

**TO:** Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA  
**FROM:** John Attig, ALA Representative  
**SUBJECT:** Proposed Revisions of RDA instructions on Sources of Information (RDA 2.2.2.1–2.2.2.4)

Among the “Issues deferred until after the first release of RDA” [6JSC/Sec/1], one of ALA’s high priorities was “Preferred Source of Information and Collective Titles” in Chapter 2. ALA formed a Task Force to look into this and other issues relating to the RDA guidelines and instructions for the Basis for Identification of the Resource (RDA 2.1) and for Sources of Information (RDA 2.2). The Task Force has confirmed a perception that these guidelines are confusing and difficult to apply. The Task Force continues to work on a more comprehensive revision of these instructions, but has recommended that some specific changes should be proposed as soon as possible so that the revisions are available when RDA is implemented in 2013. ALA agrees with these recommendations.

The following revision proposals are presented together because they all deal with RDA 2.2, although they deal with different issues. Each revision proposal is presented separately, along with background and rationale; a single clean copy of RDA 2.2, incorporating all of the proposed changes, is given at the end of the document.

## **Recommendations**

### **A. Containers in RDA 2.2.2.1 and 2.2.4**

This proposal was originally developed by the Music Library Association, which considered clarification of the status of containers in RDA 2.2.2 (Preferred Source of Information) to be a high priority. Based on a recommendation from the Task Force on Sources of Information, ALA has endorsed this revision proposal.

This proposal is to revise the language of RDA 2.2.2.1 to make more explicit the role of a publisher-issued container as being part of a resource.

The fourth paragraph of RDA 2.2.2.1 currently reads:

Treat a container such as a box in which a game or kit is issued as part of the resource itself. Treat a container that is not issued as part of the resource (e.g., a box or case made by the owner) as a source outside the resource itself.

We presume the instruction’s intent is to make the provenance of the container (i.e. from the entity issuing the resource vs. from another source) the determinant for considering it part of a resource. The distinction is made in the negative, however (“a container that is not issued as part of the resource” and the examples of containers issued as part of the resource itself are relatively esoteric and suggest a narrow application of the principle.

The instruction for accompanying material in 2.2.2.1, third paragraph, posits the material's status vis-à-vis the resource as a function of the level of description being prepared (comprehensive vs. analytical), where in the former level of description, the accompanying material is considered to be part of the resource. ALA believes that it would be helpful to make this distinction more explicit in 2.2.4, a). The corresponding distinction for containers is made in point b); ALA proposes a slight change in wording to make it parallel with 2.2.2.1.

For the proposed language ("issued with the resource"), see section B below.

**RDA 2.2.2.1, fourth paragraph: proposed revisions:**

Treat a container issued with the resource (such as a box in which a game or kit is issued or a clamshell box containing compact discs in individual jewel cases or cardboard sleeves) as part of the resource itself. Treat a container that ~~is~~ was not issued ~~as part of~~ with the resource (e.g., a box or case made by the owner) as a source outside the resource itself.

**RDA 2.2.4: proposed revisions:**

**2.2.4 Other Sources of Information**

If information required to identify the resource does not appear on a source forming part of the resource itself (see [2.2.2.1](#)), take it from one of the following sources (in order of preference):

- a) accompanying material (e.g., a leaflet, an "about" file) when preparing an analytical description
- b) a container that ~~is~~ was not issued ~~as part of~~ with the resource itself (e.g., a box, or case made by the owner)
- c) other published descriptions of the resource
- d) any other available source (e.g., a reference source).

*[remainder of instruction omitted; no change]*

**B. Covers as sources of information**

The guidelines for containers make a distinction between those in which the resource is issued and those made by an owner after the resource is issued. The same distinction needs to be made regarding the use of a cover as a source of information in RDA 2.2.2.2. A cover should be used as a source of information only when it is issued by the publisher, distributor, or manufacturer of the resource. This is particularly important for early printed resources, which were commonly issued unbound and were bound to order by the purchaser. Even for modern resources, a distinction should be made between a cover issued by the publisher and one provided by a binder after publication.

