



## **THE INDEPENDENT TALIS USER GROUP**

### **FUTURE OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE THE RESULTS OF A SURVEY CARRIED OUT IN NOVEMBER 2009**



## The iTUG National Committee survey 2009

### 1. Background

In late 2004 the Independent Talis User group was created and at the same time an iTUG National Committee was formed. The purpose of the Committee was to: encourage the development of regional user groups; to lead on national activities such as user group days and be a main channel of communication between the regional user groups and Talis.

Development of regional groups has been successful and most are now well established and able to act as independent groups, organizing regular meetings and providing a venue to share experiences and present thoughts and ideas. It was for this reason, together with a lack of volunteers willing to be nominated as members, that the National Committee decided to review its future role. It was therefore decided to carry out a short survey. This was done in November. A copy of the questionnaire is attached as Appendix 1.

### 2. Results of the survey

#### 2.1. Role of the iTUG National Committee

**Q1.** 53 people completed the survey which was publicised via Lis-Talis, Lis-TUG, the Forums and the iTUG web page and this in itself is perhaps indicative of a lack of interest in or support for the iTUG National Committee (NC). Of the 53 who did respond 14 said there was a need for the National Committee and 39 said there was not.

**Q2.** All respondents were then asked if they thought it would be feasible to consider replacing the iTUG National Committee by something else, e.g. regional groups with Chairs of those meeting occasionally and raising issues directly with Talis. Of the 48 who responded to this question most thought this was an acceptable alternative to a National Committee though there were reservations that Talis would take any notice of the regional groups, that this would increase the responsibilities of the Chairs and that some coordination would be necessary. One respondent thought there was more value in an over-arching Committee and 4 respondents simply said they did not think this was a feasible option.

Only those respondents who said the National Committee should be retained were asked questions 3 to 7

**Q3.** This question asked what the respondent thought should be the role of the National Committee if it was retained. Most of the comments related to coordinating issues raised at the regional groups and some thought it should provide a formal mechanism for relating community wide issues to Talis, influencing future developments and organising meetings and events.

**Q4.** Respondents were asked if the National Committee should be retained in its present format or if they thought the set up was too formal. Most thought it should be less formal though some structure was needed but not many suggestions were made as to alternatives. One suggestion was that it could be made up of representatives from the regional groups (though not necessarily the

Chair) and another was that virtual meetings might encourage more participation in the national Committee. 3 people did not have a view or were unsure.

**Q5.** If the National Committee did carry on respondents were asked if they thought the Chair should have a more formal role in Talis – e.g. have input into strategic developments etc. All thought the Chair should though some expressed doubt that this level of involvement would be welcomed by Talis!

**Q6.** This question asked if the National Committee were to be retained was a formal constitution necessary or should it exist on a more informal basis. An equal number (7) thought it should exist on a more informal basis and that it should not!

**Q7.** The respondents who said they wanted to retain the National Committee were asked if they would be willing to be elected to one of the vacant posts if the format was to change – e.g. web conferencing meetings. Only 3 said that they would.

**Q8.** All respondents were asked this question. It had been identified that if the National Committee ceased to exist there would still be a need for someone to take over the role of Communications Officer – so this question asked if they would be willing to take on this role. 3 said they would and 50 said they would not.

## 2.2. Regional Meetings and Lis-TUG

**Q9.** This question asked everyone if they attend regional meetings. 43 said they did and 10 did not.

**Q10.** Those who said they did not attend regional meetings were asked why they did not do so. Respondents were asked to select all that applied. The table below summarises the responses.

| Reasons for non attendance   | Numbers |
|--|---------|
| Finance  | 2       |
| Time   | 5       |
| Have prev. attended and not found useful   | 1       |
| None in my local area  | 2       |
| Don't find out about them  | 0       |
| Venue holds limited numbers  | 2       |
| Other:   |         |
| Other colleague usually attends  | 1       |
| Health reasons   | 1       |
| I have 2 jobs and the regional meetings fall on the day of the week I do not work for the institution that has Talis | 1       |

