

**ALA Executive Board
2007 Annual Conference**

Topic: Resource Description and Access Project: Background and Status Report

Action Requested: Background for Discussion

Proposed Motion: NA

Requested/Prepared By: Mary W. Ghikas, Senior Associate Executive Director
Don Chatham, Associate Executive Director, Publishing

Date: 22 June 2007

RDA: Background and Status – Actions Since April 16, 2007

The RDA publication date remains spring 2009 – firm. At their recent meeting in Ottawa, the COP and JSC discussed RDA activities at the 2008 IFLA Conference in Québec City, including release of a beta version of RDA Online.

It is too early to report on pricing, but pricing decisions will be made consistent with market norms. The Co-Publishers are continuing to research the pricing experience of other online products and are determined to arrive at a fair and reasonable pricing model that will accommodate both individual and system purchases.

The following report summarizes key meetings and actions since the Spring 2007 meeting of the ALA Executive Board.

- The ALA Association for Library Collections and Technical Services (ALCTS) is currently appointing an RDA implementation task force, chaired by Ann O’Neill (Emporia). The task force will focus on training and information dissemination.
- The Co-Publishers (Don Chatham, ALA, chair) have created a short survey on user preferences for a print version of RDA. The survey is available online at www.rdaonline.org – and click on the survey link in the left hand navigation bar. There is also a separate survey for cataloguing educators and trainers, at the same address. Both surveys will be available until July 15, 2007.
- In April 2007, the entities responsible for RDA and ONIX announced a joint initiative to develop a common framework for resource categorization. ONIX, an international standard for representing publishing industry product information in

electronic form, is published and maintained by EDItEUR. According to the announcement on the JSC website, “the objective is to develop a framework for categorizing resources in all media that will support the needs of both libraries and the publishing industry and will facilitate the transfer and use of resource description data across the two communities.”

- April 30-May 1, 1007, a meeting of representatives from the RDA, Dublin Core, and IEEE-LOM (Learning Object Metadata) communities was held at the British Library. The group met to compare the conceptual models or standards used by each group. See: <http://www.bl.uk/services/bibliographic/meeting.html>
- During the week of April 16, the four committees responsible for the creation and management of RDA, Resource Description and Access, met in Ottawa (CN). Among the actions taken were the following. Additional outcomes of the JSC meeting are available at <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/jsc/0704out.html>
 - The Committee of Principals (COP) approved a change in the name of the Joint Steering Committee for Revision of AACR to Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA, effective immediately.
 - The COP began evaluation of several possible models of international expansion for both the COP and JSC following release of RDA Online in early 2009, based on inquiries and expressions of interest outside the Anglo-American cataloguing world.
 - The COP extended an invitation to the National Library of Australia to join the COP, paralleling the JSC, where NLA is represented through the Australian Committee on Cataloguing.
 - The British Library, Library and Archives Canada, and the Library of Congress have begun discussion on issues related to adoption and implementation RDA. The National Library of Australia will also participate in these discussions.
 - John Attig replaced Jennifer Bowen as the ALA representative to the JSC.
 - A revised chapter 3 (“Carrier”) was released for comment. The chapter focuses on the description of the carrier of the resource (e.g. physical characteristics), the formatting and encoding of information stored on the carrier, etc.
 - The JSC continued to revise chapters 6 (Persons, Families, and Corporate Bodies Associated with a Resource) and 7 (Related Resources) for review by constituencies in all four countries. Drafts will be available for review between July and September 2007.

- The JSC continued work on RDA Part B, “Access Point Control,” due for release for constituency review in December 2007.
- The JSC evaluated the effect of RDA on MARC21 elements, identifying MARC tags that would need modification to accommodate RDA; this information will be submitted to MARBI for ongoing discussion of modifications to MARC21 in light of RDA’s impending release.
- JSC reviewed analyses by editor Tom Delsey, which will be revised and release as (a) an RDA Element Analysis, (b) an RDA to FRBR Mapping, and (c) an RDA to DCMI Element Mapping.
- Through their meeting, the JSC identified elements in the draft RDA that are “data about data” (e.g. details of the issue or part used as the basis for description of a serial or multipart monograph). Instructions on recording “data about data” will be moved to a separate section of RDA, tentatively a new Part C.
- The Co-Publishers (the ALA, CLA and CILIP) reviewed a draft RFP for RDA Online. The RFP was released at the end of April and a vendor will be selected in mid-July 2007.
- The JSC will meet October 15-19, 2007, in Chicago.

