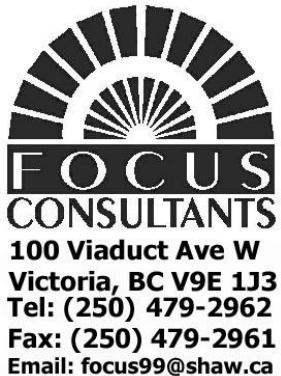


LawMatters Public Library Legal Resources Project

Results of a LawMatters Training Follow-Up Survey

FINAL REPORT



December 2009

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to Nancy Hannum, Janet Freeman and Johanne Blenkin for their assistance with the development and implementation of this survey.

Sincere thanks also to the public library staff who took the time to participate in the survey.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction and Description of Law Matters

This report presents the findings of a follow-up survey of public library staff in BC who attended the Legal Reference Introductory Training provided by the LawMatters Public Library Legal Resources Project (LawMatters) in 2008-2009. The purpose of the survey was to determine the utility and application of the skills and information provided in the Introductory Training and to identify the current legal reference skill needs of library staff. The survey also examined the changing trends and challenges staff encounter when considering legal reference questions and whether confidence gained in the training had been maintained.

The LawMatters Project provides core funding to public libraries to help them expand, update or improve their legal reference collections as well as training and support to library staff. LawMatters is supported by Courthouse Libraries BC and is funded by the Law Foundation of BC.

Description of the Introductory Legal Reference Training and Number of Workshops Held

The Legal Reference Introductory Training workshop was designed by LawMatters and provides a comprehensive overview and introduction to print and online legal reference resources, legal search strategies and methods of assisting patrons with legal reference questions.

Since late 2007, LawMatters has provided twenty-seven training workshops or webinars involving 395 public library staff in BC. Sixty-three percent (248/395) of the training participants attended the Legal Reference Introductory Training, which began in February 2008.

Follow-Up Survey Completion Rates and Methods

Library staff were surveyed by telephone using a questionnaire consisting of rating, numerical and Likert scales and qualitative or open-ended questions that addressed the following subject areas:

- Description of library staff including participation in other legal reference training;
- The frequency, type, range and complexity of legal reference questions that library staff are currently receiving from patrons;
- Trends in the types or complexity of legal reference questions;
- Respondent assessment of the utility of the Introductory Legal Reference Training and the value of training components;
- Current library staff confidence levels in addressing legal reference questions;
- Recommendations for improving training or providing refresher or future training.

Each telephone interview took approximately twenty minutes to complete.

Contact information was available for 115 participants who took the Introductory Training. Seventy of these participants participated in the survey, at least 29% of those who participated in the workshop.

Previous Assessments of the Introductory Legal Reference Training

Legal training participants completed training assessment forms immediately after the training workshop. Over 90% of those who took the Introductory Training and completed their assessments felt that it provided a good overall introduction to the legal reference area, that the facilitators were effective and the objectives of the training were clearly stated. Participants said that the most useful aspect of the training was the opportunity to learn about the scope of legal reference resources that are available, (particularly online resources), to practice handling legal reference questions and to learn about legal information and referral resources in the community. They recommended strengthening the training by expanding the length of the workshop (to a one-day session), providing more opportunity to explore online resources and to do more practice searches.

Results from the immediate post training assessments also showed that the training significantly raised the confidence levels of library staff in terms of their handling legal reference questions. For example, 50% of the training participants reported having a low confidence level in terms of addressing legal reference questions *prior to* the Introductory Training, while only 10% lacked significant confidence immediately *after* the training. The group with a high level of confidence increased from 9% to 32% after the training. All these changes were statistically significant.

Description of Respondents and the Libraries Involved in the Survey

Seventy-four percent of the respondents worked full time at their libraries; 25% worked part time. Just under 50% were from libraries in the Lower Mainland and Sunshine Coast; 25% were from libraries in northern and north coast regions. Libraries from all regions of BC were represented by respondents in the survey.

Forty-four percent of the survey participants were from libraries located in very large urban centres; 27% were from small communities.

Sixty percent of the training participants had taken other types of legal reference training in addition to the Introductory Training provided by LawMatters. Seventy-one percent of these respondents had taken Searching QP LegalEze.

Frequency and Types of Legal Reference Questions Asked at Libraries

A third of the respondents said that they received legal reference questions from patrons frequently – either on a daily basis or several times a week. A small minority (about 14%) said the number of legal questions was infrequent or never occurred.

Libraries located in large or very large urban areas were statistically much more likely to receive legal reference questions from patrons than were libraries located in small communities.

Over a quarter of the respondents said that the number of legal reference questions from library patrons appeared to be increasing while 55% said the volume of questions had remained the same. Libraries that

were most likely to describe an increase in the volume of legal questions were located in the large (but not the largest) urban centres.

Twenty-seven percent of the survey participants said that patron questions were addressing new topic areas at their libraries or that questions reflected an increasing interest in specific topic areas. This was most noted at the libraries located in centres with 50,000 to fewer than 100,000 people.

Sixteen respondents identified the areas where legal reference questions had changed or showed a different emphasis. Areas related to family law (e.g., divorce, custody) were noted most frequently. Completely new areas of legal reference inquiry were not identified.

