

CORE
(A Division of the American Library Association)
Metadata and Collections Section

Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access

Report of the MAC Liaison

To: Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access

From: John Myers, CC:DA Liaison to MAC

Provided below are summaries of the proposals and discussion papers considered by the MAC during virtual meetings scheduled on January 25-27, 2022.

Complete text of the MAC proposals and discussion papers summarized below is available via the agenda for the winter 2022 virtual MAC meetings on the MARC Advisory Committee web site: https://www.loc.gov/marc/mac/mw2022_age.html

Executive Summary:

Six proposals and five discussion papers were taken up. The six proposals passed, some with amendments. Three of the discussion papers are anticipated to return as proposals, one will proceed through the Fast track approval process, and the fate of the last is uncertain.

Narrative:

From the Chair: The Chair opened each session with careful instructions regarding the logistics of holding the meeting virtually – how to signal to be recognized, how voting would be conducted, and a request for brevity.

Business Meeting: Discussion of prospective dynamics for the summer meetings. ALA is intending Annual to be in-person. MAC does not need to decide for another month, which would involve a financial commitment. Sally would like to discuss that on the list over the next month. It was observed that discussion on the list would offer the opportunity to consult with constituencies.

LC Report: MARC Update 33 published in November 2020, so users can now implement those changes.

Other Reports: [none]

Proposal 2022-01 would make improvements in the subfields for field 340. Specifically, it would amend the definition of the \$f subfield in field 340 to restrict its use to reduction values only, applicable to microforms only. It would also create a \$q subfield for reduction designator entries, again applicable to microforms only. These changes would result in two effects: 1) they would clarify the recording situation for reduction values for other media, which now have other medium specific fields, and 2) they would provide more distinct mapping of value and designator data to facilitate clean data usage, particularly when transiting data to (and from) linked data.

Pre-meeting comments were generally favorable with some minor concerns and comments raised. Meeting discussion took up those comments, including the reminder that MARC is content-standard agnostic.

Proposal was approved with amendments to substitute “use” for “prefer” in the definition of \$f and to remove a redundant instance of “express in general terms” from \$q.

Proposal 2022-02 would define a field to express record equivalent relationships. Specifically, it would create a new field 788 for the recording of an equivalent description among the possible language of cataloging options among the languages of a manifestation housing expressions of the same work in different languages. Such equivalent descriptions being typically created by the same cataloging agency. It is closely defined to be applicable only in instances of manifestations with equivalent expressions in different languages, that is, it is not for recording equivalent descriptions by different cataloging language communities of a monolingual work.

Pre-meeting comments were generally favorable. Meeting discussion persistently revisited the issue of “equivalent description” as articulated in the paper with the “parallel description” previously explored in OCLC via the 936 field. There was also a discussion about the seeming English language focus of the generated print constants in what is anticipated to be a multi-lingual environment until the general guidance in the MARC formats regarding print constants was pointed out. Ultimately reached a solution where an indicator value could distinguish between the “equivalent description” use case from which the paper was initiated and the “parallel description” use case on which the committee had focused.

The proposal was approved with a number of minor editorial and reformatting changes, and the substantial amendment of using an indicator value to specify “equivalent” vs “parallel” descriptions.

Proposal 2022-03 would make changes to field 507 to better address alterations to scale content introduced by RDA. Specifically, it would revise the label and broaden the Field Definition and Scope to better align with the RDA definition concerning non-cartographic scale content.

Pre-meeting comments were generally supportive. There was minimal discussion, to incorporate minor editorial amendments as raised in the pre-meeting comments.

The proposal passed as amended.

Proposal 2022-04 would provide a mechanism for recording representative expression data as articulated in the post-3R release of RDA. Specifically, it would add field 387, with exceptions for music specific elements.

Pre-meeting comments were generally supportive. Meeting discussion re-articulated the particular challenges and needs of the musical elements of instrumentation and key, and hence the need to use a different solution for those elements from that deployed as the primary solution. The complexities presented by one of the examples – where the original manuscript was only discovered subsequent to original, heavily edited publication’s issuance, and displaced it as the canonical expression – was explored as both a complicating dynamic and an illustrative example of the benefit in recording the representative expression. There are also some deferred elements for choreographic works that have not yet been addressed in MARC at all, before they can be articulated as elements in a representative expression. There was a second reminder that MARC is a communication standard that is “content standard agnostic” so that if there are elements in a content standard that need to be recorded, then MARC should provide a means to do so. The use case was strongly affirmed for the case of aggregates.