Attachments:

2006-2007 EBD#12.53 – Report Description and Access Project: Background and Status Report, 11 April 2007

Cataloguing Issues and RDA Solutions. June 2007, Marjorie Bloss, project manager.

Attachment: 2006-2007 EBD# 12.53, Spring 2007

RDA: Resource Description and Access

Cataloguing Issues and RDA Solutions

The Issue	RDA's Solution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop a new standard for resource description and access designed for a digital world 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Separate content description from display in RDA instructions ■ Permit users to use RDA content with many encoding schema (MARC 21, Dublin Core, DACs, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Build on the strengths of AACR2 while moving forward into the digital age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Build RDA on the revision of the Paris Principles (1961) which are under revision by the IME ICC and reflect changes in a digital environment ■ RDA part B contains many similarities to part 2 of AACR2 in determining choice and form of entry
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Build on bibliographic conceptual models as the foundation of RDA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop RDA within the context of the FRBR conceptual model using both FRBR concepts and terminology ■ Include instructions on authority work using FRAD as a basis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a comprehensive set of guidelines and instructions on resource description and access covering all types of content and media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Eliminates restrictions imposed by class of material by providing all instructions for each element together ■ Carrier and content chapters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility • Allow for description of newly emerging technologies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a flexible, extensible framework for content description of digital resources while also serving the needs of libraries organizing traditional resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ RDA provides flexibility when describing multiple aspects of a work as a result of using the FRBR conceptual model. ■ RDA has identified and added elements that are commonly used in descriptions for digital resources not found in AACR2.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a better fit with emerging database technologies, allowing institutions to take advantage of efficiencies regarding data capture, storage retrieval, and display. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ RDA places emphasis on "taking what you see," thus enabling machine-capture of metadata.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide compatibility with existing catalogues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ RDA instructions for choice and form of entry will be compatible with AACR2 records. Thus recataloging will be unnecessary.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide institutions from countries other than those sitting on the JSC the opportunity to participate in developing RDA (internationalization) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ RDA drafts are available for review and comment on the JSC website ■ RDA is being written with an understanding that other countries will want to translate it and adjust instructions to local needs ■ The CoP is re-evaluating the governance structure of the JSC and/or the CoP ■ RDA is being written with more generic instructions than AACR2, including alternatives and options to meet local needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Work with other metadata communities to ensure RDA compatibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With the publishing community (ONIX), developed a list of carrier terminology for use in both the publisher and library communities ■ With the Dublin Core and IEEE-LOM, and Semantic Web communities, held a meeting to compare the conceptual models/standards used by each

**ALA Executive Board
2007 Spring Meeting**

- Topic:** **Resource Description and Access Project: Background and Status Report**
- Action Requested:** Based on questions from members of the Executive Board, the following background information is provided for possible discussion.
- Proposed Motion:** *NA*
- Requested/Prepared By:** Mary W. Ghikas, Senior Associate Executive Director
Don Chatham, Associate Executive Director, Publishing
- Date:** 11 April 2007

RDA – Foundation/Directions

Originally published in 1978, AACR2 was modeled on ISBDs – International Standards of Bibliographic Description, which could be applied to the variety of formats acquired and cataloged by libraries. AACR2 has been revised many times through the consultative process of the JSC. It remains, nevertheless, a standard largely designed for an environment dominated by print – and, at least conceptually, by the card catalogue.

Over the course of the last decade, the JSC has sought to balance evolution of the rules to meet the changing needs of a global, web-based environment with preservation of the inherent strengths of AACR2 and ISBD.

In 1997, the JSC hosted the International Conference on the Principles and Future Development of AACR. As a result of that conference, Tom Delsey (then at the National Library of Canada) was asked to draft “a logical analysis” of the principles and structure underlying AACR for the JSC’s consideration (<http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/jsc/aacrdel.htm>). That analysis was “intended to serve as a tool to assist in the re-examination of the principles underlying AACR2 and in setting directions for its future development.” Comments on the resulting schema were actively solicited (1999) by the JSC.

