TO: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA

FROM: John Attig, ALA Representative to the JSC

SUBJECT: Consideration of proposals from the ISBD Review Group

The JSC was asked to consider two issues raised by the ISBD Review Group that had arisen from the world-wide review of the ISBD consolidated edition. Although the request was for the JSC to decide what advice to give to the ISBD Review Group, ALA presumes that the question of whether revisions to comparable instructions in the RDA draft also needs to be addressed.

1. Removal of the exception for serials and integrating resources at ISBD 1.1.4.1.1 [AACR2 12.1B1; RDA 2.3.2.5 exception]: ALA **opposes** the removal of the exception from RDA, and likewise **opposes** the removal of the exception from the ISBD.

    ALA believes that the exception is justified. The need to determine the title proper for a continuing resource is ongoing; the determination needs to be affirmed for every issue or iteration of the resource. It is therefore important that the instructions for selecting the title proper of a continuing resource be simple and straightforward to apply and lead to a predictable result, one that will lead to the same decision being made by anyone applying the instructions. While judgement based on the sequence or layout of the source of information may be practical for monographs, it leaves the cataloguer of a continuing resource at the mercy of the aesthetic whims of the designer of the source. Furthermore, any reliance on cataloguer judgement is likely to lead to a diversity of results that is simply not tolerable when choosing the title proper of a serial. For example, it is often unclear whether a set of letters should be interpreted as an acronym or a logo.

    The stability of the title proper is also important for continuing resources, and the ambiguity that results from the need to interpret the sequence and layout of the sources is likely to lead to unnecessary major title changes — which the exception is designed to avoid.

    Finally, in the light of the position taken by the ISSN Network, ALA also **reaffirms** the importance of the harmonization agreement and urges that it not be broken by the proposed revision of the ISBD.

2. Application of the guidelines for major/minor title changes that refer to the first five *words* in the title proper to Chinese, Japanese, and Korean titles:

    ALA does not have a definite recommendation to make on this issue. We observe:

    - The current provision applies well to romanized data.

    - For data in CJK scripts, there was no consensus for any of the three alternatives (the current instruction; counting characters instead of words, not counting either words or characters when evaluating a possible title change).

    - ALA does not recommend that any change to RDA be made at this time. However, note that the report below identifies other RDA instructions that invoke the concept of *words*.

    Attached is the report of ALA's experts on Asian cataloguing; although it specifically addresses provisions in RDA, it might be of interest to the ISBD Review Group.

To: ALA/ALCTS/CCS/Committee on Cataloging: Asian and African Materials

Date: 23 October 2008

From: CC:AAM Task Force on RDA

Subject: 5JSC/Chair/13 (7 October 2008), Issue #2

On 13 October 2008, 5JSC/Chair/13 (7 October 2008), issue #2 was referred to various relevant groups, including the CC:AAM Task Force on *RDA*. It pertains to difficulty, reported from the ISBD Review Group to JSC, with counting words in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, for determining whether or not any change has occurred within the first five or six words of serial titles proper.

The Task Force on *RDA* within ALCTS/Committee on Cataloging: Asian and African Materials (CC:AAM) thoroughly reviewed in December 2005 and January 2006 draft *RDA*, 2.3.1.12 (Dec. 2005) pertaining to major and minor changes in serial titles proper but did not find at that time the provision, which is in line with current *AACR2*, 21.2C2, problematic or difficult to apply to Chinese-, Japanese-, or Korean-language serial titles proper. *ALA-LC romanization tables* (1997) and subsequent revisions delineate word-division of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean phrases and expressions, which has been facilitating and will continue to facilitate counting words in each of these languages.

While counting words in these languages is essential in determining whether or not addition, deletion, change, or reordering of first five or six words has occurred, however, we do not find it a relevant issue "counting words in these … *scripts* [emphasis added]" (5JSC/Chair/13, 7 October 2008). Although the Chinese script is certainly used in all of these three languages, word-division in each of these three languages does not need to be the same. As a matter of fact, *ALA-LC romanization tables* (1997) and subsequent revisions carry different word-division provisions for some of the same Chinese character stings depending on the language in which such Chinese character strings are used.