Survey findings indicated that libraries are experiencing a small but significant trend towards being asked more complex, time-intensive questions which require the use of multiple and sophisticated legal reference resources.

Some of the reasons for this trend were posed by the library staff that answered this question. Half of these librarians suggested that funding cuts had led to decreased services for citizens, which had led to the more frequent use of free services available at public libraries. Several librarians said that unrepresented litigants are bringing more questions to librarians. It was also noted that the internet provides answers to simple legal questions, meaning that more complex questions are more likely to be directed to library staff.

Gaps in Legal Reference Information and Resources

A quarter of the respondents said that their libraries lacked sufficient legal reference materials in some areas to adequately address some of the legal questions of patrons. This was more frequently noted by library staff located in libraries situated in communities of 50,000 to under 100,000 people.

A general lack of reference and materials at the branch level, case law information, information for unrepresented litigants (e.g. describing the court process) and family law materials were most frequently mentioned as gaps in the collections.

Retrospective Assessment of the Introductory Training and Recommendations for Improvements

Results indicate that the components of Introductory Training that are still the most highly valued are the overview focus of the Introductory Training, the introduction to online resources and the opportunity to do practice questions. These findings were consistent with the assessments made by training participants immediately after the Introductory Training workshops.

There was no strong consensus around recommendations for improving the Introductory Training. The two most frequently made recommendations were to provide more opportunity for practice questions, including role playing, and to hold comparable or refresher legal reference training more frequently.

Application of Skills Acquired in Training and Library Staff Confidence Levels.

Thirty percent of the survey respondents said that they used the skills and information acquired in the Introductory Training frequently or very frequently – at least one or more times a week. Only two respondents said that they never used the skills.

Participant assessments completed before and immediately after the training indicate that the Introductory Training significantly raises the confidence levels of library staff. This trend was statistically significant. Results at the time of the follow-up survey indicate that the proportion of library staff with low confidence levels continues to drop and there is more consolidation at the moderate level. This means that there is no drop-off in confidence levels over time, even after more than eighteen months had passed since the Training.

Respondent Interest in Future Training

Eighty percent of the survey respondents said that they would be interested in attending additional LawMatters follow-up or refresher legal reference training. Almost 40% of these respondents said that they were most interested in a refresher course with a focus on updated and new legal reference resources. The most frequently mentioned legal topic area for future training was family law.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND DESCRIPTION OF THIS REPORT

This report presents the findings of a follow-up survey of public library staff in BC who attended the Legal Reference Introductory Training provided by the LawMatters Public Library Legal Resources Project (LawMatters) in 2008-2009. The purpose of the survey was to determine the utility and application of the skills and information provided in the Introductory Training and to identify the current legal reference skill needs of library staff.

The LawMatters Project provides core funding to public libraries to help them expand, update or improve their legal reference collections as well as training and support to library staff. LawMatters is supported by Courthouse Libraries BC and is funded by the Law Foundation of BC.

Three types of training are provided by LawMatters: the Legal Reference Introductory Training, Searching QP LegalEze and Legal Information Sources. This study involves only those who participated in the Legal Reference Introductory Training.

The Legal Reference Introductory Training was designed by LawMatters and provides a comprehensive overview and introduction to print and online legal reference resources, legal search strategies and methods of assisting patrons with legal reference questions.

Seventy library staff who took the Introductory Training in 2008 – 2009 participated in the telephone survey which was conducted by Focus Consultants in October and November, 2009. This represented almost 30% of those who had participated in this training.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF LAWMATTERS

2.1 PURPOSE OF LAWMATTERS

LawMatters was launched in March 2007 to provide enhanced and updated legal reference resources, funding and training to public libraries in BC in order to improve and expand public access to legal information and resources. Since its inception LawMatters has provided:

- Training (both group and webinar) to library staff on the effective use of legal reference materials and ways of assisting patrons with legal reference questions. Three types of training have been provided (see Section 2.2);
- Consultation and advice to libraries about updating and adding current legal reference materials and resources to the core list and to the library;
- Information to library staff about legal services and resources external to the library;
- Core funding, based on library size, to public libraries so that they are able to improve, enhance or expand their legal reference collections and resources;
- Assistance and advice related to the promotion of legal reference materials to the public.

2.2 TYPES OF TRAINING PROVIDED BY LAWMATTERS

LawMatters provides three types of training to public library staff. These are:

1) Searching QP LegalEze:

This is a free two-hour webinar which was developed cooperatively with Nancy Hannum (Library Consultant) and staff from the Public Library Service Branch (PLSB), Courthouse Libraries BC (CLBC) and the Legal Services Society of BC. The webinar provides training in the use of QP LegalEze, which is a web-based subscription service that provides access to BC's current laws and legislation. QP LegalEze is available at all public libraries in BC. PLSB manages the publicity, registration, software and technical assistance for the training, and the workshop is facilitated and updated by staff from the LawMatters project and the Courthouse Libraries BC reference staff.