In 2001, considering future directions of AACR, the JSC set some possible goals for future development. The AACR of the future would, they indicated, operate in an online, Web-based environment; provide effective bibliographic control of an expansive array of media (both analogue and digital); be compatible with other standards for resource description and retrieval (e.g. metadata); easy to use and interpret; multinational –

though derived from English-language conventions and customs; and, preserve the fundamental principles and attributes of AACR.

Work on a major revision of AACR2 continued through 2004. Comments received on the proposed revision of part I of AACR2 came to a joint meeting of the JSC and the COP in April 2005. At that point, the COP, in concert with the JSC, determined a new approach was needed. Several alternatives were reviewed and a decision reached to redefine the program of work to develop a new standard, “designed for the digital environment” – a flexible framework that could be applied to a wide variety of analog and digital resources, would be readily adaptable to new/emerging database structures, would be compatible with existing records in library catalogs (no “de-superimposition”). The working title recommended by the JSC was “RDA – Resource Description and Access,” to reflect the change in both format and scope.

RDA is developing concurrently with the IFLA revision of the 1961 Paris Principles. During this period, the international cataloging community developed a new conceptual model for a world of proliferating digital formats, which often are not easily or most appropriate addressed from a “format” perspective, the perspective of the ISBDs. That conceptual model is the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR), focusing on the concepts of Works, Expressions, Manifestations, and Items – not formats – and defining a set of common user tasks that bibliographic records are designed to fulfill: find, identify, select, and obtain.

These were separate projects, but there is a formal communication between the JSC and IFLA and overlap in working group memberships. Members of the JSC have participated in the ongoing work on the Statement of International Cataloging Principles. Further, the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR), developed by an IFLA Study Group (1992-1997), is part of the conceptual foundation for RDA. RDA will include FRBR terminology, address FRBR relationships, and use the FRBR user tasks as a basis for defining mandatory data elements.

While RDA is built on the firm foundations established by the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules and is being developed primarily for use in libraries, consultations are also underway with other communities interested in resources description and access, e.g. archives, museums, publishers, vendors and other metadata creating/using communities. The aim is to attain “effective levels of alignment” between RDA and other metadata standards.

RDA – Structure and Content

RDA will include two primary sections: Part A – Description, Part B – Access point control. Broadly, part A will cover elements that have traditionally been included in bibliographic records and part B will cover those that have traditionally been in authority records. There will also be appendices covering capitalization, abbreviations, initial articles, presentation of descriptive data, and presentation of access control data, as well as a glossary and index. A major focus of RDA will be on providing guidelines and

instructions on recording data to support the FRBR user tasks and to reflect attributes of, and relationships between, the entities defined in FRBR, i.e. between works, expressions, manifestations and items.

RDA will not include specific instructions on subject access or classification or Cutter numbers; it will not include information on content designation used in MARC 21 or mark-up languages such as XML. ISBD punctuation will not be required, but “instruction on its application in relation to data elements defined in RDA will appear in an appendix of RDA.”

In an effort to replace the General Material Designation (GMD), the JSC joined with the ONIX developers to produce a general framework for resource categorization; based on this framework, three new data elements – Content Type, Media Type, and Carrier Type – will be included in RDA.

Data elements in RDA will be identified as “required,” “required if applicable,” and “optional” based on the FRBR user tasks.

While the JSC feels that the concept of “main entry” as applicable to a card catalogue is not applicable to an online catalogue, the JSC believes that some aspects of the concept found in AACR2 are still important. In particular, there is still a need to choose a “primary access point” in order to collocate works and expressions. The chapter in RDA on controlled access points for works and expressions will contain instructions for selecting such a primary access point.

Part A of RDA will not be arranged by type of material (e.g. music, continuing resources, etc.), which would have required cataloguers to consult multiple chapters for many resources, but will combine general instructions for each data element with special instructions for specific types of resources. Working on a web-based *RDA online*, cataloguers will be able to locate all instructions pertinent to a specific category of resources – and mask the display of instructions not applicable.

RDA will follow the FRBR model of four entity levels (work, expression, manifestation, and item), with creation of a separate record for each manifestation of a work or expression (vs. the current practice of some catalogers who use a single record for all manifestations of a work or expression). RDA will “provide guidance on collocation at the expression and work levels through citations.”

