeal of MARS and its programming derives from the strong focus that the Section has maintained on the intersection of technology and the library user. This focus has defined the unique

character of MARS while at the same time appealing to a wide audience of reference and other public service librarians engaged in a variety of user services. The MARS Section Review Task Force report findings clearly illustrate the vital programs and activities that have attracted so many to MARS as a useful and productive home within ALA.

Appendix F: RUSA STRATEGIC PLAN

Every three years, the RUSA Board of Directors develops a strategic plan. Objectives for 2004–07 are:

1. Provide leadership in professional development for reference and user services librarians and library staff.
2. Work towards equity of access.
3. Seek ways to improve participation in RUSA by reference and user services librarians and library staff.
4. Ensure the effectiveness of RUSA in meeting its and ALA's mission.
5. Increase the visibility of RUSA in the profession and society at large.

The RUSA Strategic Plan is available at
http://www.ala.org/ala/rusa/rusaourassoc/rusastrategic.htm

Appendix G: FORMS

MARS Executive Committee Motion Form

TO RECORD YOUR MOTION ACCURATELY in the Minutes of the Executive Committee, please state the motion exactly as presented on this sheet and give it to the Secretary. Thank you.

Moved That

By

Seconded by

Session

Date

Note: Attach copies of any pertinent documents

Revised: November 1995

MARS Committee Attendance Form

(Committee chairs: Please distribute with current roster during meeting.)

Name of MARS Committee:
Date:
Time:
Members present: (Please note any changes to your contact information.)
1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12.

Visitors present:
Please give name, organization, telephone, e-mail and postal address. Place a check mark before your name if you are interested in serving on this committee.

1.

2.

3.

4.
Approved: July, 1988

MARS Committee Membership—Status Report

Name of Committee:

Current Chair:

Current members who wish to be reappointed:

Current members who are going off the committee:

MARS members suggested for appointment (must be MARS member to serve):

Member:

Member:

Member:

Member:

Member:

Intern:

Recommendation for Committee Chair:

This form is to be completed at Midwinter and sent to: MARS Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect
(Deadline: one week after Midwinter Conference)

Approved: June 1990

MARS Committee and Discussion Group Reporting Form

Committee Name:

Date of Meeting:

Describe Activity: Is this a new activity since the last conference?
For example: The Committee is working on a Program for the 2008 Annual Conference in Anaheim. We plan a program that will teach reference librarians how to adapt existing services for the next generation of library users, specifically on taking telephone reference and updating it for those who rely on IM and chat. The tentative title is IM, not your grandmother's reference librarian.

1.

2.

3.

Progress since the last conference:
For example: The program has been submitted to MARS Executive Committee for review, and will be submitted to the RUSA Conference Coordinating Committee at this confere**nce.**

1.

2.

3.

MARS Section goal (s) addressed by this activity:
For example: The relevant MARS Goals include:

- Defining the skills needed by reference services personnel in the future and looking at ways of educating and preparing new and experienced reference personnel to fulfill future needs.

1.

2.

3.

Assistance needed from Executive Committee or other MARS group?

Future Committee Plans:

Suggestions: (Objectives not on planning documents, etc.)

INSERT HYPERLINK TO CURRENT MARS GOALS
http://www.ala.org/ala/rusa/rusaourassoc/rusasections/mars/marssection/MARSGoals200506.htm

Approved: June 1995
Revised: June, 2006

This form is to be completed within 2 weeks of the conclusion of the Midwinter and Annual Conferences and sent to: MARS Chair, Vice-Chair, and the Chair of the Planning Committee.

Form is located at http://www.ala.org/ala/rusa/rusaourassoc/rusavolunteers/marsonlinecommittee.htm (8/04)

MARS Committee Interest Form

For more information about MARS committees, please visit the MARS Home.

