To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA

From: John Attig, ALA Representative

Subject: RDA 12–16, 23, 33–37 (Group 3 entities and "subject")

ALA thanks CILIP for this discussion and recommendation. We view this as an alternative to the approach outlined in 6JSC/LC Rep/3. In general, we find the approach in the latter paper to be more fruitful for developing "subject" content for the RDA placeholder chapters.

ALA agrees with CILIP that one of the issues that must be faced, both by the JSC and the FRBR Review Group, is the reconciliation of the way in which the subject entities and relationships are treated in the three Functional Requirements models. However, we do not believe that this means that we need to pick one of the models; if we did have to choose, we would not pick the highly general FRSAD model.

In a presentation to CC:DA in June 2011,[1] Gordon Dunsire went over the "subject" entities in the three FR models and showed how they can all be accommodated in a single structure of properties and sub-properties. In particular the four Group 3 FRBR entities can be defined as subproperties of the FRSAD Thema entity. If this is the direction in which the FRBR Review Group moves in reconciling the models, then there is no need to choose between them. In terms of RDA, this suggests defining Thema in Chapter 12 (the General Guidelines for the Group 3 entities), as well as defining each of the FRBR entities in the remaining chapters of Section 4.

ALA is convinced that any RDA instructions relating to subject entities and relationships need to be as general as possible in order to accommodate application to any possible system of subject headings or classification.

We are not sure how the proposed use of PRECIS fits into this requirement for generality, but we suspect that it would involve overlaying a different structure onto the FR model — something that we do not believe would be helpful.

Further comments on these and related issues will be found in the ALA response to 6JSC/LC Rep/3.

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[1] http://www.libraries.psu.edu/tas/jca/ccda/docs/FRSubjects.pptx