



Response to Questions on the 2016 LOBs

Request By: Supervisor Smyth

Relevant LOB(s): LOB #97

Question: Explain the change in the most recent Access Services data.

Response:

The Fairfax County Public Library (FCPL) operates eight regional libraries and 14 community libraries conveniently located to serve all the residents of Fairfax County and Fairfax City. FCPL also has Access Services, located at the Fairfax County Government Center, which provides unique services for residents with visual and physical disabilities. Starting in 2015, the Fairfax County Public Library revised the way statistics are gathered for the Talking Books program and books delivered to senior residences. As these reflect significant portions of the circulation totals for Access Services, this change in data gathering resulted in annual numbers that are significantly different than previous years.

As shown at the FCPL Lines of Business presentation, the circulation totals for Access Services from FY 2013 to FY 2015 are as follows:

- FY 2013 = 107,327
- FY 2014 = 102,826
- FY 2015 = 23,219

The Talking Books program is administered by the Library of Congress as part of its National Services for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. The Talking Books program is a service for individuals who are unable to read or use standard print due to permanent or temporary blindness, visual impairment, or physical limitations. When a FCPL customer would like to borrow materials from this program, FCPL staff directly contacts staff at the Library of Congress. Materials are then provided directly to FCPL customers, not allowing for a capture of these as traditional FCPL check in/check out transactions. In past years, FCPL was estimating the amount of activity in this program and reporting it as circulation for Access Services. After significant review of the process in FY 2015, FCPL decided this isn't technically a circulation statistic but rather an indicator of customer service. FCPL believes the FY 2015 number to be a more accurate representation of the actual circulation of FCPL materials. Going forward, a footnote will be added to the chart to reflect this change. **The exact numbers are not readily available, but it is believed that without the Talking Books program, the Access Services circulation totals are consistent.** In addition, FCPL has also revised the methodology for counting the circulation of books delivered to senior residences. Each senior residence delivery is now being counted as one circulation, not an estimate of the number of people that might read the book while it is at the senior residence.