

May 26, 2020

Canadian Abridgment Editorial Advisory Board Report

Annual Report 2020

Members:

Stephen Thiele, Chair, Gardiner Roberts LLP
Ken Fox, Law Society of Saskatchewan Library, Saskatoon
Jean-Sébastien Danis, McCarthy Tétrault, Montreal
Nathalie Léonard, University of Ottawa, Ottawa
Susannah Tredwell, DLA Piper, Vancouver
Michèle LeBlanc, Université de Moncton, Moncton
Melanie Bueckert, Manitoba Court of Appeal, Department of Justice, Manitoba

Currently, the regular Carswell members of the Board are:

Adela Rodriguez, TR Product
Jilean Bell, Director, Legal and Regulatory Market
Audrey Wineberg, Product Development Manager
Jennifer Beaufile, Editor, Index to Canadian Legal Literature
Rex Shoyama, Online Development Manager

Other employees from Thomson Reuters, such as product managers and trainer, often join our meetings.

While our next meeting is currently not scheduled because of COVID-19, we are discussing with Thomson Reuters the possibility of having a one-hour virtual meeting in June 2020.

Membership

Further to our last report, membership in the Canadian Abridgment Editorial Advisory Board (“CAEAB”) continues to remain stable. The membership remains active and continues to consider ways in which to solicit feedback from CALL members and to work with Thomson Reuters to enhance or improve The Canadian Abridgment.

Given the COVID-19 health emergency, which has affected all of us, the Board will strongly recommend holding an open meeting for CALL members at the 2021 conference, assuming that a face-to-face meeting takes place. Otherwise the Board will consider hosting a virtual meeting of some type for the 2021 year at which we will invite CALL members to attend.

Our past experience has shown a lack of attendance on the part of CALL members, which we believe is the result of scheduling conflicts with other meetings. Accordingly, we hope that an open meeting could be scheduled at a time when those potential conflicts are minimal. COVID-19 may ignite a great movement toward the need to access virtual libraries and a greater need to enhance The Canadian Abridgment and overall access to online commercial products.

The CAEAB has no budget requests from CALL as all expenses for the CAEAB members are covered by Thomson Reuters.

December 2, 2019 Meeting: closed meeting

The Board met with representatives of Thomson Reuters in Toronto on December 2, 2020.

As per our usual protocol, the Board members held a pre-meeting on December 1, 2020 to review minutes from our meeting with TR in May 2019 and to discuss issues related to enhancing The Canadian Abridgment product.

Our meeting with TR in December 2, 2020 followed its usual standard agenda and interactions between Board members and TR representatives. The Agenda included a review of the minutes of the May meeting, a review and report on the ICLL, a review of Canadian Abridgment Publishing program, a review of usage statistics, and other enhancements related to the Abridgment. Some of the highlights will set out further below.

We are, however, still awaiting the minutes of our meeting with TR for the December 2, 2019 and due to COVID-19 our Board members are currently without access to their notes from the meeting.

Highlights

We were introduced to Adela Rodriguez who has now been assigned to lead TR in its liaison with the Board. Adela was formerly with Canada Law Book and transferred to TR upon TR's acquisition of Canada Law Book 9 years ago.

Other members of TR's group that we have dealt with in the past will continue to have roles with the overall joint meetings.

We continue to liaise with TR to find a better way to ensure that legal material is provided to TR for indexing into the ICLL and how to ensure that the information provided can guide the research to collecting the material indexed.

We contacted the Ontario Bar Association and provided contact information to TR for the purpose of re-introducing TR and the OBA so that materials provided to the OBA could be indexed to ICLL. The OBA/CBA hosts many conferences and receives multiple legal articles every year which does not get indexed on ICLL, but which may be of tremendous value to the legal community Canada-wide.

We also reviewed usage statistics and made note of various items which provide some insight into the way researchers use The Canadian Abridgment. We asked for other statistics to enhance our understanding and to take away for consideration.

We discussed some enhancements to content on WestlawNext Canada.

The Way Forward

On a going forward basis, COVID-19 has driven home the need for law libraries to become virtual. Our committee has always understood the need to evolve law libraries through the technology. The Canadian Abridgment has been easily adapted to an online format and has been enhanced through the contributions of our Board. We continue to be committed to providing recommendations to TR in this evolution and are excited about the opportunities that might be available to enhance The Canadian Abridgment and WestlawNext Canada.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Thiele