To: Joint Steering Committee for Revision of AACR

From :   Jennifer Bowen, ALA Representative

Subject: Persistent identifiers and URLs

ALA appreciates the work undertaken by ACOC to incorporate persistent identifiers and URLs into the instructions within RDA. ALA has both general and specific recommendations for incorporating this work into RDA.

General recommendations

Over the last several years in updates to MARC 21 documentation, ALA has noted an effort to use the phrase "Uniform Resource Identifier" (URI) in place of the more-specific "Uniform Resource Locator" (URL). ALA agrees with this direction and feels similar language should be used in RDA.

Regarding the placement of the proposed instruction X.X, ALA is in agreement that the logical place to include discussion of URLs within RDA is Chapter 5 – Information on Terms of Availability (i.e., Option 3 within *5JSC/ACOC/1*).

ALA agrees with the ACOC recommendation that "online resource" be used in place of "remote access resource" within RDA. Such a move would certainly further the JSC's efforts to prefer terms in common use.

ALA agrees that DOIs should be included in RDA, especially if they become an ISO standard. We note that these identifiers may not indicate a location only, but in some cases may contain specific metadata elements packaged together with an identifier. ALA would like to see RDA encourage the recording of all types of unique identifiers given their importance for enhancing the use of metadata and digital objects in harvestable databases or OPACs. Unique identifiers also allow efficient reassembly of data pulled from multiple repositories.

Specific recommendations

Mandatory. ALA notes that RDA 1.4 says that "resource identifier" is a mandatory element. Then 2.12 makes a distinction between "standard numbers" and "other resource identifiers." The standard number is implicitly mandatory, yet the "other resource identifier" in 2.12.2.1 is entered only "if they are considered to be important." 2.12.2.1 thus contradicts 1.4 which specifies "resource identifier," but not "standard number." Consider the situation where the "other resource identifier" is the *only* resource identifier for the resource being described; shouldn't it then be mandatory as per 1.4? [ALA also

supports the LC recommendation to combine RDA 2.12.1 (Standard number/identifier) and 2.12.2 (Other resource identifier) (see section addressing *5JSC/ACOC/1/LC response* below). ALA recognizes that combining these two RDA instructions will have repercussions for the current relationship between 1.4 and 2.12 (i.e., the RDA mandatory elements), and will consequently need to be considered carefully.]

Persistent identifiers and URLs. ALA strongly agrees that persistent identifiers and URLs need to be included somewhere in a resource description. ALA does believe further discussion is warranted on where within RDA persistent identifiers and URLs should be treated. To do so, the editor and the JSC need to clarify whether the functional objectives of RDA include all **four** of the FRBR user tasks (find, identify, select, obtain). RDA Part 0.1.2 indicates only that the functional objectives of RDA are to help the user to "identify" and "select." If those are the sole objectives, then resource identifiers need only be mandatory to the degree they fulfill those functions. Conversely, if the objective of RDA is to assist the user with all four FRBR user tasks, then "resource identifier" must be considered a mandatory element.

DOI. ALA recommends that DOI be added to 2.12. ALA also recommends renaming RDA 2.12.1 from "Standard number" to "Standard identifier."

[Note: Footnote no. 5 lacks the URL for the cited resource.]

2.12.1–2.12.2. If the JSC does not follow the LC recommendation to combine RDA 2.12.1 and 2.12.2, ALA recommends the following revisions to the ACOC proposal:

Proposed revision of the 2.12.2.1, 1st bullet. ALA believes that the term "Precede" is a presentation issue. In light of the JSC initiative to remove display elements from the body of RDA, ALA recommends the term "indicate."

ALA recommends that RDA support use of controlled vocabulary for the agency/agencies responsible for resource identifiers so that they may be machine-actionable. Therefore, do not instruct catalogers to abbreviate agency names.

The clean revision proposal reads (examples and remaining bullet unchanged):

2.12.2.1. Recording other resource identifiers

> ➢ Record resource identifiers other than standard identifiers (i.e., identifiers assigned by an agency other than an ISO registration agency, persistent identifiers, publishers' numbers, etc.) if they are considered to be important. Indicate the name of the agency, etc., responsible for assigning the identifier, if readily ascertainable.

