



Chair's Corner

Terri Clark, NALIT Chair, Director of Technical Services of the Kansas State Legislature

Happy New Year! Just a few months ago, I left the NALIT Sacramento Professional Development Seminar (PDS) with an overload of ideas popping in my head. As we begin 2016, reality sets in and I'm accepting the fact we can't accomplish everything. In narrowing down the list, two key actionable items remain on the list for NALIT—create a webinar and launch the XML standards workgroup. The Legislative Research Librarians (LRL) staff section invited us to co-sponsor a webinar on large data sets. Unfortunately, one of the key speakers had to change his schedule due to his state's special session, so this webinar has been moved to the spring. I'm hopeful that once we have some experience, NALIT will be positioned to sponsor annual webinars expanding educational opportunities for our members beyond the Summit and PDS meetings, and especially to involve staff unable to attend the onsite meetings.

Since the PDS, seven members have volunteered to begin the work of the XML standards workgroup. Their initial tasks will be to identify and prioritize the expected outcomes of the workgroup over the next two years. The workgroup will identify methods to educate our members on the XML standards and explore ways to eventually implement the standards in our environments. Look for more information from this group as they dig into their assignment over the next several months.

Changing topics – one of the duties of the Chair and Vice Chair is to represent NALIT at the [Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee](#) (LSCC) meetings. I'd like to give you a quick update on the LSCC activities:

- The [State House Ambassador Program](#) has been discontinued. The LSCC is investigating different methods to engage legislative staff, and encourage participation in NCSL staff section activities.

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CHICAGO, ILL.

AUG. 8 - 11.

Are Your Humans Secure?

Kyle Forster, Information Technology Manager of the North Dakota Legislative Council

As I am sure the majority of you are aware, October was Cyber Security Awareness Month. The key word here is “Awareness.” Keeping systems and networks secure and protecting the information that resides within them has both a technical and a human aspect related to ensuring success.

System and network administrators spend a lot of time and effort to ensure their systems and networks are secure. However, do we provide enough attention to the human aspect of keeping systems secure? Our systems and network administrators generally receive training which covers best practices to keep our information safe and secure. However, there is a very large group of humans that is easy to overlook. These are the end users of our networks and

data systems. These users are frequently under attack by persons wanting to gain access to our networks and data systems.

How do we make sure our humans are secure? The answer is training. Cyber Security Awareness Month provides an annual reminder to complete security training courses. If you did not provide your end users a training opportunity in October, it is not too late. If you do not have an end user training course implemented for your end users, SANS provides an excellent training program for securing your humans. See the SANS website for more information:

www.securingthehuman.org

The screenshot shows the SANS website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the SANS logo and a search bar. Below the navigation bar, there are several menu items: About, Products, Resources, Events, Blog, and Customer Support. A prominent banner on the right side of the page reads "Deploy Security Awareness Training from SANS Securing the Human:" followed by a list of four bullet points: "Change Human Behavior", "Manage Risk", "Maintain Compliance", and "Protect Your Brand". Below this banner, there are three columns of text describing the training program's features: "Security Awareness Training" (computer-based training for various roles), "High Quality Content" (created and updated annually by an advisory board), and "Free Resources" (internal support, impact measurement tools, and newsletters). At the bottom of the page, there is a "Free Demo" button and a "Have a Question?" section with a text input field.

Call for Newsletter Articles

Publishing this newsletter would be impossible without your participation. Please consider contributing an article—short or long. Some ideas for articles include:

- Descriptions of IT-related projects undertaken by your office.
- Reviews or studies that your office has done on IT-related issues.
- IT-related policies or systems implemented in your state (not just by your office) that affect legislative IT operations.
- A profile of your office (see below).

NALIT Newsletter - State IT Profiles

As a new feature for the NALIT newsletter, we hope to include information technology profiles for several states in each edition for the next several years. Each state's IT profile would be a narrative identifying how the state supports IT within its legislative environment. Here is some of the information to include in each state's IT profile narrative:

- What is your normal legislative assembly schedule:
 - o Convene and adjournment schedule.
 - o Any constitutional limitations on legislative days.
 - o Session types.
- How many members and staff are supported by IT:
 - o Number of legislative members by chamber.
 - o Number of full and/or part time legislative assembly staff, including types of staff.
 - o Number of council staff.
 - o Any offsite locations supported.
- Do you have IT staff that support specific chambers or caucuses? If so, what does the IT staff support versus overall IT support staff?
- Areas of IT support and number of staff supporting each area.
- Do you support bring your own devices or do you provide equipment to members and staff?
- Major project information.
 - o Any major projects in progress that you want to share?
- How is your IT organization governed?
- Provide a website link to your IT or office website.

