TO: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA

FROM: Hugh Taylor, CILIP representative

SUBJECT: **RDA: Resource Description and Access – Constituency Review of Full Draft**

A. General comments

CILIP has had considerable difficulty reviewing this draft – and we doubt we are alone. Whilst the generally muted response, reflected here in the small number of comments relative to the extent of the document under review, in part reflects the size of the group available to review the draft, and the limited scope or issues on which comments were sought in the cover letter, a number of other factors came into play, which we touch on below.

Much of the text has been agreed in previous consultations (or in JSC discussions following up on those consultations) so we wouldn't have expected too many new points to arise. Equally, though, we note that a number of agreed changes have not been incorporated into this draft, and it's difficult for constituency members to know what these are and where they fall. This, and the request to try to avoid resubmitting points which have already been discussed – not to mention the difficulty in determining whether or not this situation might apply to a specific point – have led to a degree of caution in what individuals were prepared to put forward in the way of comments.

The delays in issuing this draft meant there was limited time for constituencies to review a very lengthy document. The timing was unfortunate, too, since the review period also included the Christmas break (up to 10 days for some in the UK), when RDA was off the radar.

However, the biggest impediment to a thorough review of this draft was the failure by the Co-Publishers to provide an early version of the online tool in which to place and use the text in the way for which it is so clearly written. Leaving constituencies to battle with PDFs, the sheer size of the resulting "book" (whether viewed in print or as on-screen text), and the difficulty – on this scale of operation – of following links, all took their toll. It was impossible to follow the underlying logic in the way that the one available workflow shows is clearly intended. The sheer number of errors in the text, not present in the documentation with which the JSC was originally working, drained confidence. The linear nature of what we were left with also made it impossible for us to find a means of dividing responsibility for reviewing the draft in any meaningful way. We think it is hard to overestimate the damage that the non-appearance of the promised online version as part of this review has had, not just on the specific task facing reviewers (the focus of this response), but on individuals' confidence in the project.

We have recently raised a number of issues regarding the current state of the RDA project with our representative on the Committee of Principals, but the above summarises our general thoughts as they relate to this final draft and this review of that draft.

B. Specific comments in instruction number order

0.6.1: This instruction needs additionally to cover the provision of additional detail *within* an element in order to differentiate the resource (currently it deals only with the provision of additional elements). For example, in 0.6.2: for early printed resources (for which "publisher" includes "printer"), more detail may be required in order to distinguish between manifestations.

* 1.9.2.5-10: This much-improved instruction introduces confusion with respect to a work dated to the first decade of a century. If [1800s] is given for a book printed any time in the 19th century, what would one put for a book dated to between 1800 and 1809 in order to differentiate it from one dated to somewhere between 1800 and 1899? Clearly one could apply 1.9.2.11 instead ("not before 1800 and not after 1809") but that approach could be used for any decade (or century, even), which would then render 1.9.2.5 completely superfluous.

2.2.2.2, Exception for early printed resources: We strongly urge the reversal of (b) and (c), on the basis that a caption title will be an integral part of the work. A cover title for a book printed before about 1830 will not be, as books were sold in sheets to be bound by the bookseller or the purchaser, and were, moreover, often rebound. A cover title (usually a spine title) may well vary from copy to copy.

2.7.6.4 (applies also to: 2.8.6.4; 2.9.6.4; 2.10.6.4): Current wording:
    Indicate that the information was taken from a source outside the resource itself as instructed under 2.2.4.
This is incorrect: the information is taken from the resource, but interpreted. We suggest:
    Indicate in a note that the date appears on the resource as a chronogram

2.8.2.3: We should like to see this instruction specify that for early printed resources, a preposition appearing with the place of publication should be transcribed: e.g.
    Á Paris

2.8.6.4. See 2.7.6.4
2.9.6.4. See 2.7.6.4
2.10.6.4. See 2.7.6.4

2.15: Identifier for the manifestation. We were asked the question: Does RDA contain any instructions for noting a bibliographical reference to a work, e.g. "STC (2nd ed.) 2060.5"? Whilst we think such citations are indeed manifestation-level identifiers and that this is the appropriate instruction, it's not entirely clear – but there seems to be nowhere else. If this is the right place, then an additional example would be helpful.

