

5JSC/RDA/Full draft/Chair follow-up/2
30 January 2009

To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA

From: Margaret Stewart, Chair, JSC

Subject: RDA: Resource Description and Access – Full Draft – Review by the National Library of New Zealand

These are comments on the full draft of RDA received from the National Library of New Zealand.

RDA full draft - Constituency Review of full draft

Comments from the National Library of New Zealand January 30 2009

The comments below reflect our views of the aspects of the draft we have been able to examine during the review period. We do not claim to have looked the entire draft in detail.

1. General Comments

- We consider the overall structure of the draft to be sound. The basic division into attributes and relationships reinforces a useful way of thinking for cataloguers
- At a general level we think we can work with these rules as currently written
- The lack of references to principles except at the highest level is very disappointing and repeats a failing of AACR. We consider that this will limit the ability of cataloguers to deal with new situations and encourage a “case-law” rather than a principles-based approach to cataloguing
- It seems that there is a requirement to record attributes and primary relationships for each of the Group 1 entities only when a work exists in more than one expression. Thus if there is only one expression of a work, there is no need to record a relationship between a manifestation and that expression, or between a manifestation and the work. Rules 0.6.5 and 17.3 plus the examples in Chapters 6,7, 17 and Appendix M have lead us to this conclusion, although there we could find no explicit statements to support our view. If recording primary relationships is not required, or not applicable, for a large percentage of resources, we consider that this should be clearly specified in RDA. We are also concerned at the impact this non-recording could have on the effective display and retrieval of bibliographic information in the longer term.
- The use of controlled vocabularies is useful, but the use of “other” for new terms is not - it dates data very quickly and lends itself to local practice and workarounds. Better to have guidance on how and when to use a term that doesn’t appear in the list.

2. Specific Comments

- 0.6 Core elements
Language is not a core element at present. We would like to see it a core element as an attribute of expressions for the content types where language applies. At present it appears that language is only added when needed to distinguish entities or it could be that there is an *implicit assumption* that language will be part of an encoding standard. We consider language to be a

fundamental element in fulfilment of the FRBR user tasks and therefore that it should be a core element in RDA.

- Chapters 6 and 7 cover attributes of works and expressions. We cannot see the need for a structure that places some attributes of works in one chapter and other attributes in a different chapter (and similarly for expressions), particularly when individual rules do not always identify the entity to which the instruction applies, e.g. rule 7.11.2.1.
- 6.3.1.3 - Form of work looks like an area where a defined list would be useful, taking into account the comment under above about the use of controlled vocabularies. It would be very easy to generate duplicate work records based on different terms for the same form without some kind of control.

3. Examples

- **1.8.4.**
 - The first example lacks a full reference to what appears on the source of information
 - The second example shows an unexplained (and unnecessary?) change of punctuation - from the use of a hyphen “1961-2” to the use of a slash “1961/1962”
- **6.2.10.1** The King of the Hill example is poorly chosen. This episode title is also the title of a completely different television program. A different episode title would avoid this confusion.
- **6.7.1.3** Form of Old English example does not match the form listed in ISO639-2
- **6.12.1.4** Form of Ancient Greek example does not match the form listed in ISO639-2
- **6.2.2.5. Exception. Anonymous works written in neither Greek nor in the preferred script of the agency.**
 - The first 3 examples would be more explicit if the preferred language of the agency was stated.
 - The description of the final example should include both language and script preference of the agency to support the choice of title
- **7.16.1.3.** The example for a bibliography includes page numbers. If recording supplementary content is an expression-level attribute, pagination is not appropriate as this can change between manifestations of the same expression.