

ILS Evaluation & Review Committee

Report to V-CAT Council – June 1, 2023

Since the last V-CAT Council meeting, the committee has continued to deepen our understanding of Koha's capabilities and compare how Koha and Sierra meet the different needs of the different stakeholders.

In order to get an unfiltered customer perspective and see additional actual workflows in motion, committee members and a few additional stakeholders attended virtual "site visits" with three locations currently using Koha (supported by ByWater) - AspenCat / CLiC (Colorado Library Consortium), SEKnFind / SEKLS (Southeast Kansas Library System), and the Round Rock Public Library. The committee gathered feedback from attendees after the site visits to assess the viability of both systems given the new information.

Despite earlier concerns that virtual meetings might not be as productive as physical on-site visits, these were informative sessions. Discussion of the feedback gathered after the site visits allowed the committee to answer certain questions and resolve some concerns (e.g. regarding the two systems' resilience to a low-quality internet connection). However, consensus has not yet emerged, and there are still important questions to be answered regarding how the two systems fit existing workflows and needs (in particular related to reporting, cataloging, and acquisitions). More information is needed to understand:

- 1) the scale of workflow change that would be necessary in a potential switch to Koha,
- 2) whether the benefits would outweigh the change,
- 3) how the changes would affect different libraries in the consortium (particularly as it relates to cataloging and acquisitions).

The committee remains focused on determining what additional information needs to be gathered in order to make an informed recommendation.

Since there is still additional information-gathering and workflow assessment to be done, the next scheduled V-CAT Council meeting that the committee could present a recommendation at would be in September of this year. This would allow for a potential ILS migration in 2024.