The phrase “issued by the publisher” is not adequate when referring to early printed resources, as the functions of publisher, distributor (“bookseller”), and manufacturer (“printer”) were not always distinct. Rather than the cumbersome phrase “issued by the publisher, distributor, or manufacturer,” we recommend using the phrase “issued with the resource.” We also recommend that this phrase be used generally throughout RDA 2.2 (see the proposed revision of 2.2.2.1 above).

### **RDA 2.2.2.2: proposed revisions:**

#### **2.2.2.2 Resources Consisting of One or More Pages, Leaves, Sheets, or Cards (or Images of One or More Pages, Leaves, Sheets, or Cards)**

[first paragraph and alternative omitted; no change]

If the resource lacks a title page, title sheet, or title card (or image thereof), use as the preferred source of information the first of the following sources that bears a title:

- a) a cover issued with the resource (or an image of a that cover)
- b) a caption (or an image of a caption)
- c) a masthead (or an image of a masthead)
- d) a colophon (or an image of a colophon).

#### **Exception**

**Early printed resources.** If an early printed resource (or a reproduction thereof) lacks a title page, title sheet, or title card (or image thereof), use as the preferred source of information the first of the following sources that bears a title:

- a) a colophon (or an image of a colophon)
- b) a cover issued with the resource (or an image of a that cover)
- c) a caption (or an image of a caption)

[remaining paragraphs omitted; no change]

### **C. Priority of sources for moving-image resources (RDA 2.2.2.3) and other resources (RDA 2.2.2.4)**

At the November 2011 JSC meeting, representatives from the ISSN Network noted that RDA 2.2.2.4, which applies to electronic resources, does not allow the textual content of an online resources to be used as the preferred source. As such resources do not have labels, the next available choice is embedded metadata, which often yields an inadequate title.

In looking at the provisions for using embedded metadata in RDA 2.2.2.3 and 2.2.2.4, it became clear that the priorities need to be re-examined. ALA is still working on this issue, and believes that ultimately there should be additional categories within 2.2.2, based on

categories of resources with their own conventions for presenting identifying information. While we are not ready to offer such a proposal at this time, we do offer revisions based on the following priorities for choosing the preferred source of information:

- Labels should be preferred over containers and accompanying material (unless the label does not include a collective title, and the container or accompanying material does).
- Containers and accompanying material should be preferred over embedded metadata.
- For tangible electronic resources, either a label or an internal source may be used.
- For online resources, either the textual content or embedded metadata may be used.

We believe that these changes would be immediately beneficial to catalogers attempting to apply these instructions, and are likely to be generally compatible with any further proposals that we might make. We recommend that these revisions be approved, so that they can be available early in the RDA implementation next year.

### **RDA 2.2.2.3: proposed revisions:**

#### **2.2.2.3 Resources Consisting of Moving Images**

If the resource consists of moving images (e.g., a film reel, a videodisc, a video game, an MPEG video file), use the title frame or frames, or title screen or screens, as the preferred source of information. If the title frames or title screens only list the titles of the individual contents and another source forming part of the resource bears a formally-presented collective title, choose the first applicable source bearing a formally-presented collective title.

#### **Alternative**

Use an ~~eye-readable~~ a label bearing a title that is permanently printed on or affixed to the resource (excluding accompanying textual material or a container) in preference to the title frame or frames, or title screen or screens.

If the resource does not contain a title frame or title screen, use as the preferred source of information, ~~as applicable~~ the first of the following that bears a title:

#### ***either***

- ~~a) a label bearing a title that is permanently printed on or affixed to the resource, excluding accompanying textual material or a container (e.g., a label on a videodisc)~~

#### ***or***

- ~~b) embedded metadata in textual form that contains a title (e.g., metadata embedded in an MPG video file).~~

- b) for a comprehensive description, a container or accompanying material issued with the resource

c) one of the following:

- 1) textual content of an online resource
- 2) embedded metadata in textual form that contains a title (e.g., metadata embedded in an MPEG video file) [**formerly b**]
- 3) an internal source forming part of a tangible digital resource (e.g., a disc menu).