Please consider contributing information about your office for the next edition of the newsletter. Send your office's IT profile to Kyle Forster, NALIT Secretary, at kwforster@nd.gov.

Alaska State Legislature Information Technology Profile

Curtis Clothier, Information Services Manager of the Alaska Legislature

The legislature of America's largest state is comprised of 20 Senators and 40 Representatives who meet each year for 90 days (January through April). While the Alaska Constitution calls for a 120-day session, a citizen's initiative passed in 2008 limiting sessions to 90 days.

The Legislative Affairs Agency (LAA) is the non-partisan organization that manages the day-to-day operations of the legislature. Approximately 200 employees of the LAA (including the Executive Directors Office, Human Resources, Finance, Legal Services, Supply, Legislation Information Office (LIO), Maintenance, Research, the Print Shop, and Information Services) support approximately 300 partisan staff and legislators.

Because of Alaska's vast size, all legislators also have interim offices outside of the Capitol when the legislature is not in session. Most legislators combine their interim office space with one or more of our 21 Legislative Information Offices (LIOs) that are located throughout the state. Our LIOs are non-partisan offices situated in various sized communities that assist the local population with state government activities.

The Information Services section consists of 17 staff members, divided between two help desks (Juneau and Anchorage), our programming team, our network team, our technical services team, and our administrative team (which handles ordering, inventory, policy, etc.).

We outsource very little, with our staff performing most work in-house. We maintain our websites (including streaming services), manage our wide and local area networks, maintain our own email and other servers (Microsoft and Linux), perform and maintain desktop software, and repair most hardware.

One of the biggest and most interesting duties that Information Services performs each year is preparing the Capitol for session, and facilitating the annual move of legislative offices and their equipment to Juneau every January. "Moving legislative offices back to Juneau" means that Information Services staff members travel around the state to perform maintenance, back-up computers, pack equipment and load the boxes into vans for their three-day road trip to Juneau

(through Alaska in the winter). Legislators' computers, monitors, printers, scanners, fax machines, other equipment and file boxes fill three large containers each year. This process is performed in reverse in April when sessions conclude and legislators move back to their home districts.

While Information Services reports to the Executive Director's office, all of our policies and standards have been reviewed and approved by the Legislative Council (the governing body of the Alaska Legislature). When a new policy is considered by Information Services (such as our mobile device policy), the policy is reviewed and approved by the Legislative Council's IT Subcommittee. This subcommittee includes members from leadership offices (including our rules chairs) who can contribute to the policy before Legislative Council reviews, and hopefully, approves it. It is much easier for offices to abide by new policies when leadership offices have participated in drafting as well as approving the policy. I would strongly encourage the use of steering committees if there is a need to draft policies for subjects as diverse as standards and acceptable behavior.

As far as standards are concerned, the Alaska Legislature is primarily a Microsoft shop with Exchange, Office 2013 and Windows 7, running on Dell servers and desktops, Lenovo laptops, and Apple iPads. We're currently evaluating Microsoft Surface tablets as an alternative to Lenovo laptops and Apple iPads.

Alaska State Legislature: <http://akleg.gov>



Montana Office of Legislative Information Technology Profile

Dale Gow, Chief Information Officer of the Montana Legislature

The Montana Legislature is a citizen legislature consisting of a Senate with 50 members and a House of Representatives with 100 representatives. The legislature meets in January of every odd-numbered year for a maximum of 90 legislative days. Approximately 110 temporary legislative staff are hired for the regular session. The Legislative Branch is staffed with 131 full-time employees. The legislature's responsibilities include lawmaking, appropriation, taxation, oversight of the Executive Branch and representation of local interests. The primary function of the legislature is lawmaking, which consists of the drafting, consideration, voting on and passage of bills. Other responsibilities of legislative staff are to support primary functions including research, fiscal analysis, legislation and policy development, information distribution, oversight, and business and administrative services.

The Office of Legislative Information Technology (OLIT) has 15 full-time employees and is organized into three sections: the Computer Systems Section (CSS), the Information Services Section (ISS), and the Network Services Section (NSS). The office is headed by the Legislative Branch Chief Information Officer. CSS is composed of six full-time employees: one section manager, two systems analysts, and three programmer analysts. This section is responsible for the development, maintenance, and user support for all branch software. ISS is comprised of two full-time employees: one section manager and one computer support technician. This section is responsible for the Legislative Enterprise Architecture Program, information security, quality assurance, project management, strategic planning, and help desk operations. NSS is comprised of six full-time employees: one section manager, two network engineers, and three network administrators. NSS is responsible for designing, implementing, and supporting the branch's IT systems, which includes day-to-day operational and engineering support of physical and virtual network services, work stations, printers, and other related hardware.