Name:

ALA Membership Number:

Position/Title:

Institution:

Work Address:

Work Phone:

Work Fax:

Email:

Home Address:

Home Phone:

Preferred Mailing Address: ○ Work ○ Home

Committee(s) of Interest (check all that apply):

- ☐ Best Free Websites Committee
- ☐ Education, Training, and Support Committee
- ☐ Local Systems and Services Committee
- ☐ Management of Electronic Reference Services Committee
- ☐ Outreach Committee
- ☐ Planning Committee
- ☐ Products and Services Committee
- ☐ Public Libraries Committee
- ☐ Publications Committee
- ☐ User Access to Services Committee
- ☐ Managers in MARS Discussion Group
- ☐ Hot Topics Discussion Group

Briefly outline your experience, including terms of past and current appointments:

Professional Involvement [ALA, RUSA, MARS, State/Regional Associations]:

Additional Relevant Experience/Interests/Skills:

Would you be willing to serve as a committee intern for one year with full committee membership and privileges if you cannot be appointed as a full member of a MARS Committee?

○ Yes ○ No

Do you *need* a virtual appointment? Unlike traditional appointments, virtual appointments do not require travel to conference.

○ Yes ○ No

Are you willing to work on a virtual committee, even if you plan to travel to ALA conferences?

○ Yes ○ No Send in the Form Clear the Form

Revised: June 2005

RUSA Publication Proposal

Part 1 of this form is to be completed and submitted by any RUSA unit planning a publication. Copies of the completed form and any attachments should be sent to the chair of the section publications committee or to the section publications coordinator/liaison.

It is the responsibility of the section publications committee or the section publications coordinator/liaison to submit the publication proposal and final manuscript to the section executive committee and the RUSA Publications Committee for approval.

Part I: Committee and Proposed Publication Information

1. Section

2. Committee:

3. Committee chair and address:

4. Proposed/Working title:

5. Editor/author and address (primary contact for publication):

6. Names and addresses of individuals working on publication:

7. Purpose and description of proposed publication (Be as specific as possible. Include scope and content of subject matter as well as projected length of manuscript and any details on format. Indicate if this publication replaces or updates a previous publication or continues a series. Attach an outline or preliminary table of contents.)

8. Primary audience? Secondary audience?

9. What other publications address this topic and how does this differ?

10. Where do you intend to publish?

_____RUSQ
_____RUSA Update
_____RUSA Occasional Paper
_____RUSA monograph

_____ALA publication
_____Source outside of ALA (explain and list source)

11. Is electronic publishing an option? Explain.

12. Target publication date:

Part II: Proposal Approval

1. Section Executive Committee approval
   a. Proposal recommendation: Comments:
   _____Proposal accepted as written
   _____Proposal accepted with revisions
   _____Proposal not accepted Date:

   b. Section publication committee chair or section publication liaison signature:
   Date:

   c. Section chair signature:

2. RUSA Publications Committee approval
   a. Proposal recommendation:
   _____Proposal accepted as written Comments:
   _____Proposal accepted with revisions
   _____Proposal not accepted Date:

Part III: Final Manuscript Approval

1. Section Executive Committee approval
   a. Manuscripts recommendation: Comments and date:
   _____Publish as submitted
   _____Publish with minor changes
   _____Review recommended (Substantive changes suggested)
   _____Not approved for publication

   b. Section publication chair or section publications liaison signature:
   Date:

   c. Section chair signature: Date:

2. RUSA Publications Committee approval
   a. Manuscripts recommendation: Comments and date:
   _____Publish as submitted
   _____Publish with minor changes
   _____Review recommended (Substantive changes suggested)
   _____Not approved for publication

   b. RUSA Publications Committee chair signature: Date:

From http://www.ala.org/ala/rusa/rusaourassoc/appendixrusaform/pub_proposal.pdf

Appendix H: GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Procedures for Selection—"Messages from MARS" Editor/MARS-L Moderator

The MARS Publications Committee serves in an advisory capacity to the "Messages from MARS" Editor/MARS-L Moderator. Because of that role, it is responsible for conducting the search and screening of candidates and proposing at least one name to the MARS Executive Committee for approval at the Annual Meeting twelve months before the editor/moderator's term ends, following the procedures outlined below. ,.The MARS Publications Committee, in conjunction with the Executive Committee, may appoint an Interim Editor in the event of an editor's vacating the position. The Interim Editor will serve until the official search procedure is concluded and the transition to the new editor takes place.

Search Committee: Appointment, Membership and Responsibilities

1. The chair of the Publications Committee will appoint the Search Committee.

2. The Search Committee, at the discretion of the MARS Publications Committee Chair, may include the committee of the whole or a minimum of three voting members.