If the resource contains neither a title frame or title screen nor a source of information falling into category a), ~~or b),~~ or c) above, use as the preferred source of information another source forming part of the resource itself, giving preference to sources in which the information is formally presented.

## RDA 2.2.2.4: proposed revisions:

### 2.2.2.4 Other Resources

For a resource other than one covered under [2.2.2.2–2.2.2.3](#), use as the preferred source of information, ~~as applicable~~ the first of the following sources that bears a title. If the first source of information that bears a title only lists the titles of the individual contents and another source forming part of the resource bears a formally-presented collective title, choose the first applicable source bearing a formally-presented collective title.

***either***

a) for tangible resources, one of the following:

- 1) a textual source on the resource itself (e.g., a slide) or a label bearing a title that is permanently printed on or affixed to the resource, excluding accompanying textual material or a container (e.g., a label on an audio CD or a model)
- 2) an internal source, such as a title screen, whose textual content formally presents the title

***or***

- ~~b) embedded metadata in textual form that contains a title (e.g., metadata embedded in an MP3 audio file).~~
- b) for a comprehensive description of a tangible resource, a container or accompanying material issued with the resource
- c) one of the following:
  - 1) textual content of an online resource
  - 2) embedded metadata in textual form that contains a title (e.g., metadata embedded in an MP3 audio file) [**formerly b**]

If the resource does not contain a source of information falling into category a), ~~or b)~~, or c) above, use as the preferred source of information another source forming part of the resource itself, giving preference to sources in which the information is formally presented.

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## 2.2 Sources of Information

### 2.2.1 Application

Apply the instructions given under [2.2.2–2.2.4](#) when choosing a source of information for all elements covered in this chapter unless the instructions on sources of information for the element specify otherwise.

#### 2.2.2.1 General Guidelines

Use as the preferred source of information a source forming part of the resource itself that is appropriate to:

a) the type of description (see [2.1](#))

**and**

b) the presentation format of the resource (see [2.2.2.2–2.2.2.4](#)).

When choosing a preferred source of information, treat both the storage medium (e.g., paper, tape, film) and any housing (e.g., a cassette, a cartridge) that is an integral part of the resource as part of the resource itself.

Treat accompanying material as part of the resource itself when describing the resource as a whole using a comprehensive description. When preparing an analytical description of one or more components of a resource, treat accompanying material as a source outside the resource itself (i.e., as a related resource).

Treat a container issued with the resource (such as a box in which a game or kit is issued or a clamshell box containing compact discs in individual jewel cases or cardboard sleeves) as part of the resource itself. Treat a container that was not issued with the resource (e.g., a box or case made by the owner) as a source outside the resource itself.

If there is more than one source of information that qualifies as the preferred source of information for the resource as specified under [2.2.2.2–2.2.2.4](#), apply the additional instructions given under [2.2.3](#).

If information required for the identification of the resource is not available from a source forming part of the resource itself, take it from another source as instructed under [2.2.4](#).

### 2.2.2.2 Resources Consisting of One or More Pages, Leaves, Sheets, or Cards (or Images of One or More Pages, Leaves, Sheets, or Cards)

If the resource consists of:

- a) one or more pages, leaves, sheets, or cards (e.g., a book, an issue of a periodical, a poster, a series of sheet maps, a set of flashcards)

**or**

- b) images of one or more pages, leaves, sheets, or cards (e.g., a microform reproduction of a musical score, a PDF file of a text, microform reproductions of a set of sheet maps, a JPEG image of a photograph)

use the title page, title sheet, or title card (or image thereof) as the preferred source of information.

#### **Alternative**

If the resource consists of microform or computer images of one or more pages, leaves, sheets, or cards, use an eye-readable label bearing a title that is permanently printed on or affixed to the resource in preference to the image of the title page, title sheet, or title card.

