

**To:** ALA/ALCTS/CaMMS Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access  
**From:** Kathy Glennan, ALA Representative to the RDA Steering Committee  
**Subject:** Report on RSC Activities, July-December 2016

The following report summarizes the activities of the RDA Steering Committee (RSC) from July-December 2016, primarily focusing on the RSC's November 2016 meeting in Frankfurt, Germany. As always, I am indebted to past and current CC:DA members who supported me in the development of ALA papers, responses, and fast track proposals during this time period.

### **RSC Membership – Additions**

- In July, Linda Barnhart (UC San Diego, retired) was appointed the RSC Secretary Elect. She will serve concurrently with the current RSC Secretary, Judy Kuhagen, until Judy's retirement as RSC Secretary at the end of April 2017.
- In December, Daniel Paradis (Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec) joined the RSC as the Translations Team Liaison Officer.

### **RSC Governance Developments**

- The RSC membership for the Europe region has transitioned to a single representative, currently Renate Behrens (DNB). This is an interim arrangement while the European region continues to develop their governance structure.
- ACOC has started work with colleagues in New Zealand to form ORDAC (Oceania RDA Community).
- Efforts to create NARDAC (North American RDA Committee) will resume in 2017.
- In addition, the RDA Board Governance changes are starting to take place. For details about their plans, visit <http://www.rda-rsc.org/node/437>.

### **RDA Revisions to Support the Development of RDA Reference and the RDA Toolkit Glossary**

Background:

During the summer, the RSC approved some significant changes to the RDA Elements, vocabulary encoding schemes, and instructions, with the goal of improving and streamlining the interaction between RDA Reference and the RDA Toolkit Glossary. The changes make it possible to generate the Glossary automatically from the RDA Reference data stored and maintained in the Open Metadata Registry (OMR). Although there were some substantial structural changes, the intent was that for the most part, the result of applying the instructions would not generate a different result. See [RSC/Chair/17](#) and [RSC/Sec/3](#) for more information.

### Definitions:

*RDA Elements*: includes entities, elements, and relationship designators.

*Vocabulary encoding scheme*: a named structured list of representations of controlled values for elements.

*RDA Reference*: comprises the RDA Elements, their definitions, and any related scope notes, and all vocabulary encoding scheme terms and definitions presented in the RDA instructions.

*RDA Toolkit Glossary*: includes the RDA Elements; expanded to include relationship designators.

### Summary of changes (for details, see [RSC/Sec/4](#)):

- *Extent (3.4)*  
Merged the separate sub-vocabularies for Extent of Cartographic Images, Extent of Still Image, Extent of Text, and Extent of Three-Dimensional Form into a single list.
- *Material (Base material 3.6.1, Applied material 3.7.1, Emulsion on Microfilm and Microfiche 3.7.2)*  
Merged lists of base materials, applied materials, and microform emulsion into a single vocabulary, but removed “mixed”, which was originally in 3.7.2.3. Also moved “mixed materials from 3.7.1.3 (Recording Applied Materials) to 3.7.1.4 (Details of Applied Materials).
- *Production method (3.9)*  
Merged the separate sub-vocabularies for Production Method for Manuscript and Production Method for Tactile Resource into the general vocabulary for Production Method. Changed the form of some terms (e.g., embossed became embossing). Restructured and relocated instructions in 3.9.2.3 (for manuscripts) as an exception in 3.9.1.3. Removed specific sub-instructions for production methods for manuscripts and for tactile resources.
- *Generation (3.10)*  
Merged the separate vocabularies for generation of audio recordings, digital resources, microforms, motion picture films and videotapes into a new general vocabulary. Removed the format-based generation instructions.
- *Layout (3.11.1.3)*  
Merged the separate sub-vocabularies for Layout of Cartographic Images and Layout of Tactile Musical Notation into a single list.
- *Ratio (Reduction Ratio 3.15, Aspect Ratio 7.19, Scale 7.25)*  
In all cases, created separate instructions/elements for recording a numerical ratio and for recording the related vocabulary terms.
- *Encoding format (3.19.3)*  
Removed the value vocabulary from 3.19.3.3 and deprecated the terms from the Open Metadata Registry. This vocabulary has always been problematic. The problems included: long-standing issues such as overlap in category groupings, the ad hoc mix of terms based on file formats, abbreviations, and trademarks, the complete lack of definitions, and issues in the maintenance of currency. This is potentially a huge list, with many synonyms. The RSC determined that there was no easy way to determine and maintain a “most useful” list, and that no one else has created a list that RDA could use.

