

To: RDA Steering Committee

From: Anne Welsh, RSC Secretary

Subject: Decisions on RSC/ExtentWG/2025/1 – Proposal for Manifestation: **extent of manifestation** and Manifestation: **manifestation extent statement**

The text below sets out decisions taken by the RSC at their meeting in January 2026 (RSC/Minutes/556-584 Item 574¹).

[RSC/ExtentWG/2025/1](#) was published on 18 November 2025 and formal responses were received from 9-17 January 2026. [RSC/ExtentWG/2025/1/summary](#) was published on 18 January, highlighting the need for further detailed work contained in the formal responses. In discussion during the Public Session, each of the points contained in the summary were discussed, and Thomas Brenndorfer stated that this proposal and those that followed, were submitted in the knowledge that further work would be needed. He asked for approval of the direction of travel and in a vote this was given unanimously, with the stipulation that the first action of the SES Working Group should be to draft a more detailed proposal showing how the direction of travel will be taken.

As this document will form one of the foundations for the Terms of Reference of the String Encoding Scheme (SES) Working Group, it sets out the recommendations made in [RSC/ExtentWG/2025/1](#) and the suggestions made in formal responses, as set out in [RSC/ExtentWG/2025/1/summary](#).

Recommendation 1

As set out in [RSC/ExtentWG/2025/1](#), the Extent Working Group Recommended the following changes to RDA:

Recommendation 1: Recast the element Manifestation: **extent of manifestation** as a superelement that is used to record values constructed from values derived from its subelements in accordance with string encoding schemes.

Current definition: A number and type of unit or subunit of a manifestation.

Proposed definition: A quantification of one or more physical characteristics of a manifestation.

For Prerecording, include the following (pending approval of the proposals of each of the subelements):

¹ This decisions document was prepared after a DRAFT of RSC/Minutes/556-584 was circulated to members of the RSC for approval.

This element is a *superelement* composed from values of one or more of the following *subelements*:

Manifestation: **dimensions of container**

Manifestation: **extent of aggregated content**

Manifestation: **extent of embodied content**

Manifestation: **designation of number of sound channels**

Manifestation: **dimensions of embodied content**

Manifestation: **duration of embodied content**

Manifestation: **image resolution**

Manifestation: **number of sound channels**

Manifestation: **reduction ratio**

Manifestation: **reduction ratio designation**

Manifestation: **extent of storage space**

Manifestation: **extent of unit**

Manifestation: **bibliographic format**

Manifestation: **dimensions**

Manifestation: **number of recording tracks**

Manifestation: **extent of unitary structure**

Manifestation: **number of containers**

Manifestation: **sequence of units of extent**

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**.

Include the following instructions:

Recording an unstructured description

For general guidance on unstructured descriptions, see Guidance: Recording methods.

Recording an unstructured description.

Recording a structured description

OPTION

Record a structured description by applying a *string encoding scheme* to select, sequence, and punctuate values of one or more subelements.

OPTION

Record a *string encoding scheme* that is used to construct a structured description. For general guidance, see Guidance: Data provenance. **Recording a content standard used for metadata.**

As set out in [RSC/ExtentWG/2025/1/summary](#), this recommendation was approved by [ALyC](#), [EURIG](#), [ExamplesEditor](#), [ORDAC](#), [TranslationsTLO](#). The Education and Orientation Officer also approved “subject to RSC approval of the subelements” ([RSC/ExtentWG/2025/1/EOO](#)).

[NARDAC](#) approved with amendments:

“Change the element label to follow the pattern of other superelements, e.g., Manifestation: edition statement and Manifestation: publication statement. For example, instead of Manifestation: extent of manifestation, change the label to Manifestation: extent statement.”

Remove or qualify the word “physical” in the proposed definition. NARDAC assumes that this superelement may be recorded for both tangible (physical) and intangible (electronic) resources, but the proposed definition limits the use of the superelement to describe manifestations with a physical presence.

Revised proposed definition: A quantification of one or more ~~physical~~ characteristics of a manifestation.”

Unusually NARDAC also offers further suggestions, in case their first suggestion is not accepted. Please see [RSC/ExtentWG/2025/1/NARDAC](#) if you would like to read these.