Once elected, Montana legislators are granted a technology allowance to be used once every two years for the purchase of IT equipment that will allow them to perform legislative business.

This requires OLIT staff to support these systems as a bring-your-own-device environment. OLIT is responsible for getting all legislators connected to the internal wired and wireless Capitol network along with e-mail support and making sure all systems are fully updated with the most recent OS patches and virus protection software. Legislative staff are issued systems that OLIT manages through our own Microsoft Active Directory, and all software is installed with the use of Microsoft SCCM.

During the current interim, major information technology initiatives include replacing many of our session and MCA publications-related systems. This is a major, enterprise-level business system replacement project to upgrade multiple aging systems, including process design, MCA/annotations, LAWS database, editor system, engrossing and enrolling, and the MCA online system. Other major initiatives during the interim will include system replacements for legislative staff and a security audit of our internal network.

The IT Planning Council is supported by several entities involved in developing, implementing, and maintaining IT resources within the Legislative Branch. These entities include the OLIT, the Legislative Executive Review Board, the Technical Planning Group, and the Legislative Enterprise Architecture Program. These groups coordinate on an ongoing basis on the implementation of the Legislative Branch IT Plan. They also work together to adjust and maintain the plan during the interim.

Montana State Legislature: <http://leg.mt.gov>



North Dakota Legislative Branch Information Technology Profile

Kyle Forster, Information Technology Manager of the North Dakota Legislative Council

The North Dakota Legislative Assembly is a citizen legislature consisting of a Senate of 47 senators and a House of Representatives with 94 representatives. The Legislative Assembly meets in January of every odd-numbered year for a maximum of 80 legislative days. Approximately 90 temporary staff are hired for the regular session. Legislative Council supports all legislative branch activities with a staff of 37 non-partisan employees. During the regular session, ten law school students intern with the Legislative Council to draft amendments during standing committee meetings.

The Legislative Council information technology (IT) staff consists of an IT Manager, three Legislative IT Specialists, and a Legislative Business Analyst. These five IT staff members support all members, staff, and legislative systems during the session and the interim, including issued equipment, committee room equipment and audio systems, chamber voting and audio/video systems, server environments, and legislative applications. The IT staff supports 141 Legislative Assembly members and 37 Legislative Council staff during the legislative session and through the 18 month interim. The IT staff members also support 100 temporary staff and interns during the legislative session. During the interim, assembly members are supported onsite during interim committee meetings and offsite remotely at their district residence.

The Legislative Assembly members are issued laptops and iPads for use during the legislative session and the interim. Legislative Council staff members are issued laptops and iPads. Temporary staff and interns are issued laptops for use during the legislative session. The IT staff manages all issued equipment using Microsoft SCCM and Citrix XenMobile. Any legislative wing or committee room equipment and improvements are governed by the Legislative Procedures and Arrangements Committee. Major IT initiatives are also reported to this committee.

The legislative branch utilizes the statewide Microsoft Active Directory, wired and wireless networks and Exchange email services managed by the executive branch. The legislative branch also utilizes the executive branch IT department's software development and hosting services. The department has four software programmer/analysts assigned to work on legislative systems.

During the current interim, major information technology initiatives include upgrading the core modules within our Propylon bill drafting solution, Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council computer refresh, rewriting the budget status system, mobile app enhancements, various bill drafting system enhancements, standing committee automation, and installation of in-room sound systems in several committee rooms.

For more information on the North Dakota legislative branch see www.legis.nd.gov



South Dakota Legislature Information Technology Profile

Kevin Kumpf, Programmer Analyst of the South Dakota Legislature

The South Dakota Legislature has one of the smallest legislative IT staffs around. But don't let that fool you—they are not afraid to take on any project you throw at them. Standing at three staff strong, they manage to assist 105 legislators, 22 full-time staff, 12-plus session staff, and 23-plus interns. The team is comprised of Hilary Carruthers, Brian DeBolt, and Kevin Kumpf.