3. The MARS Chair, MARS Vice Chair/Chair-elect, MARS Immediate Past Chair and outgoing "Messages from MARS" Editor/MARS-L Moderator will serve on the Search Committee in an ex-officio capacity.

4. Upon appointment, the Search Committee will prepare an advertisement of the position for *RUSA Update*. The advertisement will also be posted on MARS-L and other LISTSERVs as appropriate.

5. Following the deadline for applicants, the Search Committee will duplicate all application documents and forward them to the members for review.

6. The Search Committee Chair will poll the committee members to determine which applicants will be interviewed.

7. The Search Committee Chair will contact the selected applicants and schedule interviews with the full Search Committee at the next conference.

8. Following the interview, the committee may select the candidate to be recommended to the MARS Executive Committee for appointment as "Messages from MARS" Editor/MARS-L Moderator.

9. Should the Search Committee be unable to select an editor/moderator from competing candidates, more that one name may be posed to the MARS Executive Committee which will make the selection.

10. Final authority for approval of the appointment rests with the MARS Executive Committee.

11. When the appointment is approved by the Executive Committee, the Search Committee Chair will notify the candidate selected.

Timeline

The "Messages from MARS" Editor/MARS-L Moderator will serve a one-year term as an intern upon appointment followed by one three-year term as editor/moderator. The search shall begin prior to the final year of the editor/moderator's term. The following timeline will guide the process:

1. Search Committee appointed: twelve - fourteen months prior to the conclusion of the editor/moderator's term or immediately if the position is otherwise vacated.

2. Position advertised: The advertisement should appear in the *RUSA Update* issue immediately following the appointment of the Search Committee. Additional advertisements on MARS-L and other appropriate listservs shall be posted immediately.

3. Deadline for position applicants: Approximately two months before Midwinter Meeting or Annual Conference.

4. Interviews scheduled: One month before Conference.

5. Interviews conducted and editor selected, approved and appointed: During Midwinter or Conference.

6. Training and orientation: During one-year internship.

7. The July-September issue of *RUSA-Update* will be considered the transition issue and will be jointly prepared by the outgoing and incoming editors.

8. The October-December issue will be the sole responsibility of the new editor.

9. Assumption of duties as moderator of MARS-L will be negotiated between outgoing editor/moderator and incoming editor/moderator.

Qualifications for Editorship

1. The candidate must hold membership in MARS and RUSA.

2. The candidate must be able to attend both the ALA Annual Conference and the ALA Midwinter Meeting.

3. The candidate should have previous editorial experience and/or an undergraduate degree in journalism, communications, English or another related field.

4. The candidate should have demonstrated ability to meet deadlines.

5. The candidate should have familiarity with and access to the Internet and electronic mail.

Approved: June 1990
Revised: February 1995

Procedures for Selection—MARS Web Coordinator

The MARS Publications Committee serves in an advisory capacity to MARS Web Coordinator. Because of that role, it is responsible for conducting the search, screening of candidates and proposing at least one name to the MARS Executive Committee for approval. The following material describes the procedures to follow:

Search Committee: Appointment, Membership and Responsibilities

1. The Chair of the Publications Committee will appoint the Search Committee. The Search Committee should be appointed twelve - fourteen months prior to the conclusion of the Coordinator's term, or immediately if the position is otherwise vacated (see Timeline #7).

2. The Search Committee, at the discretion of the MARS Publications Committee Chair, may include the committee of the whole or a minimum of three voting members.

3. The MARS Chair, MARS Vice Chair/Chair-elect, MARS Immediate Past Chair and outgoing MARS Web Coordinator will serve on the Search Committee in an ex-officio capacity.

4. Upon appointment, the Search Committee will prepare an advertisement of the position for *RUSA Update*. The advertisement will also be posted on MARS-L and other discussion lists as appropriate.

5. Following the deadline for applicants, the Search Committee will duplicate all application documents and forward them to the members for review.

6. The Search Committee Chair will poll the Search Committee members to determine which applicants will be interviewed.

7. The Search Committee Chair will contact the selected applicants and schedule interviews with the full Publications and Search Committee to take place at the next conference.

8. Following the interview, the committee may select the candidate to be recommended to the MARS Executive Committee for appointment as MARS Web Coordinator. Should the Search Committee be unable to select a Coordinator from competing candidates, more that one name may be posed to the MARS Executive Committee, which will make the selection.

