

To: RDA Steering Committee

From: Thomas Brenndorfer, Extent Working Group Chair

Subject: Proposal for Manifestation: **duration of embodied content**

Abstract

This proposal paper recommends changing the current condition options for Expression: **duration** to exclude the option to record the total duration of aggregating expressions. It also includes a proposal to remove a condition and options for Work: **duration of representative expression** element, and a proposal for a new element for Manifestation: **duration of embodied content** that would record the duration of embodied content for manifestations with embodied content in temporal form (including performed music, sounds, spoken word, two-dimensional and three-dimensional moving images, and performed movement) or embodied content with an envisioned temporal duration (including notated music and notated movement).

Background and justification

The RSC Technical Working Group took up the challenge of reviewing *duration* after considering the [discussion paper](#) on extent elements in RDA. The following is based on details originally provided by Christopher Holden, Chair of the RSC Technical Working Group.

In the summer of 2024, the RDA Extent Working Group published a [discussion paper](#) on the development of extent elements in RDA, [RSC/ExtentWG/2024/1/rev2](#). The paper explored many of the issues surrounding RDA and extent, including duration as it currently exists as narrower element of Expression: **extent of expression**. While the Extent Working Group's discussion paper did not include any specific recommendations on changing duration elements in RDA, the Technical Working Group's [response paper](#) identified several issues for further study. Separately, some of these same issues were raised by NLNZ RDA Core Group to the Technical Working Group.

Parallel to the work of the Extent Working Group, IFLA's ISBD for Manifestation Task Force published a [draft of the ISBD for Manifestation \(ISBDM\)](#), which included similar approaches to extent as the work of the Extent Working Group. The draft of the ISBDM includes an element for **playing time** as a narrower element of a manifestation's **extent of embodied content**. This ISBDM element was noted in the Technical Working Group's response to the Extent Working Group's discussion paper.

Current RDA instructions under Expression: **duration** include conditions for recording the duration of expressions of aggregating works.

CONDITION

An expression is an *aggregating expression*.

CONDITION OPTION

Record the duration of each expression that is aggregated.

CONDITION OPTION

Record the total duration.

CONDITION OPTION

Record both the total duration and the duration of each expression that is aggregated.

These condition options are problematic, because an aggregating expression is a plan with no intrinsic attributes, and it does not inherit the attributes of its aggregated expressions. Therefore, it is incorrect to assert that an aggregating expression has a duration, because the aggregating expression has no relationship to the content it has aggregated. The condition and options should be removed.

Impact: Removing the condition and options under Expression: **duration** on aggregating works would remove a current inconsistency in RDA, as several of the options make recommendations that are counter to RDA's own definition of aggregating expressions.

Recommendation 1: Remove the condition and options under Expression: **duration** on aggregating expressions.

~~**CONDITION**~~~~An expression is an *aggregating expression*.~~~~**CONDITION OPTION**~~~~Record the duration of each expression that is aggregated.~~

~~CONDITION OPTION~~~~Record the total duration.~~~~CONDITION OPTION~~~~Record both the total duration and the duration of each expression that is aggregated.~~**Duration of embodied content**

Additional instructions for recording the duration of an aggregating expression exist under the element Work: **duration of representative expression**.

CONDITION

A work is an *aggregating work*.

CONDITION OPTION

Record a value that is a cumulation of values of Expression: **duration**
 for each of the expressions that are aggregated.

This above condition does not cause as many problems as the condition for Expression: **duration** described above, because the instructions make clear that a representative expression of an aggregating work does not have an intrinsic duration; rather, the duration is the result of the process of cumulating the durations of each of the aggregated expressions. The [guidance for representative expressions](#) also makes clear that “the values of representative expression elements for an aggregating work are derived from one or more expressions that are aggregated.”

However, the efficacy of looking at duration from the perspective of the *work* is unclear. The discussion paper from the Extent Working Group pointed out that, if one looks at duration from the perspective of the *manifestation*, then “playing time may include the durations of aggregated content plus the gaps between content.” The instructions for recording the duration of the representative expression of an aggregating work currently do not allow one to take into account the gaps between the content embodied in a manifestation, and may result in a duration value that differs from one recorded on the manifestation itself. (This issue was tacitly acknowledged in earlier cataloging guidelines, such as the Library of Congress rule interpretations to AACR2, which instructed a cataloger to round up to the nearest minute when calculating the total duration of a sound recording through the stated durations of its component units). It is also likely that a

user of the catalog is more likely to be concerned with the duration as the measure of total playing time of a manifestation, rather than as a cumulative total of aggregated expressions.

A new element of Manifestation: **duration of embodied content**, which would exist as a narrower element of the Manifestation: **extent of embodied content** element recommended by the Extent Working Group's discussion paper, would provide a quantity of duration of an aggregate that a catalog user would find more intuitively satisfying. It would also align with the ISBDM approach to extent and duration, and the shift toward the focus of approaching extent not simply as physical measurements, but also as the amount of content embodied in a manifestation, as recommended by the discussion paper of the Extent Working Group. The name and definition of the element Manifestation: **duration of embodied content** is slightly different from ISBDM's **playing time** element, to take into account the LRM's assertion that duration is not limited to expressions manifested temporally, but also can encompass the "envisioned duration of performance of musical notation."

Impact: Removing the condition and options under Work: **duration of representative expression** on aggregating works would shift the focus to recording the duration of aggregates to the manifestation level, specifically using the new element Manifestation: **duration of embodied content**. This would ensure that the duration of an aggregate was not being recorded under multiple elements, and moving the duration of an aggregate to a manifestation extent element would provide consistency in how RDA treats extent elements.

The creation of the new element Manifestation: **duration of embodied content** would be a change in how duration is addressed in RDA, especially for aggregating works, but should be seen in light of the larger push to provide clarity and consistency for extent elements in RDA, as represented by the work of the Extent Working Group, and the recent work by both the Extent Working Group and ISBDM to view extent of embodied content from the perspective of the manifestation.

Recommendation 2: Remove the condition and options under Work: **duration of representative expression** regarding aggregating works and expressions.

CONDITION

~~A work is an aggregating work.~~

CONDITION-OPTION

~~Record a value that is a cumulation of values of Expression: **duration** for each of the expressions that are aggregated.~~

Recommendation 3: Create a new element, Manifestation: **duration of embodied content**. Add Manifestation: **duration of embodied content** as a subtype of Manifestation: **extent of embodied content**.

Proposed definition: A measurement of the existing or envisioned duration of temporal content embodied in a manifestation, including the temporal gaps between the embodied content.

Scope note

This element applies to a manifestation that embodies one or more expressions that are manifested temporally (such as a cartographic moving image, performed music, sounds, spoken word, a two-dimensional and three-dimensional moving image, or performed movement), or to a manifestation that embodies one or more expressions that have an envisioned duration of performance (including notated music, notated music, tactile notated music, and tactile notated movement).

Include in the Prerecording section the language providing the option of using a value of Manifestation: **manifestation extent statement**.

For general guidance and instructions on recording a statement from a manifestation that reproduces another manifestation, see Guidance: Manifestation statements.

Manifestation statements of facsimiles and reproductions.

OPTION

Record an unstructured description within a value of Manifestation: **manifestation extent statement**.

Summary of recommendations

Recommendation 1: Remove the condition and options under Expression: **duration** on aggregating expressions.

Recommendation 2: Remove the condition and options under Work: **duration of representative expression** regarding aggregating works and expressions.

Recommendation 3: Create a new element, Manifestation: **duration of embodied content**. Add Manifestation: **duration of embodied content** as a subtype of Manifestation: **extent of embodied content**.