2) LawMatters for Library Staff Introductory Legal Reference Training:

This in-person training workshop provides an introduction to legal reference materials and skills. It includes information on the purpose and scope of the LawMatters project, basic information on print and online legal reference resources and materials, legal reference search strategies, methods of conducting a legal reference interview and addressing legal reference questions. Introductory training workshops vary in length and content and are dependent on factors such as the time library staff have available for training,¹ their needs, previous experience and the training facilities that are available. The Introductory Training was designed by and is being implemented by LawMatters.

¹ The length of training is frequently determined by the capacity of public libraries to send staff to training.

- 3) **Legal Information Sources (Community Library Training Program)**: This is an eight-week, web-based, distance education elective course that is part of the PLSB's Community Library Training Program for BC public libraries. The course is taught twice a year. Students receive credit for completed courses, and receive a certificate for completion of core courses. PLSB manages the publicity, registration, software and technical assistance, and the workshop is facilitated and updated by staff from LawMatters. The training provides information about legal reference resources and search techniques.

2.3 VOLUME OF TRAINING PROVIDED BY LAWMATTERS

LawMatters has provided twenty-seven training workshops or webinars, involving 395 public library staff in BC since late 2007 when the LawMatters Project was launched.

Sixty-three percent of the training participants attended the Legal Reference Introductory Training. The first Introductory Training workshop was held in February 2008. Thirteen Introductory Training workshops have been held involving 248 participants.

Table 1: Type and Volume of Training Provided by LawMatters

Type of Training	Number of Workshops or Webinars	Number of Participants
Searching QP LegalEze	13 (48%)	138 (35%)
LawMatters Introductory Legal Reference Training	13 (48%)	248 (63%)*
Legal Information Sources Training	1 (4%)	9 (2%)
TOTAL	27 (100%)	395 (100%)

* These data are from official registration records. A small number of staff did not attend the training.

2.4 PREVIOUS PARTICIPANT ASSESSMENTS OF LEGAL REFERENCE INTRODUCTORY TRAINING WORKSHOPS

All library staff who attend LawMatters training complete a post training workshop assessment form immediately after taking the training. Results from these assessments indicate that the majority of participants had a highly positive response to all three types of training provided by LawMatters, including to the Introductory Training.

Over 90% of those who took the Introductory Training said that it provided a good overall introduction to the legal reference area, that the facilitators were effective and the objectives of the training were clearly stated.

Participants said that the most useful aspect of the Introductory Training was the opportunity to learn about the scope of legal reference resources available (particularly online resources), to practice handling legal reference questions and to learn about legal information and referral resources in the community. They recommended strengthening the training by expanding the length of the workshop (to a one-day session),

providing more opportunity to explore online resources and to do more practice searches using case examples.

The Introductory Training significantly raised the confidence levels of library staff in terms of their handling the legal reference questions of patrons. For example, 50% of the training participants reported having a low confidence level in terms of addressing legal reference questions *prior to* the training, while only 10% had low confidence immediately *after* the training. The group with a high level of confidence increased from 9% to 32% after the training had taken place. These changes were statistically significant.

3.0 DESCRIPTION AND DESIGN OF THE FOLLOW-UP SURVEY

3.1 PURPOSE OF THE FOLLOW-UP SURVEY

The purpose of the Introductory Training Follow-up Survey was to determine whether and how legal reference skills learned in the training are being applied by public library staff, whether gaps in legal reference skills and information exist, and how useful the training is assessed to be in retrospect. The survey also examined the changing trends and challenges staff encounter when considering legal reference questions.

Previous LawMatters evaluation research indicates that library staff confidence levels improved immediately after taking the Introductory Training. However, it was not known whether this training has had a long-term impact on confidence levels. One of the other objectives of the follow-up survey was to assess this question.

3.2 SURVEY SAMPLE SELECTION AND COMPLETION RATES

Initial LawMatters training records indicated that 248 library staff participated in the Introductory Training. Because participant contact information was not systematically recorded, we were only able to determine some level of preliminary contact information for 122 of these participants.

Of these 122 potential respondents, seven had registered for but not subsequently attended the training. Survey interviews were completed with 70 library staff who participated in the training; this reflected 29% of all those who attended the introductory workshop.

Table 2: Survey Completion Rates

Initial Training Data	
Number who participated in Introductory Training	248
Contact records available	122
Registered for but did not attend training	7
Baseline respondent group	
Participants who completed the survey	70 (61%)
Unable to contact (multiple attempts)	25 (22%)
Contact information incomplete or invalid	20 (17%)
Percentage of all training participants included in the survey	
70/241 (29%)	

3.3 DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH PROCESS AND SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

All potential respondents for whom contact information was available were sent emails describing the purpose of the study, confidentiality provisions and requesting the participant's involvement. The email was followed up with a direct phone call to the potential respondent to arrange a convenient time to complete the survey by telephone. Telephone survey interviews took approximately twenty minutes to complete.

The survey questionnaire (Appendix I) consisted of rating, numerical and Likert scales and qualitative or open-ended questions that addressed the following subject areas:

- Characteristics of survey participants including participation in other types of legal reference training;
- The frequency, type, range and complexity of legal reference questions that library staff are currently receiving from patrons;
- Changes in the types or complexity of legal reference questions;
- Respondent assessment of the utility of the Introductory Legal Reference Training and the value of training components;
- Current library staff confidence levels in addressing legal reference questions;
- Recommendations for improving future training.

