

# Annual Report to the Conference of Directors of National Libraries Library and Archives Canada—2014–2015

## Profile

**Country:** Canada

**Library or equivalent national organization:** Library and Archives Canada

**Chief Executive:** Guy Berthiaume, Librarian and Archivist of Canada

**Contact for international matters:** Christopher Kitzen, Chief of Staff, Office of the Librarian and Archivist of Canada; and Hilary Morgan, Director, Stakeholder Relations, Support to Communities and Collaboration

**Public enquiries:** Library and Archives Canada, 395 Wellington Street, Ottawa, Ontario, CANADA

**Mailing address:** Library and Archives Canada, 550 Boulevard de la Cité, Gatineau, Quebec, CANADA K1A 0N4

**Telephone:** 613-996-5115 or 1-866-578-7777 (toll free in Canada and the U.S.),

TTY: 613-992-6969 or 1-866-299-1699 (toll free in Canada)

**Fax:** 613-995-6274

**Web address:** [www.bac-lac.gc.ca](http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca)

## Reporting relationship and relevant legislation

Library and Archives Canada (LAC) is an organization of the Government of Canada, and is part of the Canadian Heritage portfolio. LAC combines the holdings, services and staff of the former National Library of Canada and National Archives of Canada. The [Library and Archives of Canada Act](#) (the Act), which sets out LAC's mandate, came into force in 2004.

## Organizational overview

Under the Act, LAC is mandated to preserve the documentary heritage of Canada for the benefit of present and future generations; to be a source of enduring knowledge accessible to all, contributing to the cultural, social, and economic advancement of Canada as a free and democratic society; to facilitate in Canada co-operation among the communities involved in the acquisition, preservation and diffusion of knowledge; and to serve as the continuing memory of the Government of Canada and its institutions.

### *Evaluation and acquisitions*

LAC is responsible for collecting records of archival and historical value to Canadian society and the Government of Canada. Most of LAC's acquisitions are governed by legislation. The [Legal Deposit of Publications Regulations](#) and the [Library and Archives of Canada Act](#) (the Act) state that Canadian publishers must deposit copies of their publications with LAC. Under [the Act](#), government information resources of archival and historical value must be transferred to LAC at the end of their retention period. LAC is also mandated to acquire documentary heritage created by individuals, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, as well as representative samples of what is published on the Web.

### *Preservation*

Over the years, LAC has built a vast collection that comprises a variety of information resources, both analogue and digital, including books, government publications, maps, works of art, photographs, and audio and video recordings. LAC is responsible for preserving this collection so that it stands the test of time and remains accessible to current and future generations.

Preservation is a responsibility LAC fulfills by drawing on the expertise and know-how of its preservation and digitization specialists, as well as by optimizing infrastructure to prevent the deterioration of these records.

#### Access

LAC provides access to its records by digitizing the most popular items in its collection, describing them to ensure easy retrieval, and by providing on-site services at its Ottawa location. LAC also showcases its documentary heritage in the exhibitions it organizes, alone or in partnership with other institutions, to promote Canadian culture or highlight specific historical events.

#### Key facts and figures

Budgetary financial resources (Canadian dollars)	102,593,650
Human resources (full-time equivalents)	951

#### LAC's collection consists of:

- 20 million books
- 250 kilometres of textual records
- 3 million maps
- 30 million photographs
- 550,000 hours of audio and video recordings
- a copy of every stamp ever issued by Canada Post
- 425,000 Canadian works of art, including sculptures, children's book illustrations, comic strips, political posters and iconic portraits
- 200 million digital records

#### Results achieved

The year 2014–2015 saw the appointment of a new Librarian and Archivist of Canada, whose vision is based on four key commitments for making LAC an institution:

1. that is dedicated to serving all its clients;
2. that is at the leading edge of archival and library science and new technologies, drawing on the strength of its staff;
3. that is proactively engaged with national and international networks in an open and inclusive way; and
4. that enjoys greater public visibility.

LAC has also benefited from the recommendations of three organizations that reviewed its situation and that of other Canadian documentary heritage institutions.

The first report issued by the Royal Society of Canada was entitled [\*The Future Now: Canada's Libraries, Archives, and Public Memory\*](#). It contained 70 recommendations for libraries and archives, six of them exclusively for LAC. The aforementioned four commitments provide, in large part, a response to the Royal Society's concerns.

The second [report](#), published by the Auditor General, concerned the handling and management of government and digital records. LAC reacted promptly to the report's recommendations by developing action plans and strategies. For example, LAC developed a digital strategy to ensure permanent access to its digital collection.

The third report is from the Council of Canadian Academies and was entitled [Leading in the Digital World: Opportunities for Canada's Memory Institutions](#). It provided insight into how the digital revolution has changed the relationship between Canada's memory institutions and the general public. LAC developed a plan for consulting partners and users to ensure its 2016–2019 three-year plan accounts for client needs and requirements.