- *Digital representation of cartographic content (3.19.8)*  
Created a new RDA element for Cartographic Data Type, with a new value vocabulary: point, raster, vector.
- *Illustrative content (7.15)*  
Redefined illustrative content as “a presence of image content...” Removed instruction to disregard illustrated title pages, etc. – recording this is now up to cataloger’s judgment. Removed two terms from the list in 7.15.1.3 (charts, music), without moving them to a new element at this time. The RSC has recognized this problem. A solution will be rolled out in the RDA Toolkit February 2017 release, providing these two terms as an “e.g. statement” in the standard paragraph “If none of the terms in the list is appropriate or sufficiently specific...” In the meantime, catalogers should feel free to continue using these two terms as appropriate.
- *Sound content (7.18)*  
Modified these instructions so that they are consistent with the Colour Content and Illustrative Content instructions.

## Other Fast Track Changes

The August release contained 29 Fast Track changes; see [RSC/Sec/3](#) for details. This included ALA’s new (8) and revised (1) relationship designators for persons associated with music/AV works and expressions. I thank those from the Music Library Association and OLAC who helped develop these terms and definitions.

The October release contained 21 Fast Track changes, as well as modifications of how the definition and scope paragraphs are presented throughout RDA. See [RSC/Sec/5](#) for details. In addition, reciprocal relationships were added to Appendix I (Relationship Designators: Relationships Between a Resource and Persons, Families, and Corporate Bodies Associated with the Resource).

## RDA Steering Committee Meeting

**Note:** This summary serves as an early report on the RSC meeting in Frankfurt, Germany. For specifics about what changes will be made to RDA as part of the April 2017 RDA Toolkit update, consult the various “.../Sec final” versions of the proposals, which will be made available on the [RSC website](#). In addition, the RSC will continue to make various announcements summarizing aspects of the Frankfurt meeting, such as: [RSC Meeting in Frankfurt 7-11 November 2016: Update](#), [3R Project: Update from 2016 Frankfurt Meeting](#), and [Outcomes of the 2016 RSC Meeting](#). Finally, the official minutes of the meeting should be available within a few months.

The RDA Steering Committee held its first face-to-face meeting November 7-11, 2016, at the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Documents associated with the meeting are available on the RSC website, including the agenda (<http://www.rda->

[rsc.org/RSCmeetingagendas](http://rsc.org/RSCmeetingagendas)) and the various documents under discussion (available both at <http://rda-rsc.org/newrscdocs> and under the responsible constituency's document listing).

### *Attendance*

The RSC members present were:

Gordon Dunsire, RSC Chair  
Judy Kuhagen, RSC Secretary  
Linda Barnhart, RSC Secretary Elect  
Kathy Glennan, American Library Association  
Ebe Kartus, Australian Committee on Cataloguing  
Bill Leonard, Canadian Committee on Cataloguing  
Renate Behrens, Europe Community  
Dave Reser, Library of Congress  
Kate James, Examples Editor

Additional individuals closely affiliated with the RSC attended part or most of the RSC meeting:

Simon Berney-Edwards, chair, RDA Board  
James Hennelly, Director, ALA Digital Reference  
Deborah Fritz, chair, RSC Appendices Working Group  
Damian Iseminger, chair, RSC Music Working Group

The following experts joined the RSC virtually to discuss specific topics:

Francis Lapka, chair, RSC Rare Materials Working Group  
Pat Riva, chair, IFLA FRBR Consolidation Editorial Group

23 observers from eleven countries (Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Portugal, Slovenia, and United States) attended public sessions of the meeting. This included the following individuals who made reports to the RSC:

Maria Inês Cordeiro, chair, IFLA UNIMARC Strategic Programme  
Barbora Drobíková, member of the IFLA FRBR Review Group  
Massimo Gentili-Tedeschi, chair, IFLA ISBD Review Group  
Christian Schütz, for ISSN International Centre  
Axel Ermert, who reported on the updated edition of the international standard  
*ISO 5127-2016 Foundation and vocabulary of information and documentation*

### *Major topics*

The RSC meeting focused on the following:

- Adopting the IFLA Library Reference Model (formerly known as the FRBR Library Reference Model).
- Implications of and continuing work on the RDA Toolkit Restructure and Redesign (3R) Project
- Community and Working Group proposals and discussion papers

### *IFLA Library Reference Model*

The RSC agreed to implement the IFLA Library Reference Model (LRM) by April 2018; RDA will be one of the primary instantiations of this model. The final draft, which is awaiting approval by IFLA's Committee on Standards, is considered stable enough for work to proceed. RDA will add five new entities from the LRM: Agent, Collective Agent, Nomen, Place, and Time-span. RDA will retain its current entities, elements, and relationship designators as refinements of the high-level LRM entities and relationships. For example, "family" and "corporate body" will be sub-classes of "collective agent".