9. Final authority for approval of the appointment rests with the MARS Executive Committee.

10. When the Executive Committee approves the appointment, the Search Committee Chair will notify the candidate selected. Once agreement to serve is secured, the Chair will also notify the other candidates that a selection has been made.

Timeline

The MARS Web Coordinator will serve a one-year term as an intern upon appointment, followed by a three-year term as Coordinator. The search shall begin prior to the final year of the editor/moderator's term. The following timeline will guide the process:

1. Search Committee appointed: twelve - fourteen months prior to the conclusion of the Coordinator's term or immediately if the position is otherwise vacated (see #7).

2. Position advertised: The advertisement should appear in the *RUSA Update* issue immediately following the appointment of the Search Committee. Additional advertisements on MARS-L and other appropriate discussion lists shall be posted immediately.

3. Deadline for position applicants: Approximately two months before Midwinter Meeting or Annual Conference.

4. Interviews scheduled: One month before Conference.

5. Interviews conducted and Coordinator selected, approved and appointed: During Midwinter or Annual Conference.

6. Training and orientation: During one-year internship.

7. If the position is vacated, the MARS Publications Committee, in conjunction with the Executive Board, may appoint an Interim Coordinator. The Interim Coordinator will serve until the official search procedure is concluded and the transition to the replacement takes place.

Qualifications

1. The candidate must hold membership in MARS and RUSA.

2. The candidate must be able to attend both the ALA Annual Conference and the ALA Midwinter Meeting.

3. The candidate should have experience creating and editing HTML documents and loading them to a Web server.

4. The candidate should have familiarity with and access to the Internet and electronic mail.

5. The candidate should have good communication skills.

6. The candidate should have demonstrated ability to meet deadlines.

Prepared by MARS Publications, February 2002.
Approved: June 2005

MARS Archives Procedures

PRINCIPLES:

1. Working files go from one committee Chairperson to the next; ephemeral material should be discarded; completed projects and "dead" files are sent to RUSA headquarters to be deposited in the Archives.

2. The committee Chair is normally responsible for maintaining committee files, and thus sending material to the Archives. The Secretary of the Executive Committee holds this responsibility for the Executive Committee, and for sectional documents such as the Handbook and roster. MARS editors hold this responsibility for the publications they edit.

3. The Secretary of the Executive Committee shall coordinate the deposit of materials in the Archives, soliciting files from committee Chairs, and depositing materials for the Executive Committee and the Section as a whole. Normally, this will be in mid-July of each year. The Secretary will send the materials collected directly to RUSA Headquarters. At this time, current files should be sent from the outgoing to the incoming committee Chairs, and from the outgoing to the incoming Secretary.

4. Archivists use the principle of "respect des fonds"--keep the material in the order it was as it was created. Correct obvious misfilings, but don't try to re-file in a "more logical order" than the material was in. (Removing staples and rubber bands is a help.) Print copies of electronic documents, if created simply for the purpose of depositing with Archives, may be filed chronologically or interfiled with other documents according to the order of that file. It is essential that all folders be clearly labeled: for example, "MARS User Access to Services Committee, 1995-1996."

5. The MARS Historian shall maintain a reference copy of the MARS Handbook. This shall consist of the latest printed copy with copies of all sections that have been changed. The printed copy will be annotated to indicate which sections have been revised. The Chair of the Planning Committee shall notify the Historian when changes are made to the Handbook, and the MARS Web Coordinator shall notify the Historian when changes are posted on the Web site. A complete copy of each new edition shall be sent to the archives.

TYPES OF MATERIAL:

Official Documents

Progress reports and meeting reports are already sent to RUSA; but a copy should also be included with the materials sent to Archives to assist anyone making use of the committee's archives. A copy should also be sent to the new Chair. Agendas of meetings and minutes of meetings (if not included in the above) should be retained, one copy to Archives, one to the new Chair.

Routine memos setting agendas, announcing meetings, etc.: one copy to Archives.

Membership rosters: a copy of the official MARS roster to Archives. If you do more than one during the year, keep a copy of each, unless the changes are trivial (e.g. typo corrections).