**Q11.** Those who said they attended regional group meetings were asked why they attended. The table below details the responses, again respondents were asked to select all that applied.

| Reasons for attendance                            | Numbers |
|---|---------|
| Like the networking                               | 37      |
| Find them useful                                  | 37      |
| Problem sharing / resolving                       | 39      |
| Talis updates                                     | 33      |
| Meeting Talis staff                               | 25      |
| My boss sends me                                  | 0       |
| Other:  |         |
| Guilt, badly attended so feel I should support it | 1       |

**Q12.** When the iTUG was formed a closed discussion list only open to Talis customers was set up. This list (Lis-TUG) is rarely used. All respondents were asked if they would object to it being closed

and if so why. 43 people made comments. 32 people said it should be closed, 5 people said they didn't know it existed, 3 people said it should be retained as it was a closed list that Talis could not access and 3 people thought it should be publicised, especially if the National Committee ceased to exist.

**Q13.** The final question invited respondents to make any further comments about the iTUG national Committee, the regional groups, Lis-TUG etc. 12 did so and these are all detailed below.

- *The group helps you to get more from your system; can you really do without them?*
- *I am not prepared to volunteer for National because am on a regional committee.*
- *Keep up the good work!*
- *willing to help regional committee - not enough time to do comms job*
- *As a librarian newly supporting Talis, these are the most useful forums I attend*
- *Regional meetings still tend to be Talis promising the earth but in many cases failing to deliver.*
- *I think the regional groups do a great job. I haven't been able to attend one in a while but hope to soon.*
- *I would like a more informal constitution*
- *I think the regional groups might not have got off the ground (certainly not all of them anyway) without the National Committee so hats off to them for that*
- *I think that people are very disillusioned with the Company and their products and this may be why people are reluctant to volunteer for the committee. BUT Talis is not a cheap product and somehow we have to get a return on our investment. Perhaps it would be worth each of the present committee members providing a brief outline of their role and what tasks they have done in the last months? This might encourage people to reassess their potential contribution?*
- *For ITUG to work, it has to be high profile, inclusive, efficient - and able to work with and influence Talis. I suspect that some of the reluctance to engage with ITUG is doubt whether what it proposes is taken seriously by Talis.*
- *Regional ITUGs give us a voice, although I often wonder to what extent our voice is heard*

### **3. Conclusions**

1. The fairly low response rate to the survey indicates there is not a lot of interest generally in the iTUG National Committee
2. Of those who did complete the questionnaire (53), only 14 felt the National Committee should continue though only 3 of those would consider taking up a post on the committee or volunteering for the role of Communications Officer.
3. Regional group meetings are well attended by respondents who find the useful for several reasons.
4. Few respondents thought Lis-TUG should be retained

### **4. Recommendations**

1. The formal National Committee should be disbanded and be replaced by a group made up of the Chairs of the Regional Groups which will operate on an informal basis – i.e. no constitution etc.
2. Talis will be asked to recognise the new set up of iTUG.
3. Chairs of the regional groups will meet virtually as and when deemed necessary. Talis will be asked to facilitate teleconferencing when required.

4. If large events such as Insight are arranged Talis will be asked to facilitate Chairs of regional groups meeting in person.
5. Minutes from each of the regional groups will be disseminated to all Chairs for information.
6. Feedback to issues raised at a regional group meeting will be sent to all Chairs of regional groups.
7. A liaison person will be required to facilitate communication with Talis – e.g. web pages, Talis news etc and liaise between Chairs of regional groups. This person is required to ensure additional workload is not created for the Chairs by the dissolution of the National Committee. Talis users will be asked for expressions of interest re nomination to this post.
8. LIS-TUG will be retained for another year and promoted to encourage greater usage. If usage remains low it will be closed down at the end of 2010.