

FOCUS

MEETING OF THE HEADS OF LIBRARIES/TICs OF DRDO LABS/ESTTS

29-30 Sept 1993

The Sixth Meeting of the Heads of Libraries/Technical Information Centres (TICs) of DRDO was inaugurated by Dr APJ Abdul Kalam, Scientific Adviser to Raksha Mantri at Metcalfe House, Delhi on 29 Sept 1993. The two-day meeting was organised by DESIDOC with a view to assess the common problems confronted by the libraries/TICs in procurement of foreign publications, information handling and networking of information resources of DRDO labs. Fifty officers-in-charge/librarians/information scientists from 35 TICs and DESIDOC participated in the meeting.

Dr Abdul Kalam in his inaugural address wished that all libraries and TICs should be managed by professionals, as they are trained to handle information in a better way and can offer effective library services to the user scientists. He exhorted that the library professionals should be motivated and trained in the use of latest information technologies to cater to the information needs of scientists/R&D managers. He further desired that research element should be incorporated in the library and documentation activities and services.

The Scientific Adviser cautioned the library managers to be vigilant about loss of publications in TICs. He further asked them to make best use of the resources available to them. For this purpose he felt the necessity of creating regional databases at Delhi, Bangalore, Hyderabad, etc where major clusters of DRDO labs/estts are located, and network them for getting maximum benefit. He emphasised the need for launching SDI services for the scientists based on their interest profiles, which should be regularly updated.

Dr Abdul Kalam felt that librarians and information professionals could be made to attend project discussions as far as possible, so that they are able to get a clear idea of the information requirements of projects and keep providing relevant information to the scientists without loss of time. He asked the librarians to make library and information services more dynamic.

The Scientific Adviser, thereafter, answered many questions from the participants and a lively discussion followed.

Earlier, Dr S.S. Murthy, Director DESIDOC, welcomed the Scientific

Adviser, participants, local Lab Directors and other invitees. He informed the participants that the meeting was being revived at the initiative of the Scientific Advisor and his presence at the Meeting showed his interest in and support to the development of an effective information system for DRDO.

He pointed out that the unique feature of the meeting was that all technical sessions were going to be chaired by the Corporate Directors who are well informed about the subject and looking after such functions in the Headquarters, and the participants could directly express their problems and views to them. He stressed the need of avoiding unnecessary duplication in library acquisitions and advocated resource sharing in this era of financial crunch. He suggested that establishment of regional databases is a viable alternative for effective utilisation of the library resources and for largely meeting the information needs of the scientists.

Shri U.R. Sharma, Deputy Director, DESIDOC proposed the vote of thanks.

The deliberations on various topics of common interest were spread over two days in five technical sessions. The topics included were : creation of in-house databases in specific areas., networking of regional databases, ways and means of improving library services including SDI services, speedy delivery of documents, need of managing libraries/ TICs by professionals, organisation of short and long-term training courses for scientists engaged in information work, resource sharing to overcome the shortfall in annual budget of librraies, need for a library manual covering relevant procedures and practices for use in the DRDO libraries/TICs, stock-taking and simplification of procedure

for release of FE for procuring foreign publications, etc.

Some of the recommendations are as follows:

1. The libraries/TICs should develop their own databases as per the requirements of their respective labs.
2. Regional databases could be developed and maintained at Delhi, Hyderabad, Bangalore and Pune and networked.
3. All the libraries/TICs of DRDO labs should provide their databases and their regular updations to their regional centres in the 'Common Communication Format' (CCF) and AACR2 for rendering data elements.
4. A Specialists Committee may be appointed to go into the various aspects of networking like suitable library application software, computer hardware and networking nodes.
5. The officer-in-Charge library, may be invited to attend any suitable forum of the lab to enable him/her to comprehend the information requirements of the scientists in relation to their projects.
6. DESIDOC should develop continuous training programmes, suitable to various levels of personnel, in database creation, networking, SDI and other areas in association with DIMT, Mussoorie and other agencies.
7. The library budgets should be related to the project budgets so that libraries can get proportionate increase in their budgets with the increase in the budget for project programmes.
8. Libraries/TICs shall take the responsibility of retrospective data conversion in CCF format and ensure quality control with the available financial resources.