2.12.1.1, 2nd bullet. ALA is uncertain what is achieved in adding the "resolvable" distinction, as it is unclear what is meant by "resolvable". Interpreted by a computer? Has a correct URL prefix (http, ftp, etc.)? Does not give a 404? ALA therefore recommends adding clarification of the term either within RDA or in the glossary.

Proposed definition for inclusion in the glossary. ALA suggests the following revision:

> A **persistent identifier** is a self-identifying and globally unique identifier for a resource. A persistent identifier is intended to be permanent.

ALA questions whether the definition is intended to apply only to remote access resources.

Comments on Proposed Instruction X.X

X.X.0.1. Definition. ALA recommends removing "global," as many URLs are not.

X.X.0.2. Sources of information. In light of the ACOC section addressing the *impermanence of URLs*, ALA recommends that catalogers take URLs only from the browser address window displaying the resource. This ensures that on the day it was described, the URL was valid. Cut-and-paste functionality of these URLs also ensures accuracy and minimizes typos, especially for longer URLs.

X.X.0.3. Recording Uniform Resource Locators for remote access resources. ALA recommends changing the caption to "Recording Uniform Resource Locators." The current caption implies that there may be other forms of URLs. But according to the ACOC definition, this is not true.

X.X.0.3. ALA recommends that the instructions at X.X.0.3 and X.X.0.4 be combined. The first sentence of X.X.0.4 adequately covers single URLs.

If the separate sections are retained, ALA recommends deleting the second bullet in X.X.0.3; there are many data elements that apply to related resources, and RDA does not (and should not) say this at each of them.

X.X.0.4. Recording multiple Uniform Resource Locators, 1st bullet. ALA recommends deleting the second sentence as it is already adequately covered.

X.X.0.4. Recording multiple Uniform Resource Locators, 2nd bullet. ALA disagrees that PDF is an access method; it is a method of content encoding. *5JSC/Chair/6/Chair follow-up* lists it as a specific carrier type.

ALA recommends that when recording multiple URLs or resolvable persistent identifiers, RDA should require catalogers to use structural metadata to convey the specific relationships between the different URLs.

X.X.0.5. Restrictions on access to, or use of, remote access resources. ALA recommends removing this rule. The first bullet conflicts with the first bullet of X.X.0.4. The second bullet is unneeded; RDA should not have to repeat this reference at every data element at which it could apply.

X.X.0.6. Recording changes in Uniform Resource Locators. ALA supports LC's suggested revisions to X.X.0.6 (see section addressing *5JSC/ACOC/1/LC Response* below). ALA is not convinced that when URLs are removed from records that catalogers should **always** make a note. ALA recommends that this provision be made optional.

URLs for related resources referred to in the record. The paper suggests the possibility that URLs to biographical or historical information for the FRBR Group 2 entities may belong within authority records. ALA recommends reserving any final decisions upon the incorporation of the concepts of authority control into RDA until the Editor and the JSC have completed and presented parts 2 and 3 of the RDA draft.

Proposed instruction 1.7.7. ALA believes this rule is not needed and should be removed. The cataloging code does not generally instruct what types of information may be included in notes. If RDA doesn't say you can't, then you can. ALA instead recommends rewriting references to and from other resources (RDA 1.7.3, 1.7.4, and URLs) as separate sub-elements of all notes.

This recommendation parallels ALA's comments regarding the Notes area of the part 1 draft of RDA. We feel strongly that the time has come for a thorough reconsideration of the Notes area within the cataloging code. ALA encourages the Editor and the JSC to consider a careful reassessment of this area as they compile part 2 of RDA. Special attention should be given to the role of these data elements and sub-elements for identifying and providing access to resources.

Re: *5JSC/ACOC/1/LC response*

ALA supports LC's proposal to merge the instructions for standard numbers (RDA 2.12.1) and other resource identifiers (RDA 2.12.2).

ALA supports LC's proposed revisions to 5JSC/ACOC/1 Rule X.X.0.6 for clarifying "the distinctions between adding an additional URL, dealing with a changed URL (when a replacement is available), and dealing with a URL that no longer resolves and [for which] no replacement is available."

ALA suggests that in cases where a URL is removed from a record, the instruction to then record that URL in a note be made optional.