3.4.5.3: According to the general guidelines at 3.4.5.2 (see the "i.e." statements in (a) and (b) on p. 35), the presence of numbering on both sides or one side is what distinguishes between recording "pages" or "leaves". (The Glossary does not include "leaf" or "page".) Therefore the beginning of the instruction at 3.4.5.3 is problematic without a fuller preceding definition of leaves and pages, for if they are unnumbered, how can one know whether to use pages or leaves?

3.4.5.3: In the paragraph beginning "When recording a sequence of unnumbered pages, etc…" bullet (b) strictly speaking needs to read

> an estimated number preceded by *approximately* and followed by *unnumbered pages*, etc.

(This would require a corresponding change to the 2nd example on p. 39.)

3.4.5.9: "Disregard unnumbered sequences of plates" (p. 44). This instruction is undesirable. Plates are often unnumbered, especially in early printed resources. For early printed resources the desire to account for every leaf to show how the resource has been put together makes it essential to consider them, even if they don't constitute a substantial part of the resource or aren't referred to in a note.

3.4.5.14, exception for early printed resources, 2nd para.: Does the sheet have to be folded? Could it not be "designed to be folded", as in the previous paragraph? If so, the wording needs to match.

It is also unclear whether this part of the early printed resources exception may apply to a single sheet printed as a part of a book but never folded and stitched. The use of "panel" (instead of "page") implies that it is not intended to cover such cases. They are, however, the most common folded single sheets cataloguers are likely to encounter with early printed resources, and so the instruction needs to be clearer. Sheets intended to be folded and stitched into books might be better described as parts of books: that would need to be explained.

3.12.1.3: The term "book format" was unknown to CILIP's reviewers; "bibliographic format" is the common term, if a qualifier has to be used at all. Additionally, the first two sentences would make more sense reversed, but we believe that the format is *always* important in hand press books and urge would prefer to omit the second sentence.

* 3.13: We think there is a case for renaming this element "Text characteristics". The scope should cover not just the font size, but also the font type and contrast between text and paper colour, e.g.

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24 point Arial font on cream paper
Arial font in blue on yellow background
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See also comments at 7.17.5 which impact on this element.

3.19.3.3: We propose an addition to the list, under "Text encoding formats":

> Megadots

For more information, see http://www.duxburysystems.com/megadots.asp

3.22.2.9: We suggest that RDA refers out to Gaskell's *A new introduction to bibliography* for guidance on presenting the collational formula for signatures.

6.2.2.5: Here, and in other places in chapter 6, the instruction is to use "well-established titles" as preferred titles. Not only is "well-established" going to be relative – what's "well-established" to a classical scholar, for instance, may mean nothing outside that field of endeavour – but we wondered whether it would be helpful to provide a guideline for determining what was "well-established" and what wasn't? For example, pointing users in the direction of readily-available standardised forms might be a way of aiding consistency in this area.

6.2.2.8: Since the purpose of preferred titles is to help users find specified works, it really doesn't help to change the guidelines for choosing the form of preferred titles just because the manifestation in hand is part of an incunable. Only if incunables contain texts that have not been edited and reprinted would it make sense to refer to reference sources to identify preferred titles, but even then it would be better to use other more subject-based reference sources.