4.0 DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS AND LIBRARIES INVOLVED IN THE SURVEY

4.1 BACKGROUND, LOCATION AND TIME OF TRAINING

Seventy library staff members participated in the survey. They represented 11/13 of the Introductory Workshops provided by LawMatters. Training had been held from February 2008 to May 2009.

Seventy-four percent (52/70) of the respondents were working full time at their libraries; 26% (18/70) worked part time.

Respondents worked in libraries located throughout BC. Just under 50% were from libraries in the Lower Mainland and Sunshine Coast.

Table 3: Regions Represented by Survey Participants

Region	Number and Percentage
Lower Mainland/Sunshine Coast	33 (47%)
Northern and Coastal BC	18 (26%)
Fraser Valley	9 (13%)
Kootenays	6 (9%)
Vancouver Island	2 (3%)
Okanagan	1 (1%)
Central/Cariboo	1 (1%)
TOTAL	70 (100%)

4.2 SIZE OF LIBRARY COMMUNITY

The size of the community in which a library is located is a proxy indicator for the size of the library. Forty-four percent of the respondents were from libraries located in very large urban centres, 27% were from small communities.

Table 4: Size of Community in Which Participant Libraries Are Located

Community size	Number and Percentage
Very small community (under 5,000 people)	8 (11%)
Small community (from 5,000 – under 10,000)	11 (16%)
Mid-sized community (from 10,000 to under 50,000)	13 (19%)
Large community (from 50,000 to under 100,000)	7 (10%)
Very large urban centre (100,000 people or more)	31 (44%)
TOTAL	70 (100%)

4.3 PARTICIPANT'S TRAINING BACKGROUND

Results indicate that the majority (60% or 42/70) of the training participants had taken other types of legal reference training in addition to the Introductory Training provided by LawMatters. The type of training taken by respondents is listed in Table 5. Specific information on the time or provider of the training was not collected.

Seventy-one percent of the librarians who had taken other legal reference training had taken QP LegalEze; 17% had taken the Family Law in BC webinar.

Table 5: Other Legal Reference Training Taken by Survey Participants

Type of Training	Number and Percentage (N=42)
QP Legal Eze	30 (71%)
Legal Sources Training	6 (14%)
BC Library Association Conference	1 (2%)
LawMatters Legal Forum	3 (7%)
ClickLaw	2 (5%)
McGill University Legal Reference course	1 (2%)
Library School training	1 (2%)
BC Codes Webinar	4 (10%)
Family Law in BC Webinar	7 (17%)
Legal Services Training workshops	2 (5%)
Courthouse Library Course (unspecified)	1 (2%)
In-house Legal training	1 (2%)
Seminars with Janet Freeman	1 (2%)
SFU workshops	1 (2%)
University of Victoria Library workshop	1 (2%)
Can't recall the name	2 (5%)

5.0 FREQUENCY AND TYPES OF LEGAL REFERENCE QUESTIONS ASKED AT LIBRARIES

5.1 FREQUENCY OF LEGAL REFERENCE QUESTIONS FROM PATRONS

A third of the respondents said they received legal reference questions from patrons frequently – either on a daily basis or several times a week. A small minority (about 14%), said the number of legal questions was infrequent or never occurred.

Table 6: Frequency of Legal Reference Questions Asked by Library Patrons

Frequency of Legal Reference Questions	Number and Percentage
Daily	6 (9%)
Several times a week	17 (24%)
About once a week	10 (14%)
Every few weeks	9 (13%)
About once a month	10 (14%)
Every few months	8 (11%)
Once or twice a year	8 (11%)
Never	2 (3%)
TOTAL	70 (99%)

The frequency of legal reference questions was clearly related to the size of the community in which the library was located. Libraries located in large or very large urban areas were statistically much more likely to receive legal reference questions from patrons than were libraries located in smaller communities.

Table 7: Frequency of Legal Reference Questions and Size of Community

Frequency of Legal Reference Questions	Size of Community				
	Very Small	Small	Mid-Sized	Large	Very Large
Frequent or very frequent	0 (0%)	1 (10%)	6 (46%)	4 (57%)	21 (68%)
Occasional	3 (38%)	4 (40%)	5 (38%)	2 (29%)	5 (16%)
Rare or never	5 (63%)	5 (50%)	2 (15%)	1 (14%)	5 (16%)
TOTAL	8 (101%)	10 (100%)	13 (99%)	7 (100%)	31 (100%)

5.2 TRENDS IN LEGAL REFERENCE QUESTIONS

Over a quarter of the respondents said that the number of legal reference questions from library patrons appeared to be increasing while 20% said the volume had remained the same.

Libraries that were most likely to describe an increase in the volume of legal questions were located in the large (but not the largest) urban centres.

Table 8: Trends in the Volume of Legal Reference Questions from Patrons

Volume Trends	Number and Percentage
Volume of questions generally increasing	17 (26%)
Volume of questions generally decreasing	13 (20%)
Volume of questions staying the same	36 (55%)
TOTAL	66 (101%)*

*Non-responders are removed from all table totals.