This proposal passed.

Proposal 2022-05 would provide a mechanism for recording enhanced data provenance elements as articulated in the post-3R release of RDA. Specifically, it would deploy the subfield \$7 across a variety of fields generally, and other subfields where \$7 was not available for this purpose.

Pre-meeting comments were generally supportive, although ongoing reservations with the overall complexity of the solution and in particular the use of \$5 in the proposal were voiced. Discussion featured extensive expressions of appreciation for the undertaking. The possibility of re-assigning current instances of \$7 to other subfields and then allowing \$7 to be uniformly used for data provenance was raised, but not taken up, particularly as it was recently instituted and is rapidly being populated in field 856. Various alternatives to \$5 were identified and a more uniform use of \$y when a mix of \$y and \$z were proposed.

This proposal passed with amendments to cleanup subfield choice (refrain from using \$5 and provide substitute subfields; use \$y more consistently)

Proposal 2022-06 would provide further mechanisms for recording open access and licensing information for remote online resources. Specifically, it proposes four new subfields (\$l (el) \$n, \$r, \$t) to fields 506, 540/845 to work in conjunction with field 856 to record:

\$l – Standardized information governing access

\$n – Terms governing access

\$r – Standardized information governing use and reproduction

\$t - Terms governing use and reproduction

As the pattern reveals, there are two data foci of interest: 1) access, and 2) use and reproduction. These can then be recorded in controlled and free-text methods.

Pre-meeting comments were generally supportive, with minor concerns with the \$l/\$r and \$n/\$t text concerning their connection to fields 506 and 540 – namely that the 506/540 fields would apply to the resource and its description as a whole, where the 856 subfields would be specific to the access dynamics of the version at the URL held in the 856 \$u. Committee discussion picked up these concerns, to successful resolution. It was noted that this paper would use up four of the previously “freed” subfields in field 856 and, in conjunction with those considered in 2022-DP02, we might see nine or ten of the eleven available subfields put in use, obviating the flexibility just obtained.

This proposal passed with amendments to clarify the distinction between applicability of 506/540 vs the proposed cluster of subfields in field 856.

Discussion Paper 2022-DP01 explores further modifications to the existing field 856. To that end, it articulates the addition of second indicator values of 3 and 4 to correspond to subsets of content of the resource described or an online equivalent to the resource described, that is, they would correspond to the “part equivalent” of the existing 0 and 1 values. The definition of value 2 would be tightened to address solely distinct but related content. Corresponding changes to the definition of 856 \$3 would be incorporated.

Pre-meeting comments were generally favorable, although there were concerns for the impact on legacy data, current workflows, and for the terminology “subset.” In committee discussion, the use of “subset” was identified as coming from a proposal from 25 years prior but that it could be readily abandoned in favor of other terminology. There was discussion about the guidance, current and proposed, for \$3, which resides in an ancillary document to the field’s general guidance. To the concerns expressed, the desire is not to change current usage as to provide language that better reflects the current data dynamic and uses to which \$3 is put (e.g. Provider Neutral and BIBCO guidance). This response also applies to \$y/\$z questions and concerns. Discussion moved into some particular use cases which the paper’s solution could address.

This discussion paper will return as a proposal.

Discussion Paper 2022-DP02 explores a mechanism for recording a variety of web archiving data in field 856. To that end, it articulates options for recording persistent identifiers and for recording current and past URLs.

Pre-meeting comments were cautionary and skeptical, with concerns about maintenance, various implementation concerns including the interaction with resolvers, and the potential to “use up” the newly freed subfields in field 856. Committee discussion raised concerns with mixing data in the proposed \$q to hold both MIME types and PRONOMs, and that perhaps this complexity would best be addressed in a new field with a full range of available subfields to articulate cleanly. A straw poll was taken concerning whether to explore new subfields in field 856 or to craft an entirely new field. The outcome was overwhelmingly in support of a new field. There was subsequent discussion concerning display implications for both the data itself and the solution used to record it.