In South Dakota, each chamber typically convenes at 2 p.m. and adjourns around 4 p.m. for the 40 (legislative) day sessions. All legislative offices are located in the capitol building, which makes it easier for staff to provide consistent support during the legislative session. During the interim, staff will assist legislators with their state-issued devices either remotely (by phone) or when they are on-site. Legislators are provided either an HP laptop or an iPad. The Technology Subcommittee, comprised of members of the Executive Board, governs the technology initiatives undertaken by the IT staff.

Hilary Carruthers is the Computer and Web Support Specialist—she fields phone calls from legislators far-flung across South Dakota. Her chipper voice sets legislators at ease as she assists them with their state-issued iPads and HP Revolve laptops. Like many technology professionals, Hilary gets to dive into many projects that involve technology in the office. Currently she is working with staff to re-brand the Legislative Research Council, digitize microfilm and consolidate our Legislative Library.

Brian DeBolt is the Network Administrator. In the past, the legislature relied on the Executive Branch's Bureau of Information and Telecommunications to provide infrastructure support. It has been a challenge for Brian to break through the status quo, but over the last nine months he has been developing an independent network for the legislature. As someone new to the legislature, Brian has been successful at researching everyone's needs to make the transition as smooth as possible. The entire staff is thrilled to see what Brian has accomplished when the network goes live in the spring of 2016.

Kevin Kumpf is the Programmer Analyst. Kevin develops and maintains a variety of in-house

applications including Lawmaker, SD LRD's bill drafting and tracking software as well as the LRC website. He works with legislators and staff to improve applications and the legislative website. Recently, Kevin has been working on streamlining information within the LRC that has been distributed among multiple Access databases into SQL and VB.NET.

The Legislative Research Council has a number of projects currently underway. The most dramatic project is the aforementioned "independent network" project. With a slated switchover of spring 2016, hardware is currently being installed and fiber is being run to the fourth floor of the Capitol Building. The LRC staff will begin testing in the fall of 2015.

The appropriations chambers, which last saw a major technology update in the late '80s, are being remodeled. Upgrades will include new Crestron touch-screen controllers, six 65" television displays, a document camera, and new audio equipment. As a final major project, the House Chamber has opted to consolidate its two displays into a single display (5 feet by 8 feet) as well as upgrade the voting software to International Roll-Call's .Net Voting Software.

It may not always be easy, but the IT staff at the Legislative Research Council does its best to provide quality and efficient service to their legislators. They are proud of the close and positive rapport they have maintained—and are excited to be working on projects that are improving the quality of the legislative process in South Dakota.

South Dakota Legislature: <http://legis.sd.gov>



(Continued from page 1)

- Creating “Legislative Success Story” videos – these short videos showcase staff working with legislators to bring about a successful resolution to a challenging issue. In addition to highlighting legislative staff actions, I think these videos will also remind us of the intangible benefits of working in state legislatures.
- Planning the legislative staff sessions at the 2016 Legislative Summit – Hampton Sides, the notable historian and author of “Hell Hound on His Tail,” will speak at the legislative staff lunch. “Hell Hound on His Tail” is about James Earl Ray’s stalking and assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The talk will focus on the characteristics leaders possess to help them prevail despite difficult circumstances.
- Continued focus on expanding digital communications – webinars and social media.

I’d like to thank Kyle Forster for producing this newsletter. The idea of highlighting different IT departments is terrific!

One last thing, if you’re looking for something to read I recommend Walter Isaacson’s “The Innovators,” a book about movers and shakers in technology from Ada Lovelace to the ultimate collaboration of humans and machines working together. Very stark differences between those who worked solo, and those who were brave enough to share their work and collaborate with others...

I hope everyone has a wildly successful 2016!

The NCSL Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee

The [Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee](#) (LSCC) is made up of the legislative staff members elected to the NCSL Executive Committee, the staff chair and staff vice chairs of the NCSL Standing Committees, two officers of each of the ten staff sections, and four discretionary appointees of the Staff Chair. Terri Clark, NALIT Chair, and Linda Wettstone, NALIT Vice Chair, are representing NALIT on the LSCC this year.

The purposes of the Legislative Staff Coordinating Committee are to oversee the legislative staff division of NCSL, to coordinate the work of the ten staff sections of NCSL, to promote professional development of legislative staff, and to review and evaluate NCSL services to legislative staff. LSCC serves in an advisory capacity to the NCSL Executive Committee.

The LSCC usually meets four times a year in conjunction with the NCSL Executive Committee.

This is the newsletter of the National Association of Legislative Information Technology (NALIT), a staff organization of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL).



NATIONAL CONFERENCE
of STATE LEGISLATURES

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