5.3 TRENDS IN LEGAL REFERENCE TOPIC AREAS

Twenty-seven percent (18/67) of the survey participants said that patron questions were addressing new topic areas or that questions reflected an increasing interest in specific topic areas. This was most noted at the libraries located in large communities with 50,000 to under 100,000 people.

Sixteen respondents identified the areas in which legal reference questions had changed or intensified. Areas related to family law (e.g., divorce, custody) were noted most frequently. Specific new areas of legal reference inquiry were not identified.

Table 9: New or Emphasized Legal Reference Topic Areas

Issue Area/Topic	Number and Percentage (N=16)
Family law matters (custody, divorce)	6 (38%)
Landlord/Tenant/Residential	3 (19%)
Strata title	2 (13%)
Wills, probate, estate	2 (13%)
Questions that are more specific and refined	1 (6%)
Questions regarding Canadian law	1 (6%)
Small business	1 (6%)
Human rights	1 (6%)
Citizenship and immigration	1 (6%)
Questions related to the use of websites and databases	1 (6%)
Questions on the use of self-help resources	1 (6%)

Findings suggest that libraries are experiencing a small but significant trend towards being asked more complex, time-intensive questions which require the use of multiple and sophisticated legal reference resources.

A quarter of the survey participants said that the legal reference questions were more complex than in the past, although most said the level of complexity had not changed.

Table 10: Complexity of Legal Reference Questions

Complexity of Legal Reference Questions	Number and Percentage
More difficult and complex	17 (25%)
About the same level of complexity as before	42 (63%)
Less difficult and/or complex	8 (12%)
TOTAL	67 (100%)

Half of the librarians who felt that patron questions had become more complex, said that funding cuts had limited information sources for citizens, potentially leading to more use of free library services. Two librarians noted that unrepresented litigants are bringing more legal reference questions to the library.

These librarians noted that addressing these complex questions took more time, frequently consisted of multiple aspects and were often very specific rather than general in nature.

Five library staff said that legal documents or court forms are often difficult for patrons to understand, copy or print out. Many questions also require reference to case law and historical reference materials.

Three librarians noted that answers to simple legal reference questions can now be answered on the internet, meaning that librarians are now asked more complex questions.

(The questions are) more difficult as there are fewer places for patrons to turn to with complex questions and the library is free. This takes more time.

(The) multi-step and multi-needs questions of self-represented litigants require more time and expertise

Easy questions are answered on their own by the internet, so librarians are left with more difficult questions

6.0 CURRENT CAPACITY OF LIBRARIES TO ADDRESS LEGAL REFERENCE QUESTIONS

Twenty-five percent (17/67) of the respondents said that their libraries lacked some of the legal reference information and resources to adequately address some of the legal questions of patrons. This was more frequently noted by library staff located in libraries in the urban centres of 50,000 to under 100,000 people.

Twenty-five percent of these respondents said that there was a *general* lack of reference and materials at their branches so that referrals to larger branches to answer specific types of questions were usually required. A number of information gaps were identified including the need for (updated) BC forms and print guides and case law and information to assist unrepresented people in court. There was no strong consensus among respondents in any of these areas.

Table 11: Perceived Gaps in Legal Reference Resources

Legal Reference Resource Gap	Number and Percentage (N=16)
General reference resources (to address more complex questions)	4 (25%)
Case law information	3 (19%)
Resources for unrepresented litigants (including information about the court process)	2 (13%)
Family law materials	2 (13%)
Archival information	1 (6%)
Human rights information outside of Self Counsel and CLE materials	1 (6%)
Worker's Compensation information	1 (6%)
Updated Self-Counsel Press materials	1 (6%)
Pamphlets – poverty law	1 (6%)
Texts	1 (6%)
Information on wills and estates	1 (6%)
Updated referral lists (external resources)	1 (6%)
ESL materials (e.g. traffic violations, immigration laws)	1 (6%)
Updates to BC forms and print guides	1 (6%)

7.0 RETROSPECTIVE ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS OF THE INTRODUCTORY TRAINING

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Respondents assessed the utility of the Introductory Training, the degree to which training skills have been applied and whether the skills learned in training continue to contribute to staff confidence levels.

Respondents were also asked to identify recommendations for improving the Introductory Legal Reference Training and whether they would like to attend further training of this type.

7.2 RETROSPECTIVE ASSESSMENT OF INTRODUCTORY TRAINING

Respondents were asked to retrospectively evaluate the usefulness of five aspects of the training.² A rating scale of 1 (not useful at all) to 5 (very useful) was used. Ratings were reported in low (1-2), moderate (3) and high (4-5) categories.

Results indicate that the general overview of legal reference resources and the information about web-based resources were the most highly rated aspects of the training. The information about legal reference print resources was given the lowest rating in terms of the usefulness of all the workshop components.

The broad introduction to legal reference and online resources were also given a high rating by training participants immediately *after* the training, suggesting that this focus continues to be highly valued by library staff.