#### *Evaluation and acquisitions*

LAC has continued to enrich its collection by adding archival fonds, publications, websites and government records. The 99 archival fonds acquired in 2014–2015 include, among other things, a booklet by Canadian artist and author Emily Carr and the addition of nearly 200,000 negatives and transparencies to the [fonds of Canadian photographer Malak Karsh](#). In 2014–2015, LAC processed more than 105 archival fonds from public and private sources.

LAC added nearly 175,000 publications to its collection. Published titles received through Legal Deposit account for 70% of this total, with nearly 50,000 electronic theses added to the 425,000 theses already available on the [Theses Canada](#) portal. A total of 1,010 websites were archived in 2014–2015, including more than 850 Government of Canada sites.

For government records management and acquisition, a strategy was implemented to ensure all federal institutions have comprehensive and up-to-date disposition coverage within the next three years. On March 31, 2015, 30% of departments and agencies subject to the Act had comprehensive coverage.

Another initiative was launched to eliminate a backlog of 98,000 unprocessed boxes of government records by December 2015. On March 31, 2015, 63% of these boxes had been processed.

#### *Preservation*

LAC continued to transfer its collection to sites with the appropriate conditions needed to preserve Canada's documentary heritage in analogue format. Accordingly, LAC has moved 500,000 Second World War archival files, 2.6 million miscellaneous publications, and 26,000 boxes of newspaper archives to a new high-density storage facility. It also successfully moved 1.6 million post Second World War military personnel service records to the Winnipeg Regional Service Centre, in Winnipeg. It has achieved all this with no interruption of service.

With new and better equipment, LAC significantly increased its digital storage capacity from 3 to 7 million images per month. This helped LAC preserve more than 1,000 terabytes in 2014–2015, an increase of 129% from the previous year.

LAC has made progress in implementing the [10-year Audiovisual Migration Strategy](#), which seeks to create digital master copies of 180,000 hours of audio and video content stored in at-risk formats. The Strategy was introduced in 2009 and is scheduled for completion in 2019. LAC also made progress with the migration strategy for unpublished content recorded on outdated digital media (e.g., diskettes, floppy disks).

#### *Access*

At the national level, LAC supported the provision of access to Canada's documentary heritage through intensive digitization initiatives, public events and exhibitions.

Most users of LAC's collection and services in 2014-2015 gained access through the [institution's website](#). The site received more than 22 million visits during the year, making it one of the most popular Government of Canada websites. LAC has also continued to make its collection known through social media. Its [Flickr page](#) has had an average of 425,000 visits per month; its [podcasts](#) have been downloaded 150,000 times; and its many [blog](#) posts have drawn 150,000 visits.

A survey on the use of LAC's website found the two subjects with the highest user interest were, in order, genealogy and the First World War. This survey confirmed the relevance and importance of conducting the most ambitious digitization project in LAC's history, which targets the 640,000 service files of members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF), the army sent overseas to serve Canada during the First World War. On March 31, 2015, some 21% of CEF files were added to the [Soldiers of the First World War database](#). In total, LAC and its partners digitized more than 23 million images in 2014–2015.

LAC continued its block review approach, which allows faster access to government records. Through this process, LAC made nearly 9.3 million pages of historical government records available in 2014–2015. The approach also contributed to Canada's [Open Government](#) initiative. LAC's *Policy on Making Holdings Available* states that, with few exceptions, government records transferred to LAC must be open to consultation.

Lastly, to make its collection more searchable, LAC prepared more than 150,000 archival record descriptions and nearly 34,000 published record descriptions. LAC also made progress in discussions with a supplier, and with the library community, about replacing the national database of published material containing more than 25 million bibliographic records. In doing so, LAC will help Canadian libraries benefit from new technology and meet user needs more effectively.

#### *Collaboration*

In 2014–2015, LAC renewed its collaborative relationships with national and international partners, setting up a mechanism to maintain dialogue. The Stakeholders Forum provides a venue where representatives from the main national associations representing archives, libraries, history and museums can hold upstream discussions on the development of LAC's priorities and direction, as well as regularly explore opportunities for co-operation.

In view of its commitment to play an active role in international networks, LAC has ensured a Canadian presence among international organizations like the International Council on Archives (ICA), the Association internationale des archives francophones (AIAF), the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), and the Réseau francophone numérique (RFN). To further highlight this commitment, an international engagement strategy is being developed.

To promote and ensure the sustainability and outreach of local documentary heritage institutions, LAC has created the Documentary Heritage Communities Program (DHCP). This new program will provide funding for activities that preserve and facilitate access to local collections.

LAC has also shared treasures from its collection, loaning several items to the new Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg. In conjunction with the National Gallery of Canada, it also organized two exhibitions featuring historical photographs from its collection.

To make more records available online and to ensure they are preserved in the long term, LAC conducted large-scale digitization projects with [Canadiana.org](http://Canadiana.org) and [Ancestry.ca](http://Ancestry.ca).

In collaboration with the National, Provincial and Territorial Archivists Conference, LAC will develop a national collaborative approach to acquisitions.

Lastly, LAC has continued working with the TD Bank Group and Toronto Public Library to develop the TD Summer Reading Club, an annual program that helped more than 2,000 Canadian public libraries offer reading activities to more than half a million children.