RDA – Status and Next Steps

Resource Description and Access (RDA) will supersede *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, 2nd edition* in 2009. No significant changes to existing records will be required.

”RDA instructions are designed to be independent of the format, medium or system used to store or communicate the data, and to be readily adaptable to newly-emerging database structures.” RDA is designed to be a web-based product, but will also be issued in a print

format. The JSC currently plans to make available a concordance (“where’s that rule...?”), as was done for the transition from AACR to AACR2, a list of changes by area/element, and a map to MARC 21. The features of *RDA online* will allow users to select different interfaces, view different levels of “completeness” of the code, and use hyperlinks to move from section to section.

The COP recently considered the question of possible further* delay (the original target of 2008 had already been moved to 2009, because of project scope and the extent of consultation involved), based on some dissension within the U.S. community. Some members of that community believe the initial version of RDA will not move far enough toward the digital end of the spectrum. (Note that other groups believe the change goes too far.) This concern has not been voiced by the other national communities. Based on their review and on discussion with the chair of the JSC, the COP determined that the JSC should proceed on their present timeline. The COP’s position was that the overall community could best be served by delivering the RDA. As was true with AACR, the RDA will be continually modified through the JSC’s consultative process, which will continue to involve a broad spectrum of cataloging and metadata groups.

The RDA website includes drafts of the code, working papers and information about RDA: <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/jsc/rda.html>. You can also subscribe to the RDA listserv: <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/jsc/rdadiscuss.html>

The national libraries of Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States have all committed to implementing RDA. The national libraries will assume responsibility for training their own cataloguing staff and will be providing guidance on options found in RDA and will develop appropriate documentation. The national libraries will make their implementation schedules public. The JSC has also been working on changes that might be appropriate for encoding RDA data in MARC 21.

The JSC and the COP continue to grapple with the challenges facing libraries as they integrate legacy records and systems with a host of new digital resources and new systems. The JSC and the COP are seeking to find the most reasonable “transition” strategy. Both recognize that this new standard will, itself, be transitional, and that AACR/RDA will continue to evolve as library services and information resources evolve.

AACR/RDA – Copyright/Governance

The Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, 2nd ed. (AACR2) were published in 1978, updating and reconciling separate British and North American texts originally published in 1967. Three associations hold joint **copyright** to AACR: The American Library Association, the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (formerly The Library Association), and the Canadian Library Association.

- The maintenance and publication of AACR are governed by the **Committee of Principals (COP)**, including coordination of three subordinate groups: the Co-Publishers of AACR, the Joint Steering Committee for Revision of AACR (JSC),

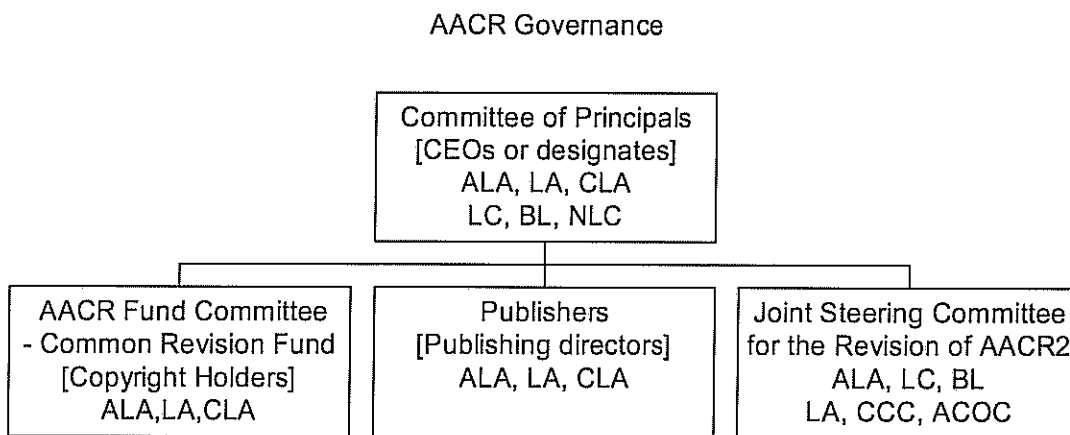
and the AACR Fund Committee (Trustees). The CEOs/Directors (or designates) of the three copyright holders (ALA, CILIP, CLA) and of the Directors (or designates) of the national libraries in the same three countries comprise the **Committee of Principals (COP)**. The initial meeting of the Committee of Principals was held in 1986, including the three copyright holders as well as the Library of Congress and British Library; the National Library of Canada was subsequently added, joining BL and LC in 1990. The relationships were formalized in a protocol signed in 1989, giving the Committee of Principals “final responsibility for all policies and programmes relating to the Anglo-American cataloguing rules, the publications of revisions and new editions and the affairs of subordinate bodies provided for in this Agreement...” Decisions of the Committee of Principals must be unanimous. The COP is charged to “review regularly developments and progress in the work of the Joint Steering Committee,” “review regularly the state and application of the AACR Fund,” “determine future programmes of work for the Joint Steering Committee,” and “determine all questions of constitution, terms of reference and conduct of the Joint Steering Committee and the AACR Fund Committee and Trustees as they may arise.”