This discussion paper will return as a proposal.

Discussion Paper 2022-DP03 explores a mechanism for recording a concrete end date for a preservation or other action recorded in field 583, particularly for the recording of the end date for retention commitments in distributed print archive networks. To that end, it articulates several prospective options for recording such a formatted date.

Pre-meeting comments were divergent, falling broadly into two cohorts – those who favored an easier to implement approach with respect to the existing data and those who favored a cleaner implementation approach (that would involve significant data migration). There was an early straw poll concerning whether to keep the data in \$d (and adjust its definition to accommodate it) or to move the data to a new subfield. There was a roughly 2:1 preference for a new subfield. The possibility of using a range of dates, as supported by EDTF, in \$c was raised. There was some point/counter-point regarding the need to specify EDTF (via a \$2, already in use though) and the evolving nature of IS08601 for dates. A new straw poll concerning whether to use a new subfield or expand the use of \$c to accommodate a range of dates yielded a slight 3:2 preference for adjusting \$c.

This discussion paper will return as a proposal, likely narrowed to two options – one with a new subfield and the other addressing \$c.

[Post script: since the Midwinter MAC meeting and the time of this report, the authors have indicated that they are not moving forward with a proposal at this time.]

Discussion Paper 2022-DP04 explores a mechanism for recording the more granular relationship elements in the post-3R release of RDA, that expand on the prior “Affiliation” element. To that end, it suggests adding new subfields \$i and \$4 to field 373.

Pre-meeting comments were generally favorable. Meeting discussion picked up on some of the concerns in pre-meeting comments, particularly around the pairing of \$i/\$4 if repeated and implementation guidelines in that case. Best practice would argue for repeating the field. Another concern was the potential exposure of personal information in the resulting records, but such a question is more a matter of the content standards rather than MARC as a communication standard. There was a straw poll on whether this could be treated with the Fast track process, which passed.

This discussion paper will be addressed as a Fast track proposal.

Discussion Paper 2022-DP05 explores mechanisms for enhancing the recording of subject relationships within the Authority format. To that end, it articulates three options for navigating current restrictions on the interoperability of terminology drawn from different controlled vocabularies or even lacking a source vocabulary at all. In brief, these entail:

1. Define the 2nd indicator position in the authority 5XX block, to then support a value of 7 to pair with a subfield \$2 to identify the thesaurus from which the 5XX content is drawn.

2. Define a new 3XX field in the authority format for recording such subject relationships.
3. Define new subfields \$i and \$4 in field 381 to allow it to be leveraged for recording subject relationships.

Pre-meeting comments were generally favorable although there were mixed views on which solution to pursue and there were several comments about genre not being applicable at the expression level. The Library of Congress submitted a jarring note of dissent that was not shared with MAC until the actual meeting. Their position is that they have made preliminary explorations, through the lens of BibFrame development, of migrating “title authorities” to the bibliographic format. They would neither support development along the lines proposed in the paper nor implement its changes if they were to pass. Meeting discussion took up the question of choosing between the 5XX and 3XX paths toward an ultimate proposal. Much of this hinged on the definition of “authorized” – whether it meant “supported by an authority record” or “compliant with a particular string encoding scheme”? This may ultimately be a policy decision. But given the potential dynamics, they might argue for a “both/and” rather than an “either/or” approach with respect to the 5XX and 3XX question, although expanding the 381 field was disfavored in comparison to a new 3XX field if a 3XX solution is brought to the table. The question of the genre and its applicability to expressions was touched on, with reference to RDA’s “Category of Expression.” Discussion returned to the appropriate format for developing enhancements to work records. Some of the concerns about “authorized” entries in a 5XX solution would likely disappear in a bibliographic format solution. For serials, the question is largely moot in an RDA context owing to the WEM lock. For the music community, there is significant investment in work authorities that they are very anxious to see leveraged to support manifestation records. Owing to the late emergence of the Library of Congress’s position and alternative solution, consensus was not reached. Stakeholders moving forward include PCC, LC, and the MARC/RDA WG.

This discussion paper’s status is TBD.