Appointment letters and forms: Do not retain; do not send to Archives.

Formal reports to committees, by a committee Chair to the Executive Committee: a copy to Archives.

Projects: Retain copies for Archives in the order in which you made them.

Retain one copy of each major draft of a project or report. Avoid keeping drafts that involve primarily typo corrections or rearranging.

Keep a copy of the final report, etc. and send to Archives.

Publications: One, or better, two copies of every publication to Archives (one if it is very long).

Also, don't forget to send handouts, and the like. Copies of these should also be included in the materials sent from the outgoing to the new committee Chair.

As noted above, the Editors of "Messages from MARS," a MARS series, etc. are responsible for sending final copies to the Secretary to deposit in the Archives. They, of course, also send other types of documents, in the same manner as committee Chairs, in the materials forwarded to the Secretary.

Correspondence: Keep all correspondence of significance.

If connected with a project, normally this will be kept with the project.

Attach replies to original sent; send both to Archives.

Retain the working file order; don't try to "tidy up."

Retain correspondence logs, if you use them, and send to Archives.

Electronic Mail: Keep a paper copy of significant messages.

Use the same rules as for regular correspondence: don't keep routine memos, "me to messages" etc.; do keep anything significant.

The ORIGINATOR OF THE MESSAGE KEEPS THE MESSAGE and any replies to it. For example, BW sends to all Committee Chairs for comments. AA, BB, XY reply. BW keeps a copy of the original, and the copy of the replies. BW then sends to Archives.

Web Pages: Keep a paper copy of the old version of any Web pages when any changes are made (other than minor corrections).

Keep a paper copy of any Web page that is being taken down.

At this point in time, there is no reliable mechanism to deposit this (or any) material electronically.

Other: If in doubt, keep it and send to Archives.

Don't forget realia: buttons, balloons, flags, etc. Send a copy to Archives. (If they come in several colors, keep one of each color).

NOTE: Materials identified in these guidelines to be sent to Archives should not be sent directly to the ALA Archives. As noted above, committee Chairs will send their materials to the MARS Secretary, who will forward these materials, along with those for the Executive Committee and Section, to RUSA headquarters, with clear indication they have been collection for deposit in the Archives.

Originally prepared by James H. Sweetland, MARS Chair 1982/83, with the advice and consent of the 1983-84 Executive Committee and Andrew M. Hansen.

Approved: July 1988

Revised in 1999-2000 by William McHugh and Patricia Riesenman. Approved by MARS Executive Committee: July 2000

Procedures for Publication of MARS Committee Documents

The MARS Publications Committee seeks to facilitate the publication of section documents by providing assistance to MARS committees in order to:

- seek publication of the document in a timely manner;
- expedite the approval process; and
- determine the appropriate medium for publication and distribution.

In order to meet these objectives, the committee has established the following procedures for publication:

1. When a MARS committee first decides to create a document, the committee chair completes the "RUSA Publication Proposal" (this Handbook) and submits to the MARS Publication Committee Chair. The MARS Publications Committee Chair will assign a member of the MARS Publications Committee as liaison to provide assistance and guidance to the originating committee during the publication approval process.

Endorsement of the publication proposal is the first step. Every effort will be made to provide a response to the committee submitting the proposal within 8-10 weeks. Proposals have to be reviewed at several levels – MARS Publications, MARS Executive Committee, and RUSA Publications.

2. The final version of the document must be approved. When the committee has finalized the draft of the document, it should be sent to the liaison and/or Chair of the MARS Publications Committee for distribution so that the review process may commence.

The MARS Publications Committee meets once or twice at every conference. Drafts received eight weeks or more prior to a given conference will be acted on at the first Publications Committee meeting at that conference. Drafts received by the start of the first Publications Committee meeting at a conference will be acted on before the end of the second meeting, which will always be scheduled prior to the last MARS Executive Committee meeting of the conference. Drafts received within three months after a conference will be reviewed through long-distance communication and, if possible, acted on prior to the next conference.

The draft should be submitted to the MARS Publications Committee in the format specifications for the medium or vehicle in which it is intended to be published. (e.g., RUSQ, "Messages From MARS"). These specifications are available from the publication editor or the MARS Publications Committee. All graphics should be included and all pages numbered. Pages should be numbered if appropriate.