Table 12: Retrospective Ratings of Introductory Training Components

Training Component	Number Reporting	Usefulness of the Training			Mean Rating Out of 5.0
		Low Level	Moderate Level	High Level	
General overview of legal reference resources and materials	69 (100%)	2 (3%)	4 (6%)	63 (91%)	4.3
Information about print resources	68 (100%)	8 (12%)	15 (22%)	45 (66%)	3.8
Information about web-based resources	69 (100%)	4 (6%)	7 (10%)	58 (84%)	4.3
Learning how to conduct a legal reference interview	66 (100%)	5 (8%)	20 (30%)	41 (62%)	3.9
Information about legal resources in the community	63 (101%)	6 (10%)	10 (16%)	47 (75%)	4.0

² Respondents had taken the training 7 to 21 months previously.

7.3 MOST HELPFUL TOPIC AREAS OR RESOURCES ADDRESSED IN TRAINING

The information on locating and using online resources was identified as the most helpful information provided at the training by almost half of the participants. Doing practice questions and legal reference interviews and receiving a general overview of the materials were also noted by multiple respondents.

Table 13: Most Helpful Type of Information or Assistance Provided in the Introductory Training

Type of Information or Support	Number and Percentage (N=70)
Online resources (options, databases, search techniques)	34 (49%)
Practice questions, how to conduct a legal reference interview	14 (20%)
General overview	12 (17%)
Information about CANLII	7 (10%)
Information about print resources	4 (6%)
Distinguishing between questions librarians can answer and the ones that a lawyer must address	4 (6%)
Referral sources in community	2 (3%)
Good refresher training	2 (3%)
Information about Clicklaw	2 (3%)
Supportive facilitators	2 (3%)
Handling privacy issues in small community	1 (1%)
Hands on experience with the database*	1 (1%)
Understanding how laws are made*	1 (1%)
Court forms	1 (1%)
Dos and don'ts when doing legal research	1 (1%)
Disclaimer information	1 (1%)
Understanding of Statutes	1 (1%)
Different levels and types of law	1 (1%)
Contextual information (e.g.) Tribunals and distinction between provincial and federal sources of legal information	1 (1%)
Advice to try a secondary source first	1 (1%)

*These topics were included in one training workshop where aspects of the Introductory Training and QP LegalEze training were combined.

These findings were also consistent with feedback received from Introductory Training participants immediately after the workshops. Table 14 shows the comparability of the assessments by training respondents. Assessments are comparable except in the area of exposure to print resources which is seen as less useful by respondents in the follow-up period.

Table 14: Comparison of Participant Assessments Immediately After Training and at Training Follow-up

Most Valued Component of Introductory Training	Reported by Participants After Training	Reported by Participants at Follow-up Period
Online resources	41%	49%
Print resources	23%	6%
General overview of legal reference resources and research	12%	17%
Practice questions/conducting a legal reference interview	20%	20%

7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE CONTENT OF THE TRAINING

Forty percent (28/70) of the respondents had a number of recommendations for ways in which the Introductory Training could be improved. There was no strong consensus around most of the items. The two recommendations made most frequently were:

- To provide more opportunity for practice questions, including role playing in the training;
- To provide the training more frequently and/or in the form of refresher training.

Several respondents would like two streams of legal reference training to be implemented – one for beginners and the other for librarians with a more advanced level of knowledge. All recommendations are listed in Table 15.

Table 15: Recommendations for Improving the Content of LawMatters Training

Recommendations	Number and Percentage (N=28)
More opportunity for practice questions/doing legal reference interviews	5 (18%)
Hold training more frequently/add refresher training	5 (18%)
Divide training into beginner and advanced components	2 (7%)
Provide follow-up information fact sheets	2 (7%)
Make training more relevant to the department in which the librarian works	2 (7%)
Make training longer or add sessions	2 (7%)
Encourage more staff to take training	2 (7%)
More training on how to respond to frequently asked questions	1 (4%)
More information on accessing print materials (e.g. archived materials)	1 (4%)
Use more case examples	1 (4%)
Provide more handouts	1 (4%)
Provide more resources for small communities	1 (4%)
Provide more information about the legal system and process	1 (4%)
Don't use Jeopardy – not a useful training tool	1 (4%)
More hands-on practice with online tools	1 (4%)
Focus on materials available in the branches	1 (4%)

8.0 APPLICATION OF SKILLS AND LIBRARY STAFF CONFIDENCE LEVELS

8.1 APPLICATION OF SKILLS LEARNED IN THE INTRODUCTORY TRAINING

Survey respondents were asked to describe the frequency with which they used the skills, resources and/or information they had gained in the Introductory Legal Reference Training. Thirty percent of the participants said that they used the skills and information frequently or very frequently – at a minimum of once a week.

Table 16: Frequency With Which Legal Reference Skills Are Used

Frequency	Number and Percentage
Daily	3 (4%)
Several times a week	13 (19%)
Once a week	5 (7%)
Every few weeks	14 (20%)
About once a month	12 (17%)
Every few months	10 (14%)
Once or twice a year	11 (16%)
Never	2 (3%)
TOTAL	70 (100%)

8.2 CONFIDENCE LEVELS OF STAFF

One of the objectives of the Introductory Training is to provide public librarians with the skills, information and confidence they need to address the legal reference questions of patrons.

Participant assessments completed before and immediately after the training indicate that the Introductory Training significantly raises the confidence levels of library staff.