- The **Joint Steering Committee for Revision of AACR (JSC)** considers the need for revisions of AACR, prepares the text of any revisions, and advises the COP and the AACR Fund Committee on programs and activities. The JSC is the authority for providing updates to the Rules. JSC members also have a significant liaison role to their appointing body, facilitating broad input on proposed changes. The JSC’s process is “grounded in repeated and thorough consultation with the constituent communities and other stakeholders.” For instance, the ALA representative to the JSC is appointed by ALCTS and works with a variety of U.S. cataloguing communities, particularly **ALCTS CC:DA**. Proposed revisions are circulated for broad comment.

Over the past decade, as the rate of change accelerated, the demands on the JSC – and on their volunteer time – have increased. In 2001, the COP authorized a part-time secretariat for the JSC, to reduce what had become a significant burden on the Chair. The secretariat (Nathalie Shultz) has assumed a significant part of the work of pulling together final documents for the JSC and for publication. The COP and the JSC have also worked with the Library of Congress to provide (through Cataloger’s Desktop) more convenient access to the electronic text – again simplifying the work of the JSC. This remains, however, a substantial volunteer commitment.

Because of the complexity and extent of the current shift from AACR to RDA and the need to keep multiple aspects of the project moving forward in concert, the COP also authorized hiring a project manager (Marjorie Bloss, Dominican University) and formation of a temporary “project team,” including the Chairs of the COP and the JSC, Don Chatham (ALA Publishing) and the project manager.

Two other bodies play key roles in the governance and maintenance of AACR: the Co-Publishers and the Fund Trustees. The **AACR Fund** receives royalties from the sale of AACR and other authorized publications and generates interest on the royalty revenues. These funds support the process of maintaining and revising AACR, e.g. the regular international meetings of the JSC. The Fund Trustees, who are the individuals concurrently serving as Co-Publishers, advise the COP on appropriate use of the AACR Fund and report to the COP on the status of the Fund and any issues related to its management. The **Co-Publishers** represent the copyright holders – the three national associations. From time to time, the Committee of Principals holds a joint meeting with the Joint Steering Committee. The COP, the JSC, the Co-Publishers and the Fund Trustees will meet April 16-19, 2007, in Ottawa.



Sources for additional information

RDA – Resource Description and Access: Scope and Structure

<http://www.collectionscanada.ca/jsc/docs/5rda-scope.pdf>

IFLA Meetings of Experts on an International Cataloguing Code (IME ICC):

- IME ICC1:
http://www.ddb.de/standardisierung/afs/imeicc_index.htm
- IME ICC2: (English and Spanish)
<http://www.loc.gov/loc/ifla/imeicc/imeicc2>
- IME ICC3: (English and Arabic)
<http://www.loc.gov/loc/ifla/imeicc/>
- IME ICC4: (English, Chinese, Japanese and Korean)
<http://www.nl.go.kr/icc/main.php>

Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR) and Functional Requirements for Authority Data – in development (FRAD)

<http://www.loc.gov/cds/FRBR.html>

<http://www.ifla.org/VII/s13/frbr/frbr.htm>

FAQ on RDA

<http://www.collectionscanada.ca/jsc/rdafaq.html>

RDA online prototype

<http://www.rdaonline.org>