The major change for current RDA entities is to remove fictitious characters and non-human entities from the scope of Person; however, RDA will develop accommodation for these data as names within the context of the Nomen entity. For example, a Nomen for a fictitious character could still be presented as an author in a bibliographic context, but the supporting authority record would need to indicate that a non-fictitious agent is responsible for the creation of the work.

In addition, the final draft of LRM enables work to commence on aggregates in RDA; development of these guidelines will be a major project of the RSC Aggregates Working Group in the next year.

### *RDA Toolkit Restructure and Redesign (3R) Project*

This significant, multi-faceted project will require "freezing" the RDA Toolkit content between April 2017 and April 2018. This means that no proposals, discussion papers, fast track changes, etc. will be considered by the RSC in 2017. For details about the 3R Project, see the following announcements: <http://www.rdatoolkit.org/blog/3RProject> and <http://rda-rsc.org/3Rprojectupdate>. Anticipated changes include:

- Conversion of the underlying data to the DITA standard, an XML data model for structured authoring and publishing.
- Increased synchronization between RDA Reference and the RDA Toolkit content. In part, this will help keep the various translations of RDA current with the English base text.
- Implementing the new LRM entities.
- Generalizing the instructions where possible.
- Introducing the 4-fold path (unstructured description, structured description which includes authorized access points, identifiers, and URIs) throughout RDA. This effort will also address the ongoing challenges associated with transcribing vs. recording data.
- Changes to Extent (taking [6JSC/ALA/Discussion/5](#) into account).
- Creating instructions, etc. for aggregates.
- Developing a new approach to relationship designators and possibly incorporating new terms.

- Restructuring the layout of the instructions, by creating general guidance chapters followed by entity-based chapters.
- Completely removing the instructions currently including the sentence: “This instruction has been deleted as a revision to RDA.”
- Building a concordance of current instruction numbers which will map to their new locations, something like the AACR2 to RDA mapping now.
- Better tracking of revision history.
- Allowing for end-user customization of the display of the RDA text and associated policy statements, etc. The needs and desirable enhancements are being drawn from submitted user stories.

The RSC’s intention is that the changes associated with relocating current instructions will have a minimal impact on the application of the guidelines. Therefore, the April 2018 RDA Toolkit Update will not be branded as RDA 2.0. However, the scope of the 3R Project will also introduce changes (new data elements, practices, etc.), as is obvious from the list above.

Although the RSC will not consider change proposals in 2017, CC:DA may continue to identify gaps in RDA, problems that need to be fixed, etc. When issues arise, they need to be documented with a brief statement about the problem and an outline of the proposed solution. As the ALA Representative, I will collect these summaries, which will be used by the RSC when planning for revisions in 2018.

Due to the nature of all of these changes, the RSC will follow the precedent set in 2004 during RDA development: rather than reacting to proposals and other concerns raised by the communities, such as CC:DA, the RSC will develop proposed revisions which will be shared with the communities for comment and information gathering. Along with the RSC members, we anticipate involving the RSC Working Group members and other community experts in the creation of these draft changes. Please note that the RSC recognizes CC:DA as a well-informed group of RDA experts, with a broad range of knowledge of special formats, languages, etc., so our participation in these efforts will be welcomed.

The 3R Project has also prompted the RSC to plan two three-day meetings in 2017: one in Chicago in May and one in Europe sometime in either October or November. The RSC expects to plan a day-long outreach event associated with each of these meetings.

The work on RDA Reference and the RDA Toolkit Glossary over the summer was an early aspect of the 3R Project. In the February 2017 RDA Toolkit release, additional changes will be made to help move the project forward. This includes: replacing “person, family, or corporate body” with “agent”; and a more rigorous use of the term “resource”. Similar kinds of changes will be made in the April 2017 Update.

*Proposals and discussion papers***RSC/AggregatesWG/1:** *Discussion paper: RDA and WGA treatment of aggregates*

**Outcome:** Will be folded into an aggregates work package in the 3R Project.

**Of note:**

- Although there was general agreement that it is important to distinguish between whole-part works and aggregation works, but that is harder than it sounds. If we cannot come up with a clear distinction, then separate relationship designators will not be needed.
- The end result of providing instructions for aggregates in RDA needs to offer flexibility: not all aggregates need to be described with the same level of granularity.
- The RSC cannot solve the problem of serials as aggregates in the given timeframe (before April 2018).

