To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA (RDA JSC)

From: Gaëlle Béquet, Director of the ISSN International Centre, and the ISSN Review Group

Subject: Change in mode of issuance for online resources: proposal for a revised instruction.

1. Background

The current instruction at RDA 1.6.3.1 that a change in mode of issuance requires a new description is problematic for the ISSN Network in the case of online resources. The resulting multiple records are also likely to be a source of confusion for catalog users as the change from online serial to online integrating resource or online integrating resource to online serial can be a very subtle one. When resources are online, content providers have a broad variety of ways to present their content. A resource may be divided into "volumes and issues" and yet have a section of integrating reference material, such as in the John Wiley resource, *Comprehensive Physiology*, recently discussed in the CONSER community. A re-design by the provider may tilt the balance of such a resource towards or away from being regarded as a serial or as an integrating resource, thus requiring a new description. The re-design might not be successful and the provider will return to the previous design. Creating new descriptions each time these sometimes subtle changes take place only creates confusion.

The ISSN Register, the database of ISSN registrations worldwide, is based on the principle of one ISSN per description and one description per ISSN. Starting with the 2002 revision of AACR2, there has been a concerted effort to keep ISSN rules for major and minor changes aligned with ISBD and cataloging rules. However, the RDA instruction to create a new description for a change in mode of issuance is particularly difficult for the ISSN Network in the case of online resources. Content providers do not recognize the difference between an online serial and an online integrating resource and do not request a new ISSN when they make such a change. ISSN centers (and likely libraries also) may not become aware of such changes in most instances in order to assign a new ISSN or create a new description. ISSN users and library users are not likely to understand why a new ISSN or new description was necessary.

The proposal that follows is limited to online resources because we recognize that other changes in mode of issuance, e.g., from a monograph to a serial, or from a monograph to a print loose-leaf service, are more obvious and more significant. Our proposal instructs the cataloger to re-describe the online resource as a whole from a current issue or iteration rather than creating a new description. In our experience, the most common change in mode of issuance for online resources is from serial to

integrating. In such changes, re-describing from the current iteration of the integrating resource can be accomplished without difficulty. Notes are made, when useful, to document information pertaining to the former mode of issuance. The reverse, re-describing when an online integrating resource changes to a serial, can usually also be accomplished in a similar fashion.

 In our proposal we provide an exception for the situation where re-describing does not generally seem feasible or advisable, namely, the case where an integrating resource has undergone what would be major changes in title for a serial that are documented in a single integrating resource description. Depending on how the resource is presented as a serial, it might be difficult to access the appropriate sources needed to create separate serial descriptions for each of those changes that would be considered a major title change in a serial. Additionally, it may not be appropriate to separate the single description as an integrating resource into separate serial descriptions. For example, when presented as a serial, the resource might now include all content under the current title.   The exception instructs the cataloger to close out the description as an integrating resource and create a new description that begins with the resource's presentation as a serial as would be done for other changes in mode of issuance.

Proposal

 1.6.2.1 Change in Mode of Issuance of a Serial

> Create a new description if a serial changes to a multipart monograph, or a print serial changes to a print or online integrating resource, see 2.1.3. Do not create a new description if an online serial changes to an online integrating resource. Instead, re-describe the resource from the current iteration and make notes as needed to accommodate the former issuance as a serial.

> Create a new description if a multipart monograph changes to a serial, or if a print integrating resource changes to a print or online serial, see 2.1.3. Do not create a new description if an online integrating resource changes to an online serial. Instead, re-describe from the earliest issue of the online serial and make notes as needed to accommodate the former issuance as an integrating resource. Exception: if the description as an integrating resource includes one or more changes of title, determine whether any of the changes are major changes according to RDA 1.6.2.3. If any major changes have been recorded, do not update the existing description but rather create a new description for the resource beginning with its serial mode of issuance.