7.13.4.3: Within the visually impaired community, our understanding is that braille is usually referred to as "braille code". In addition, the term "computer braille" suggests that the braille has been computer-generated. To clarify the correct context here we recommend changing the terms to:
> braille code
> computing braille code
> mathematics braille code
> Moon code
> music braille code
> tactile musical notation

We also propose the addition of the following term to the list:
> tactile graphic

7.17.5: The draft currently has statements about text/background colour here. Although we can see some logic in grouping together all of the colour instructions, there is a strong argument for placing this instruction at 3.13 (whose renaming we have already proposed above). The instruction is not really about recording *illustrative content* – colour is there not as illustration but to make the text readable by people with certain visual impairments. If the current placing were to be retained then it would be essential to include references between these two instructions, as well as to ensure that the online product is capable of distinguishing between the different uses of "colour" in the instructions.

8.5.6: Although it reflects the status quo, it seems inconsistent to leave a space between a full stop following an initial representing a forename or surname and the subsequent initial or name but not when recording the name of a corporate body (compare the Rowling and Folger examples). Having instructions that are inconsistent – treating similar situations differently depending whether the name is a personal, family or corporate name, is likely to result in

errors. It's also the sort of illogicality that we hoped would disappear from RDA (and which gives cataloguers a bad name in some quarters).

D.3.1: Now that MARC 21 bibliographic field 440 has been made obsolete, presumably this should be removed from the mapping? More generally, this raises the question as to whether D.3 needs to make clear its position on obsolete fields/subfields, or whether ignoring such obsolete elements can be assumed by users of RDA to be the norm.

C. Comments on Examples in instruction number order

1.7.3, 1ˢᵗ example: Perhaps add a space after the dots (cf use of space in 2.3.1.4)?

2.3.1.5: Is there an inconsistency between "Eileen Ford's a more beautiful you in 21 days" (lower-case a) and "Beethoven's Fifth symphony" (capital F)? (Eileen Ford also appears as an example in A.4.1, in the same form.)

2.15, Identifier for the manifestation. See comment in section B above.

3.4.5.17, 1ˢᵗ para.: For early printed resources, there is emphasis on accounting for every leaf of a volume. Therefore, CILIP would like to see an exception for early printed resources that allows (a) for continuously paged early printed resources in more than one volume to not use the physical description area to record preliminary sequences unless only the first volume contains such a sequence, and (b) for multi-volumes in which more than one volume contains a preliminary sequence, to give a complete record of sequences in a note.

6.2.2.5, p. 12, final example: the non-preferred title for Eusebius' work should not be the current genitive singular, but should instead read

        Ekklēsiastikē historia

6.2.2.8: Both examples (the first of which contains a repetition of "De viris illustribus") given are unhelpful because they are very obscure. The *De viris illustribus* (or *De viris illustribus urbis Romae* in its LC authority form) is, according to modern reference sources, of unknown authorship; the most common early attribution (found in most incunable editions) was to Sextus Aurelius Victor, though occasionally it was attributed to Pliny the Younger and also Suetonius (confusingly, though, Suetonius wrote a different *De viris illustribus*, of which fragments survive, and without knowing the edition behind the second example it is difficult to be sure which work is here in question).

7.13.4.3: The single example currently provided does not fully illustrate the use of the instruction. The UK usually refers to the actual grades, so extra examples would be useful. Here are some suggestions

        braille (uncontracted)
                Tactile system of notation for a resource in grade 1 braille described by an agency in
                the United States

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braille (grade 1)
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Tactile system of notation for a resource in grade 1 braille (uncontracted) described by an agency in the United Kingdom
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braille (grade 2)
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Tactile system of notation for a resource in grade 2 braille (contracted) described by an agency in the United Kingdom
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Moon code (grade 2)
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Tactile system of notation for a resource in grade 2 braille (contracted) described by an agency in the United Kingdom

21.3: As regards the instruction to provide a preferred access point for a publisher when considered important for access, for early printed books this will frequently be the case, including times when the publisher and printer are distinguishable. We would therefore welcome an example pertaining to an early printed resource here, e.g.:
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Chard, Thomas, d. 1624, publisher
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For the benefit of special collections more widely, we suggest also including an example of a private press publisher here.

D. Typographical errors

Typos noted by CILIP have been entered directly into the RDA Typos wiki and are not included in this response.