**RSC/ALA/1:** *Adding controlled vocabulary to RDA 3.19.6, Regional Encoding, and to the Glossary*

**Outcome:** Accepted RSC/ALA/1/rev.

**Of note:**

- The proposal met the following criteria: the proposed vocabulary was controlled, useful, small, and low maintenance.
- The scope can be expanded beyond video discs and video game carriers in the future if needed.

**RSC/ALA/2:** *Expanding RDA 6.29.1.3, Laws Governing More Than One Jurisdiction*

**Outcome:** Accepted in principle, based on RSC/ALA/2/rev. ALA Representative to rework 6.21.1.3 and 6.29.1.3 based on RSC discussion.

**RSC/ALA/3:** *Providing greater flexibility in creating variant access points (RDA Chapters 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, and 11)*

**Outcome:** Accepted with revisions.

**Of note:**

- In discussion, concerns raised about requiring differentiation among variants for different entities, especially for corporate bodies. Will use “as appropriate” rather than “as appropriate to differentiate” to address this problem.
- The proposal was viewed as helpful in light of similar work that will be undertaken as part of the 3R Project.

**RSC/ALA-CCC/Discussion/1:** *Discussion paper: Accompanying material in RDA*

**Outcome:** Will be folded into an aggregates work package in the 3R Project.

***Of note:***

- The identification of primary and secondary aspects of a resource is in the eye of the beholder.
- The RSC found the paper useful and will use it to inform those working on the high level instruction in the 3R Project.

**RSC/Europe/1:** *Proposal on Sources of Information (RDA 2.2.2)*

**Outcome:** Will be folded into a provenance work package in the 3R Project.

***Of note:***

- The solution needs to accommodate differences in choice while identifying which choices were made.
- The RSC agreed to modify the definition of “container” to include information that is visible through the closed container, working from ALA’s suggested wording.
- No changes were made to accommodate landing pages at this time.

**RSC/Europe/2:** *Repositioning of Relationship Designator “Screenwriter” from I.2.1 to I.2.2*

**Outcome:** Referred to the RSC Aggregates Working Group and the RSC Relationship Designators Working Group for consideration as part of the 3R Project.

***Of note:***

- The RSC spent some time discussing whether or not a feature film is an aggregate, without reaching a definitive conclusion at this time.

**RSC/Europe/3:** *Revision of RDA 1.10.3 (Quotations in notes)*

**Outcome:** Accepted; will use ALA’s suggested wording.

***Of note:***

- Additional concerns raised during the discussion, such as making a clear distinction between internal and external sources of information, will be folded in to the 3R Project

**RSC/LC/ 1:** *Revision to instructions for Commentary, Etc. Added to a Previously Existing Work (6.27.1.6)*

**Outcome:** Accepted, based on the wording presented in RSC/LC/1/rev.

***Of note:***

- Considered a short term solution; the entire instruction could disappear as a result of the 3R Project.

**RSC/LC/2:** *Language and Script instructions for Chapters 6 and 7*

**Outcome:** Accepted RSC/LC/2/rev as written.

**RSC/MusicWG/ 1:** *Additions and revisions to RDA 7.11, Place and Date of Capture*

**Outcome:** Accepted RSC/MusicWG/1/rev with revisions.



***Of note:***

- Further investigation needed: Does LRM Place extend to a recording studio?
- No consensus in responses about adding paragraphs about people associated with capture; will not be part of this revision.

**RSC/MusicWG/ 2:** *Additions and revisions to RDA 2.15.3, Plate Number for Music***Outcome:** Accepted option 1 in RSC/MusicWG/2/rev, which rewords 2.15.3.3.**RSC/MusicWG/ 3:** *Replacement of RDA 6.15 Medium of Performance***Outcome:** Accepted RSC/MusicWG/3/rev with revisions.***Of note:***

- In the future, a “medium of performance statement” will need to be developed. Information like “1 hand” doesn’t make sense without context.

**RSC/MusicWG/ 4:** *Revision of RDA 6.28.1.9 and 6.28.1.10, Additions to Access Points Representing Musical Works***Outcome:** Accepted RSC/MusicWG/4/rev with revisions.***Of note:***

- The problem of the extensive exceptions in 6.28.1.9.1 will be revisited as part of the 3R Project.