3. The review process will include a peer review of the final draft manuscript by the three Members-at-Large of the MARS Executive Committee followed by a final review of the manuscript by the members of the MARS Publications Committee, the MARS Executive Committee, and the RUSA Publications Committee, when necessary.

Members reviewing the final draft manuscript will be asked to direct their comments and suggestions to the chair of the originating committee and/or editor of the proposed publication as well as to the MARS Publications Committee chair, who will summarize all comments for the benefit of the committee but without associating names of reviewers with specific comments.

Comments from members may cover appropriateness for publication, market considerations, content of document, format and structure, clarity, length as well as general editing and proofreading.

4. The outcome of the review by the MARS Publications Committee takes one of two forms:

a. Recommendation to the MARS Executive Committee and, when necessary, to the RUSA Publications Committee that the document be approved for publication, along with a recommendation as to the desired medium or vehicle for publication.

b. Recommendation to the MARS Executive Committee the document be referred back to the originating committee for revision and re-submittal.

5. Once a document receives approval for release from the MARS Executive Committee and, when necessary, the RUSA Publications Committee, the MARS Publications Committee will advise the originating committee or the contact person of the required procedures for the next step in the publication process.

See the "RUSA Publications Process Summary of Publishing Stages" Flowchart (this *Handbook*) for an overview of the publications process within RUSA.

Approved: January 1986
Revised: June 1995; June 2003

Procedures for Developing Guidelines

The procedures for developing guidelines are outlined in the RUSA Guide to Policies and Procedures at

http://www.ala.org/ala/rusa/rusaourassoc/guidetopoliciesandproced/rusadevguide/4developingguidelines.htm

These procedures were developed to ensure adequate review of Guidelines before they are officially adopted by RUSA. While the procedures may at first appear daunting, the RUSA Standards and Guidelines Committee, and in particular the MARS representative to that committee, are available as resources to help you through the process. Guidelines do officially represent the best practices of the profession, and therefore have a much greater impact than a checklist developed by the committee and posted on its Web site.

Guidelines must be reviewed every seven years by the committee that originally developed them. This procedures is less elaborate that the procedures for initially developing guidelines, and is also outlined in the RUSA Guide to Policies and Procedures. The committee having jurisdiction over a set of guidelines may decide to withdraw the guidelines rather than revise them, with the approval of RUSA Board, if they feel that the guidelines no longer serve any viable purpose.

Approved: June 2005

MARS Publications Committee Web Document Style Guidelines

MARS Committees should keep some general design considerations in mind when publishing Web documents. The proposed Web document should feature a user-friendly organization and arrangement, appropriate for the content. The use of bandwidth-eating graphics should be minimal, unless they add significant and meaningful information. In addition, images should include ALT tags**,** which describe the images. The document

should be in proper HTML format (or in other formats, such as .PPT, .DOC, .TXT, .XLS, etc., if appropriate), following currently accepted formatting standards. Web document authors should be aware of creating Web documents that are ADA-compliant (that is, provide a text-only version).

Some specific style guidelines

1. The proposed Web document should indicate when the content was created and the last time it was revised. Committees should commit to a schedule of frequent updates, dependent upon the content, and should indicate that frequency. (For example, the page could state that the producing committee will review the document quarterly for currency/accuracy.) If there is an intended expiration date or if the information content is static, that should be indicated in the document.
2. The proposed Web document should provide some indication about where the archival information will be located when the committee has ceased to maintain the document. If the Web document is also available in print, information on how to obtain that print version should be included.
3. The proposed Web document should include contact information. There must be a name or a link which will indicate who has responsibility for answering questions and responding to feedback about the document. Committees should commit explicitly to transferring that responsibility as committee membership changes.
4. The proposed document must include the MARS name and logo, the MARS unit name (the committee name), the RUSA name and logo, and the ALA name and logo at the top of all pages. The proposed document should include a link to the MARS unit's main or home page, and a link to the MARS home page. It is recommended that committees use the RUSA/MARS Web site template, at the very least.
5. The proposed document should include a statement about the purpose of the document, why it was developed and by whom. This could be in the form of an introductory paragraph, or a link to an "About This Document" page, indicating the scope and coverage of the information provided.
6. The proposed document should attempt to provide some metadata fields in order to enhance indexing for search engines. Some metadata fields that could be added are: author/creator; keywords; subject or description; resource type; creation date; revision date; expiration date; title; and version. The current version of the RUSA/MARS Web site template does not have metadata fields.
7. If the proposed document includes non-textual content which requires a special viewer or helper application/plugin, there should be concise guidance on how to obtain the software.