While word-division rules incorporated into *ALA-LC romanization tables* (1997) and subsequent revisions for Chinese, Japanese, and Korean languages are indeed results of CC:AAM's on-going direct involvement, some other affected communities outside ALA might need to develop or adopt word-division guidelines in order to apply the provision at *RDA* draft, 2.3.1.12 (Dec. 2005), similar to current *AACR2*, 21.2C2.

After 5JSC/Chair/13 (7 October 2008), issue #2 was referred to various relevant groups on 13 October 2008, members on the CC:AAM Task Force on *RDA* re-examined this issue; and some of them have expressed uneasiness with regard to counting the number of words in Chinese-, Japanese-, and Korean-language serials titles proper. Although, traditionally and currently, North American libraries have been providing romanization of Chinese-, Japanese-, and Korean-language titles in library catalog records, some other libraries and information service providers have not been, which should be a consideration in the international harmonization efforts of influential serials processing standards. Even at North American

libraries, that practice of providing romanization of Chinese-, Japanese-, and Korean-language titles might not be regarded as perpetual. While it is recognized that romanization is not a prerequisite for word-division, without romanization, counting Chinese, Japanese, and Korean words in serial titles would be a somewhat cumbersome process.

Given the extremely short notice and large ramification of the issue, the CC:AAM Task Force on *RDA* did not reach a single conclusion. Alternatives to counting words mentioned and discussed among members on the CC:AAM Task Force on *RDA* were:

- counting characters (as opposed to words) in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean-language serial titles proper; and
- not counting any word (or character) in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean-language serial titles proper.

Views of Task Force members were divided, however, among the three approaches: counting words (current *AACR2* and proposed *RDA* provisions); counting characters; and not counting any word or character (seemingly current cataloging practice in Taiwan and Japan).

Some members reiterated that the current practice of counting words have been working well among ALA constituents.

Counting characters (rather than words) would be simpler by constituents of some relevant communities outside ALA. Yet, even with that approach, some stipulation would be necessary as to a method of counting or not counting at least some appearing in Japanese titles, such as a vowel elongation mark (as in "jānaru" as romanized for "journal," which, without clear guideline in that respect, may be considered either a full-fledged character or a punctuation. Also, as to how many characters would be made a threshold, if characters (and not words) should be counted, views among Task Force members varied.

Views also varied among Task Force members as to implementation of counting characters; however, members more or less appeared to feel that a change, among ALA constituents, to the current practice of counting words of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean serial titles proper would be feasible, if it indeed becomes necessary, without much disruption in this regard to current bibliographic records that ALA constituents have for Chinese, Japanese, and Korean serials.

It was wondered whether or not making an exception to Chinese, Japanese, and Korean-language titles on the ground that counting words is difficult would lead to reconsideration of other parts of *RDA* drafts, including:

- Never omit any of the first five *words*. (*RDA*, draft 2.3.0.6 (Dec. 2005))
- A name containing a *word* that normally implies administrative subordination … (*RDA*, draft 11.2.3.2.4 (Dec. 2007))
- An agency with a name containing a *word* that normally implies administrative subordination in the terminology of the government concerned … (*RDA*, draft 11.2.6.2.3 (Dec. 2007))

- An acronym is a ***word*** formed from the initial letters of ***words*** in the full form of a name. (*RDA*, draft 11.3.2.1.1 (Dec. 2007))
- An initialism is a string of initial letters of ***words*** taken from the full form of a name read as separate letters. (*RDA*, draft 11.3.2.1.2 (Dec. 2007))

The CC:AAM Task Force on *RDA*, nonetheless, recommends CC:AAM's response to CC:DA that "an additional stipulation" (5JSC/Chair/13, 7 October 2008) for counting Chinese, Japanese, and Korean words would be helpful to some, especially those outside North America, while CC:AAM has been making on-going contribution to Chinese-, Japanese-, and Korean-language chapters within *ALA-LC romanization tables* (1997), which incorporate word-division rules for titles in these three languages. In addition, although it is assumed that the ISBD Review Group is well aware of current practices and views on this issue among cataloging communities in East Asia, further feedback from them might be beneficial to JSC as well as to the ISBD Review Group.