Results in Table 17 indicate that at the time of the follow-up survey, the majority of librarians had a moderate or high level of confidence. Only 12% reported a low level of confidence.

Table 17: Current Staff Confidence Levels

Current Participant Confidence Level	Number and Percentage
Low level	8 (12%)
Moderate level	48 (70%)
High level	13 (19%)
TOTAL	69 (101%)
Mean level of confidence	4.8/7.0

The level of confidence at the follow-up period was not affected by the duration of time since the training took place.

When participant confidence levels from the follow-up survey are compared with confidence levels before and immediately after the training, the results indicate that there is a continued drop in the proportion of staff reporting a low level of confidence but more consolidation at the moderate levels of confidence as time progresses. The three sets of data shown in Table 18 shows that:

- There are immediate and statistically significant gains in staff confidence levels as a result of the LawMatters Introductory Training;
- Confidence gains made at the training continue after the training and appear to consolidate over time.

Table 18: Comparison of Library Staff Confidence Levels at Three Periods of Time*

Confidence Levels	Before Training	After Training	At Post Training Survey
Low level	74 (58%)	21 (17%)	8 (12%)
Moderate level	46 (36%)	77 (61%)	48 (70%)
High level	7 (6%)	28 (22%)	13 (19%)
TOTAL	127 (100%)	126 (100%)	69 (101%)

*Immediately before and after the training and 7 – 22 months after the training.

9.0 RESPONDENT INTEREST IN FUTURE LAWATTERS TRAINING

9.1 INTEREST IN FUTURE TRAINING

Eighty percent (56/70) of the survey respondents said that they would be interested in attending additional LawMatters follow-up or refresher legal reference training. Eighty-nine percent (62/70) were willing to provide feedback about other aspects of LawMatters or would like to be notified about future training.

9.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE TRAINING

Ninety-three percent (52/56) of the survey respondents who were interested in taking future legal reference training made suggestions for the legal reference topics they would most like to explore in this training.

Almost 40% said that they were most interested in a refresher course with a focus on updated and new legal reference resources. The specific topic area around which most interest was expressed was family law, however, a range of other legal topic areas were also identified.

Table 19: Future Training Recommendations

Recommendations	Number and Percentage (N=52)
Refresher courses in all areas and new resources	20 (38%)
Legal reference interview practice	1 (2%)
Landlord/Tenant/Rental Tenancy Act	3 (6%)
Family law/divorce	12 (23%)
New legislation	1 (2%)
Underpinnings of the law	1 (2%)
Online materials/websites (general)	4 (7%)
More information on Clicklaw	1 (2%)
Business law/small business	3 (6%)
Debt	1 (2%)
Worker's compensation and how to appeal verdicts	1 (2%)
Strata title laws	1 (2%)
Print resources (general)	1 (2%)
Status and regulations	2 (4%)
Self-help for civil litigation/unrepresented clients	2 (4%)
Update on small claims court system	1 (2%)
Official tour of Vancouver Courthouse Library to see resources	1 (2%)
Criminal Code	2 (4%)
Case law	2 (4%)
Immigration law	3 (6%)
Copyright law	1 (2%)
Process on how laws are made	1 (2%)
Regulations	1 (2%)
Real estate	1 (2%)
Supreme Court Appeal process	1 (2%)
Land deeds and mining claims searches	1 (2%)
Personal injury claims	1 (2%)

10.0 SUMMARY AND KEY CONCLUSIONS ARISING FROM THE FOLLOW-UP SURVEY

Seventy public library staff who attended the LawMatters Introductory Legal Reference from 7-22 months ago were surveyed to determine their retrospective assessment of the training, the utility and application of training skills, and impact of training on confidence levels. The study also looked at current legal reference trends in the libraries, perceived gaps in legal reference resources and respondent interest in future training.

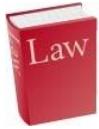
The following is a summary of key themes arising from the study findings.

- Sixty percent of those who had taken the LawMatters Introductory Training had also taken other types of legal reference training. In the majority of cases this training consisted of Searching QP LegalEze.
- A third of the study respondents received legal questions from library patrons frequently. Only 14% said that they received infrequent or no legal questions. Staff who worked in libraries located in large urban areas were much more likely to receive more frequent legal questions.
- A quarter of the survey respondents said that the number of legal questions at their libraries was increasing, 55% said the volume had remained the same; 20% said the volume was increasing.
- Twenty-seven percent of the respondents said that patron questions were addressing new or different aspects of legal topic areas. An increased emphasis on legal reference questions related to family law was noted. No distinctly new legal topic areas were identified by respondents.
- Findings suggest that about a quarter of the libraries are dealing with legal reference questions that are more complex, labour-intensive and multi-level. This may reflect the fact that cuts in program funding have reduced the PLEI services available to citizens. Several librarians also noted that the internet is a useful tool for answering simple legal reference questions but not more complex ones which may then be directed towards library staff.
- A quarter of the respondents said that their libraries lacked some of the reference materials necessary to address the legal questions of patrons. There was no strong consensus on what these limitations were, although 25% mentioned “general legal resources and materials” useful to address more complex questions.
- When asked to re-evaluate specific aspects of the Introductory Training most respondents gave specific components positive ratings. The overview focus of the training and the introduction to online resources were evaluated as the most useful components. Learning about print resources was given a lower rating. These were similar to assessments made by training participants immediately after the training took place.
- In terms of the most helpful specific content areas, almost half the respondents described this as being the introduction to online resources. Doing practice questions and the general overview of print and online resources were also noted. Again, these answers mirrored the results from evaluations completed immediately after the training.