**RSC/RareWG/1:** *Early Printed Resources and Rare Printed Resources***Outcome:** RSC/RareWG/1/rev accepted with revisions, following Option 1 (introductory instruction noting that instructions for early printed resources can also apply to any resource at the discretion of the cataloging agency). Agreed that guidelines for early printed resources should use exceptions rather than alternatives.**RSC/RareWG/2:** *Revision of RDA 1.8.1 Numbers Expressed as Numerals or as Words***Outcome:** Accepted RSC/RareWG/2/rev with revisions.**RSC/RareWG/3:** *Revision of RDA 3.4.5 Extent of Text***Outcome:** Withdrawn; will be referred for consideration as part of the 3R Project.**RSC/RareWG/4:** *Revision to RDA 3.12 Book Format and related terms***Outcome:** Accepted RSC/RareWG/4/rev with revisions.**RSC/RareWG/5:** *Revision of RDA 3.21.2.9 Note on Extent of Manifestation, Early Printed Resources***Outcome:** Accepted RSC/RareWG/5/rev as written.

**RSC/RareWG/6: *Revision of RDA 2.2.2.2 Sources of Information***

**Outcome:** Withdrawn; will be referred for consideration as part of the 3R Project.

**RSC/RelationshipWG/1: *RDA models for relationship data***

**Outcome:** Approved change #1 (Revision of 24.1.3 and 29.1.3) and #2 (Revision of Appendix M – with correction of typos). The other changes and recommendations were referred to the RSC Aggregates Working Group and the RSC Relationship Designators Working Group for consideration as part of the 3R Project.

**Of note:**

- The RSC will consider verbalizing the relationship designator labels, to match how they appear in RDA Reference; this could help clarify the direction of the relationship.
- If the label is anything other than the URI, the labels need to be distinguished for data sharing purposes, which is how RDA ended up with the parenthetical qualifiers.
- The label designations are still a problem, but they could be considered as a set: a label that substitutes for the URI, and a display label attached to a URI that could be more user-friendly. Catalogers should be able to make an initial choice and allow a customizable view for labels to clear up confusion.

**RSC/TechnicalWG/1: *RDA models for provenance data***

**Outcome:** Will be folded into a provenance work package in the 3R Project.

**Of note:**

- ALA's suggestion that RDA instructions identify public and non-public notes as such was not accepted.
- After the 4-fold path is implemented in RDA, it's possible that the current "options" will simply become alternative paths for capturing information.

**RSC/TechnicalWG/2: *RDA 9.2: Addition of elements for Given name and Surname***

**Outcome:** Referred for consideration as part of the work on the LRM entity Nomen in the 3R project.

**Of note:**

- ALA's suggestion to incorporate matronymic was not accepted at this time.
- Discussion centered on the future possibility of creating an inverted name element rather than trying to clearly distinguish between forename and surname. UNIMARC has an element for this already.

***Other RSC Meeting Topics***

- Briefing paper: *RDA technical terminology*  
This document was developed for the RSC; it is not aimed at end users or at catalogers. It focuses on clarifying the terminology we're using, such as the differences between sub-

types and sub-elements. The document includes a thesaurus, which translates between different terms and uses. RDA documentation needs to be clear as we pursue the strategy of opening RDA to linked data communities. The RSC agreed that a version of this information should be developed for catalogers. There was some discussion about introducing domain and range into the RDA Toolkit so catalogers will better understand the relationship designator problem. Ultimately there will be four audiences for this information: RSC; RSC communities; developers; end users. Work will continue to develop this information for these different audiences, concurrently with the 3R Project.

- *ISO5127:2016 Foundation and vocabulary of information and documentation* [new edition coming out] and *International Standard ISO 5127 – An overall list of terms and definitions for the library and communication field*  
Axel Ermert talked about the ongoing work on these ISO standards. The new edition of ISO5127:2016 has broadened its scope to include information science, scientific libraries, special collections, archives, museums, information technology, and data modeling. It contains about 2000 terms, with definitions that make clear distinctions between terms and show how they fit together. The group working on these documents would like to learn from the RSC; they are willing to share their terms and hope that they can help refine RDA terms too.
- ICA Experts Group on Archival Description - *Records in Context* draft  
The RSC were given a brief overview of this document, which is an effort by the archival community to standardize their method of documentation and description of resources. After the meeting, the RSC prepared a formal response to this draft.
- Discussion of efforts to coordinate development of two major vocabulary encoding schemes for medium of performance  
This work was discussed in an ad hoc meeting of interested RSC members and observers. Each of the existing medium of performance vocabularies has particular strengths: LCMPT has sources of information, brief definitions, and terms outside Western art music; the UNIMARC list has translations and a primary focus on medium of performance as represented in music manuscripts. The best way to coordinate and connect these two lists will be with mappings.
- Report from ISBD Review Group  
In the coming year, the group will work to align ISBD with LRM, and then will figure out the shape of a revised ISBD.
- Report from Permanent UNIMARC Committee  
Completed their alignment with ISBD. The big future issues are creating an alignment with LRM and finalizing UNIMARC in RDF.