If the resource lacks a title page, title sheet, or title card (or image thereof), use as the preferred source of information the first of the following sources that bears a title:

- e) a cover issued with the resource (or an image of that cover)
- f) a caption (or an image of a caption)
- g) a masthead (or an image of a masthead)
- h) a colophon (or an image of a colophon).

#### **Exception**

**Early printed resources.** If an early printed resource (or a reproduction thereof) lacks a title page, title sheet, or title card (or image thereof), use as the preferred source of information the first of the following sources that bears a title:

- d) a colophon (or an image of a colophon)
- e) a cover issued with the resource (or an image of that cover)
- f) a caption (or an image of a caption)

If none of the sources listed above bears a title, use as the preferred source of information another source within the resource that bears a title, giving preference to a source in which the information is formally presented.

If the resource does not contain any of the sources specified above, use as the preferred source of information another source forming part of the resource itself, giving preference to sources in which the information is formally presented.

### **2.2.2.3 Resources Consisting of Moving Images**

If the resource consists of moving images (e.g., a film reel, a videodisc, a video game, an MPEG video file), use the title frame or frames, or title screen or screens, as the preferred source of information. If the title frames or title screens only list the titles of the individual contents and another source forming part of the resource bears a formally-presented collective title, choose the first applicable source bearing a formally-presented collective title.

#### ***Alternative***

Use a label bearing a title that is permanently printed on or affixed to the resource (excluding accompanying textual material or a container) in preference to the title frame or frames, or title screen or screens.

If the resource does not contain a title frame or title screen, use as the preferred source of information the first of the following that bears a title:

- a) a label that is permanently printed on or affixed to the resource, excluding accompanying textual material or a container (e.g., a label on a videodisc)
- b) for a comprehensive description, a container or accompanying material issued with the resource
- c) one of the following:
  - 1) textual content of an online resource
  - 2) embedded metadata in textual form that contains a title (e.g., metadata embedded in an MPEG video file)
  - 3) an internal source forming part of a tangible digital resource (e.g., a disc menu).

If the resource contains neither a title frame or title screen nor a source of information falling into category a) b), or c) above, use as the preferred source of information another source forming part of the resource itself, giving preference to sources in which the information is formally presented.

### **2.2.2.4 Other Resources**

For a resource other than one covered under [2.2.2.2–2.2.2.3](#), use as the preferred source of information the first of the following sources that bears a title. If the first source of information that bears a title only lists the titles of the individual contents and another source forming part of the



resource bears a formally-presented collective title, choose the first applicable source bearing a formally-presented collective title.

- a) for tangible resources, one of the following:
  - 1) a textual source on the resource itself (e.g., a slide) or a label that is permanently printed on or affixed to the resource, excluding accompanying textual material or a container (e.g., a label on an audio CD or a model)
  - 2) an internal source, such as a title screen, whose textual content formally presents the title
- b) for a comprehensive description of a tangible resource, a container or accompanying material issued with the resource
- c) one of the following:
  - 1) textual content of an online resource
  - 2) embedded metadata in textual form that contains a title (e.g., metadata embedded in an MP3 audio file)

If the resource does not contain a source of information falling into category a) b), or c) above, use as the preferred source of information another source forming part of the resource itself, giving preference to sources in which the information is formally presented.

### **2.2.3 More Than One Preferred Source of Information**

*[instructions omitted; no change]*

### **2.2.4 Other Sources of Information**

If information required to identify the resource does not appear on a source forming part of the resource itself (see [2.2.2.1](#)), take it from one of the following sources (in order of preference):

- a) accompanying material (e.g., a leaflet, an "about" file) when preparing an analytical description
- b) a container that was not issued with the resource itself (e.g., a box or case made by the owner)
- c) other published descriptions of the resource
- d) any other available source (e.g., a reference source).

*[remainder of instruction omitted; no change]*