

5JSC/RDA/Part A/Chapter 3/Rev/Chair follow-up/2
13 July 2007

To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA

From: Deirdre Kiorgaard, Chair, JSC

Subject: RDA: Resource Description and Access - Review by other rule makers of March 2007 Draft of Chapter 3 - Norway

These are comments on the draft chapter 3 of RDA received from Norwegian Committee on Cataloguing.

Comments on “RDA: Resource Description and Access Part A – Constituency Review of March 2007 Draft of Chapter 3” from the Norwegian Committee on Cataloguing

General

Glossary (Clarity)

We think important words like “Media” and “Format” should be defined. In general, all words of importance should be defined. We think this would bring clarity to the meaning and significance of the elements. If they are not clear to us, they will not be clearer to cataloguers and system designers, and the OPACs and users will suffer.

It would be of help in understanding the new rules if the purpose of the information was pointed out. E.g. Media type, why should we record it. As a replacement of GMD, together with Content type, we don't think it is quite satisfying. We think Carrier type would work better as a replacement of GMD, but here we miss a distinction between CD-ROMs and DVD-ROMS. Anyway, we are not quite certain of in which element such information should go. We tried to look it up in 3.20.0.5, but couldn't find anything. “CD-ROM” and “DVD-ROM” have long been asked for as GMD's in Norway.

Exchange of records/reuse of data

You say, under the heading Use of coded values, “...the use of equivalent coded values instead of prescribed terms is a question of how the data is stored, not what data is recorded, and, as such, is a matter outside the scope of RDA.” We want to point out that the use of coded values is also a matter of how the data are exchanged. We expect that coded values are easier to exchange across language environments. As such it *might* be a scope outside RDA, but it is not a scope outside international standards.

For the same reason, it is also important that records created worldwide are as equal as possible. A great extent of optionality in the rules is a step in the wrong direction. Reuse of records is more important than ever.

Specific elements:

3.1.2. Manifestations available in different formats. (Clarity)

The examples here (“e.g. as printed text and microfilm; as an audio disc and audiocassette”) are different physical forms or different carriers. Manifestations in different physical forms indicate different manifestations according to FRBR. What do you mean by format here? We don't think this paragraph is quite clear.

Does this paragraph indicate that different file formats of online resources should be described on different records? (e.g. pdf- and html-versions of the same resource (or manifestation)?

What if “manifestations of a work” are not available in different formats? We suppose the rule would be the same: (“record the elements describing the carrier as they apply to the manifestation being described”). What exactly do you try to say here?

(Neither FRBR is quite clear about the concept of manifestation. It says different physical forms are different manifestations, but are different file formats (e.g. html and pdf) different physical forms? Everybody we have asked agree that they are, but this is only an interpretation.)

When do you use ”resource” and when do you use ”manifestation” in RDA, and what is the difference? Do we catalogue resources or do we catalogue manifestations?

“Format of notated music” is defined in 4.11.0.1. That is good.

Format is a very ambiguous word. We recommend that you try to avoid it. When you have to use it, define it, or explain what you mean. Our question is: When you say “format”, do you include the concept of “file-format” for electronic resources?

We can guess from **2.2.1.2. Resources comprising a set of graphic images** that file formats are included, but are they always included (e.g. in 3.1.2)?

3.2 Media type (Clarity)

In 3.2.0.1.1 is Media type explained this way: “**Media type** reflects the general type of intermediation device required to view, play, run, etc. the content of the resource.” We find it unfortunate to link the definition of Media type so close to intermediation devices. Intermediation devices are converging. For instance, take a DVD-player: Most DVD-players (all of them?) are both for “audio” and “video”. If we are to relate several intermediation devices to the same resource, we think this information loses its value as information. If Media type is to be retained in RDA, it definitely needs to be given a definition in the Glossary. We suggest to remove Media type as it is now.

3.3 Carrier type (Clarity)

Carrier types are also converging. For instance, what Carrier type is a DVD+R disc: “computer disc”, “audio disc”, “videodisc” or ...? This type of disc would play nicely in most computers with the right technical specifications. It also would play nicely in many DVD-players. The Content type of the disc (i.e. the file format of the content) would also determine if or if not a given intermediation device would play this form of disc. We think that definitions of Audio disc, Computer disc and Videodisc need a closer look. Isn't it unusual to define CD-audio as a Computer disc and not as an Audio disc? We have grown accustomed to look upon CD's as audio discs. If they are to be looked upon as Computer discs, the definition of Computer disc must be revised. The condition “...designed for use with a computer...” must be removed as we see it, since CD-audios primary are intended for CD-players/DVD-players and not computers. Likewise, we are not certain of the definition of Videodisc. According to this definition, is a DVD-video a Computer disc or a Videodisc? In other words, does a DVD-video contain video signals? We are afraid this is difficult to more than us.

Is a DVD+R with recorded music (for instance MP3-files) an Audio disc, Computer disc or a Videodisc? If it can be all, and we are supposed to record all possible values, this

information will loose significance. In this case it would be much more valuable to be allowed to record specific designations like CD-ROM, DVD-ROM, DVD+R, etc. Of course it will be harder to keep a controlled list of values, but we think we should try anyway. A controlled list has great value to computer systems, and it is also necessary to keep up with the technical progress.

In general, we think the relationship between 3.2 Media type, 3.3. Carrier type and 4.2 Content type is too vaguely explained. A better understanding of the purpose of these elements would, of course, be of much help.

3.4. Extent (Clarity)

Under "recording extent" (3.4.0.3) you give some "Exceptions" to things that have their main rules in later sections: Cartographic resources (3.4.1), Notated music (3.4.2), Still images (3.4.3.), Text (3.4.4.), Three-dimensional forms (3.4.5). Explanations seem very much scattered around. This gives an impression of more complexity than there really is.

Why is Extent a required element? For instance, it is often difficult to decide how many units or subunits files an online electronic resource consists of.

3.4.0.3 Recording extent. (Clarity)

We suggest adding a sentence to this rule:
"Use the terms in plural if necessary. "

3.20.0.4 File type and 3.20.0.5 Encoding format

Why are these elements optional? To us, it seems like these elements would be of great importance to users in most cases, since Media type and Carrier type are very general.

3.22 Notes on equipment and system requirements (Consistency)

We miss a paragraph here that allows for changing of the notes on equipment and system requirements for a

- a) resource issued in successive parts
- b) integrating resource

For continuing resources the system requirements will often change in the lifecycle of a resource. The system requirements should always apply to the latest iteration of a continuing resource.

3.23: Notes on item-specific carrier characteristics

We suppose it is OK to give item-specific information here. Anyway, we want to point out that you have mapped this information to 500 in Appendix 2. Since 500 also will contain manifestation-specific information, a mapping between MARC and FRBR entities will fail.