- Thirty percent of the survey participants said that they used the skills and information they received in training frequently – at least one or more times a week.
- Pre and post measurements showed that participation in the Legal Reference Introductory Training dramatically increased the confidence levels of librarians in terms of addressing legal reference questions. When the confidence levels of staff were re-assessed in the follow-up period, results showed that confidence levels since training had been maintained and consolidated and that there was a smaller group of library staff who described themselves as having a low level of confidence. These results clearly suggest that there are immediate and statistically significant gains in confidence levels as a result of the training and that these gains continue after the training for at least eighteen months or more.
- Two major recommendations were made to improve the Introductory Training in the future. These were to provide more opportunity to do legal practice questions and to hold training more frequently or add refresher training.

APPENDIX

LawMatters Training Follow-Up Survey



SECTION I: INTRODUCTION AND RESPONDENT INFORMATION

Interviewers: This survey is for those who participated in the Introductory Legal Reference Training provided by LawMatters in 2008 or 2009 and who continue to work at a public library. Prior to beginning the survey, please ensure that the introductory script has been read to the respondent. If the respondent no longer works in a public library, they should be thanked and told that they do not need to complete the survey.

1. (**Enter From Spreadsheet**), Training Date: _____ / _____
month / year
 2. Respondent's name: _____ / _____
first / last
 3. What is your position in the library? (please check one)
 Public library staff member
 Other library related position (e.g. trustee, volunteer) _____
 4. Do you work.....
 Full time?
 Part time?
 5. Name of your library or branch.

 6. In what city or town is your library or branch located?

 7. How often (approximately) do you receive legal reference questions from patrons?
Daily
 Several times a week
 Once a week
 Every few weeks
 About once a month
 Every few months
 Once or twice a year
 Never
 Can't assess
 8. Other than the LawMatters Introductory Training workshop have you taken any **other** training related to legal questions or in relation to legal reference materials?
 NO
 YES →
 - QP LegalEze (webinar)
 - CLTP Legal Sources Training (online course)
 - Other (e.g. BC Codes Webinar, LawMatters Community Forum, Family Law in BC Webinar),
- Name _____

Can't remember

SECTION II: ASSESSMENT OF SKILLS PROVIDED BY INTRODUCTORY TRAINING

This section asks respondents to assess the helpfulness of the LawMatters Introductory Training they attended in 2008 or 2009.

9. How frequently do you use the any of the skills, resources and/or information that were provided at the LawMatters Introductory Legal Reference Training?

- Daily
- Several times a week
- Once a week
- Every few weeks
- About once a month
- Every few months
- Once or twice a year
- Never

10. Considering the LawMatters Introductory Training that you attended, how would you assess the usefulness of the following aspects of the training now?

PLEASE RATE THE FOLLOWING	Not useful ← → Very useful					Unable to assess or not applicable
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. The general overview of legal reference resources and materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The information provided about legal reference print resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The information provided about legal reference online or web-based resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Learning how to conduct a legal reference interview with library patrons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Information about resources or organizations in the community that patrons can be referred to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. Considering everything that was provided at the Introductory Legal Reference Training, what type of information was most helpful to you? (Please be as specific as possible)

12. How confident do you feel or would you now feel addressing the legal reference questions of patrons? Please circle the right answer

Not confident ← → Very confident

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Can't assess

13. Do you have any specific recommendations for changing or improving the content of the LawMatters Introductory Legal Reference Training to make it more useful for public library staff?

SECTION III:**EMERGING LEGAL REFERENCE NEEDS**

14. Is the number of *legal reference questions* asked by library patrons increasing?
- Generally increasing
 Generally decreasing
 Staying the same
 Unable to assess
15. Are you finding that patron questions are addressing **new** legal topic areas or is interest in any specific legal topic increasing?
- NO
 YES → If YES, please describe the new topic areas or the areas where interest is increasing.
-
-
-
-
16. Are there legal reference topic areas for which your library lacks adequate resources or information?
- NO
 YES → If YES, what are these specific legal areas?
-
-
-
17. In the past 1-2 years have you found that the legal reference questions of patrons are ...
- More difficult or complex for you and your staff to assist with?
 About the same level of difficulty or complexity as before?
 Less difficult or complex than they have been previously?
- If legal reference questions are more difficult or complex to assist with, what kinds of difficulties or complexities are you encountering? (More complex questions, lack of resources, more time required)?
-
-
-
-
18. Would you be interested in attending additional LawMatters follow-up or refresher legal reference training?
- NO
 YES → If YES, what specific legal reference areas or topics would you *most* like to explore?
-
-
-
19. Would you be willing to be contacted again to provide your feedback about other aspects of the LawMatters project or to find out about training if it is offered in the future?
- NO
 YES → Best contact email _____
20. Additional comments about the Law Matters Introductory Legal Reference Training _____
-
-
-