The [TTLO](#) approved with amendment:

“We recommend changing the proposed definition to match the definitions of other proposed elements in this set of proposals:

A quantification or measurement of one or more physical characteristics of a manifestation”

The [WCEO](#) approved with amendment:

“The use of the term “quantification” may be slightly misleading, as there are legitimate cataloguing situations in which extent values may not be expressed numerically and a qualitative description is therefore required. It would be helpful if this point were made explicit.”

The SES Working Group should note that following discussion, voting members of the RSC decided that more work was required, not only to incorporate the amendments set out in the formal responses but also to provide more detail.

RSC Decision on Recommendation 1

Moving forward, the SES Working Group should develop this recommendation to show more detail and then submit in a new proposal along with Recommendation 2.

The SES Working Group should also note that the RDA Examples Editor and the RSC Education and Orientation Officer offered assistance in including examples and guidance alongside the new proposal. Please ensure that the RDA Examples Editor and RSC Education and Orientation Officer are consulted before submitting the proposal to the Technical Working Group. The RSC Secretary will check that all three of these officers have been consulted before publishing the proposal.

Recommendation 2

As set out in [RSC/ExtentWG/2025/1](#), the Extent Working Group Recommended the following change to RDA:

Recommendation 2: Create the element Manifestation: **manifestation extent statement**, referencing each of the subelements of Manifestation: **extent of manifestation** as options to record a value. Update the RDA Toolkit guidance chapter for manifestation statements.

Proposed definition: A manifestation statement about the quantification of one or more physical characteristics of a manifestation.

As set out in [RSC/ExtentWG/2025/1/summary](#), was approved by [ALyC](#), [EOO](#), [EURIG](#), [ORDAC](#), [TranslationsTLO](#), [WCEO](#). The RSC Examples Editor stated explicitly that her approval was provisional on seeing more detail before implementation:

“Although I approve of the creation of this element, I would prefer to see at least a preliminary set of instructions, including Options, Conditions, and/or Condition Options. The instructions for manifestation statement elements do not follow a uniform structure. This arrangement is expected and not problematic, but it does make it difficult to infer what the instructions for Manifestation: **manifestation extent statement** would look like based on the instructions in the other manifestation statement elements.

Moreover, I agree with the recommendation to update the guidance chapter on manifestation statements, but I would like to see some suggested revisions. The current instructions for Manifestation: **extent of manifestation** are clearly weighted toward structured description more so than unstructured description. Additional guidance on the use of unstructured description in the new Manifestation: **manifestation extent statement** would give RDA users a better understanding of how to use the element” ([RSC/ExtentWG/2025/1/ExamplesEditor](#)).

In discussion, the other voting members of the RSC stated that they too would like to see more detail worked out – their approval was of direction of travel and more detail should be presented at a future RSC meeting.

[NARDAC](#) approved with amendments:

“NARDAC approves of the recommendations, but we find it difficult to fully assess the recommendation without seeing the proposed text for the conditions, condition options, and options needed for this new element

We also suggest amending the proposed definition to remove the word “physical.”

Revised proposed definition: A manifestation statement about the quantification of one or more ~~physical~~ characteristics of a manifestation.”

Unusually NARDAC also offers further suggestions, in case their first suggestion is not accepted. Please see [RSC/ExtentWG/2025/1/NARDAC](#) if you would like to read these.

The [TTLO](#) approved with amendment:

“We recommend the prerecording option on page 3 be changed to the following to match the other statement elements:

Record an unstructured description using basic, normalized, or other transcription guidelines as a ~~within a value~~ of Manifestation: manifestation extent statement.”

RSC Decision on Recommendation 2

Moving forward, the SES Working Group should develop this recommendation to show more detail and then submit in a new proposal along with Recommendation 1.

The SES Working Group should also note that the RDA Examples Editor and the RSC Education and Orientation Officer offered assistance in including examples and guidance alongside the new proposal. Please ensure that the RDA Examples Editor and RSC Education and Orientation Officer are consulted before submitting the proposal to the Technical Working Group. The RSC Secretary will check that all three of these officers have been consulted before publishing the proposal.