Comments about the guidelines should be directed to the Chair, MARS Publications.

Drafted and approved May 1998 MARS Publications Committee presented June 1998 to MARS Executive Committee. Revised July 1998 MARS Publications Committee Approved fall 1998 MARS Executive Committee.
Rev. MARS Publications, June 2003.

Instructions to Contributors: “Messages from MARS”

Scope: "Messages from MARS" is the official newsletter column of the Machine-Assisted Reference Section of the American Library Association's Reference and User Services Association. It is published quarterly on the RUSA Web site. The purpose of the column is to disseminate news of the section and committee activities to those concerned with computer-based reference and information services in libraries.

Please follow these procedures when preparing items to be submitted for the column:

1. Write the article in a grammatically correct, simple, readable style. Remember that the author is responsible for the article's accuracy.

2. Give the article a brief title.

3. Include the author's name and MARS affiliation with the article.

4. Consult *Merriam-Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, 9th ed., supplemented by *Webster's Third International*, as the authority for spelling and usage; prefer the first spelling if there is a choice.

5. Verify the spelling and accuracy of all names included in submitted items.

6. The current edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style* is the authority for punctuation, capitalization, abbreviations, etc.

7. Send the article via electronic mail to the "Messages" editor, preferable as an attachment.

8. Articles may be edited to improve the effectiveness of communications between author and reader.

"Messages from MARS" complies with the *Guidelines for Authors, Editors, and Publishers of Literature in the Library and Information Field*, passed as Council 1982-83 Document no. 38. Copies may be obtained by writing ALA Executive Office, 50 E. Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611.

Approved: July 1988Revised: July 2005

Procedures for “Messages from MARS” Column and MARS-L LISTSERV

"Messages" Procedures

1. Prepare the deadline schedule according to RUSA Update deadline schedule as soon as possible. The "Messages from MARS" deadline should be set two weeks before copy is due to *RUSA Update* Editor.

2. Notify MARS Chair, Vice Chair/Chair-Elect, Secretary, and all committee chairs of deadline schedule for the year when possible.

3. Forward copies of "Instructions to Contributors" (this *Handbook*) to officers and chairs with the deadline schedule.

4. Send the officers and chairs a reminder of the due date two weeks before each "Messages" deadline or about one month before the RUSA Update deadlines. This notification can be sent via electronic mail.

5. Prepare copy. Copy is generally due in mid-July (after Annual), mid-September, mid-January or February (after Midwinter), and mid-March.

6. In addition to general MARS news, the four issues generally include:

July-September:	Comments from the new MARS Chair Executive Committee Annual Conference Summary Annual Conference Committee Reports
October-December:	Comments from MARS Chair MARS Nominating Committee Report Midwinter Meeting Plans Roster of MARS Midwinter meetings
January-March:	Comments from MARS Chair Midwinter Executive Committee Summary Midwinter Committee Reports Preliminary Annual Conference Plans
April-June:	Statement from outgoing MARS Chair Annual Conference MARS program announcement Roster of MARS Annual Conference meetings

7. Send review copy of each "Messages" column to the current MARS Chair for his/her review prior to forwarding to the *RUSA Update* editor. Comments can be exchanged via telephone or electronic mail.

8. Forward final copy, after approved by MARS Chair, to the *RUSA Update* editor by mail or via electronic mail according to the *RUSA Update* deadline.

MARS-L Procedures

1. Serve as moderator of MARS-L posting messages as appropriate and managing operation of the LISTSERV as necessary.

2. Post calls for news and messages on MARS-L on a regular basis.

3 Post "Messages from MARS" column items within one week after forwarding to the *RUSA Update* Editor.

4. Publicize MARS-L in ALA publications and other vehicles as appropriate.

5. Monitor activity on MARS-L and keep MARS Publications Committee and MARS Executive Committee apprised of activity and make recommendations as appropriate.

Approved: July 1988
Revised: February 1995; July 2005