

To: Renate Behrens, RSC Chair

From: Anne Welsh, RSC Secretary

Subject: Summary of discussion of RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2 -- Proposal on adding “scribe agent / etc.”, “scribe agent / etc. of”, “wood engraver agent / etc.” and “wood engraver agent / etc. of” as new elements to the RDA Toolkit, the corresponding new definitions to the Glossary, and the corresponding new properties to RDA Registry

Introduction

In last night's Public Session of the RSC, voting members decided on [RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2](#) Recommendation 2 but were unable to come to a decision on Recommendation 1. There was consensus that the elements in Recommendation 1, *scribe agent, etc.* were needed by the RDA cataloguing community. However, the discussion in the Public Session had, from the offset, been centred on facsimiles and this had led to confusion as to the wording of the element descriptions and, most importantly, the elements' places in the hierarchy of elements upon which voting would take place.

This document summarises the discussion in the Public Session and presents the options in a votable form for members of the RSC.

Background: Decisions Made in the Public Session

Recommendation 2: *wood engraver agent, etc.*

After a discussion of the issues raised in the formal responses (summarised at [RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2/summary](#) Recommendation 2) voting members of the RSC approved the addition of the terms set out in [RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2](#).

In terms of the issues raised in relation to the terms' place in the hierarchy of elements, the solution suggested in [RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2/NARDAC](#) was approved unanimously. The Oceania Representative, who had undertaken a lot of the work in drafting the terms for *wood engraver agent, etc.* in [RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/1/ORDAC](#) (carried forward into RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2 Recommendation 2) thanked NARDAC and the Technical Team Liaison Officer for the solution proposed to the issues raised by [EOO](#), [EURIG](#), and [ExamplesEditor](#), and by [NARDAC](#) themselves in their responses to RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2.

[RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2/TTLO](#) summarised the solution as follows:

“The responses of both NARDAC and the Examples Editor make a compelling argument that **wood engraver agent** should not be a narrower term of **engraver agent**, but instead should be on an equal level of the hierarchy with **engraver agent** under **printmaker agent**. To end all ambiguity and ensure that RDA does not rely on outside practices and vocabularies for its definitions, I agree with NARDAC's response that the best way to implement this would be not just to define **wood engraver agent** as a narrower term of **printmaker agent**, but also to propose changing the definition of **engraver agent** to clarify that this element applies specifically to intaglio printing rather than relief printing. This would eliminate a long-

standing ambiguity in RDA and bring the definition of these elements in line with community expectations.”

Changes to the hierarchy and / or definition of elements require a full proposal so they receive review by all members of the wider RDA cataloguing community. As a result, and notwithstanding the RSC’s belief in the amendments to the definition and hierarchy of the *engraver agent, etc.* elements, a proposal will need to be prepared and presented to the community at the Public Session of the RSC.

The following actions will be recorded in the Minutes:

- ACTION: Secretary to prepare RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2/Decisions
- ACTION: Technical Team Liaison Officer and Secretary to implement RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2/Decisions
- ACTION: Translations Team Liaison Officer to prepare RSC/TranslatuonsTLO/2026/3 to deal with the definition and hierarchy of *engraver agent, etc.* terms

Alternate Labels

[RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2/EURIG](#) raised a query regarding alternate labels with regard to *wood engraver agent*:

“For consistency, human consumption and possibly support of unconstrained properties in the Registry, the alternate labels for *wood engraver agent* should include *wood engraver*.”

In the Public Session, the member of the wider RDA cataloguing community who raised this issue with the Europe Representative was present as an observer. As a longstanding contributor to RDA in various roles, they made it clear that in raising this issue, they were seeking confirmation from the Technical Team Liaison Officer that the usual processes for alternate labels (such as providing an alternative label of *wood engraver* for *wood engraver agent* and the other specific terms) would be used. They had raised the same issue in response to [RSC/TechnicalWG/2026/3](#) and [RSC/TechnicalWG/2026/4](#), but raised it as an observer at this point because those two proposals were being discussed after RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2.

The Technical Team Liaison Officer was happy to give assurance about alternate labels, for this proposal, for the Technical Working Group proposals under discussion in the Public Session and in general going forward.

In the Minutes, for the benefit of readers who were not present at the meeting, and in the interests of concision, this discussion will be recorded as:

“An observer sought reassurance from the Technical Team Liaison Officer that the issue about alternate labels raised in RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2/EURIG had been taken on board. The Technical Team Liaison Officer was happy to provide this assurance, not only with regard to this proposal but also as a general principle (See RSC/Minutes/599-615 Item 612.3).”

Further Terms in RSC/TranslationsTLO/1/EURIG

[RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/1/EURIG](#) included the following statement:

“There are useful MARC terms which are not included in this proposal (for example, “bookseller [bsl]”, “attributed name [att]” and “wood engraver” nor are elements from other Western vocabularies such as RBMS (for example, “subscriber”). EURIG would like to understand why these were not included and, if relevant, see a follow-up proposal with added terms.”

In the Executive Session on 27 July, the Europe Representative once again raised this issue. The RSC Chair and Secretary reiterated that the decision reached on [RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/1](#) was that the Translations Team Liaison Officer would prepare [RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2](#) incorporating the concerns raised by EURIG, NARDAC and ORDAC. The scope of RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2 was to deal with the terms raised by the Translations Working Group and the issues they faced in the absence of their terms. ORDAC had provided a draft definition of the *wood engraver, etc.* terms and so it was straightforward to include it as RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2 Recommendation 2. The Technical Team Liaison Officer had made it clear that he would consider proposals for further terms ([RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/1/Decisions](#)) and so the Europe Representative could submit a proposal as RSC/EURIG/2026/1 or RSC/EURIG/2027/1 for consideration. Other RSC members with experience in drafting proposals, including the RSC Secretary, Translations Team Liaison Officer and RDA Examples Editor (who is a member of the RBMS Policy Statement Writers Group and the Editorial Group for DCRM) are all willing to assist, but the Europe Representative should take the lead on this.

Recommendation 1: *scribe agent, etc.*

Although the Recommendations were discussed in order, they are presented in reverse order in this document to ease voting members in their decision-making.

After discussion of the issues raised in responses (see [RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2/summary](#)), a vote was taken on the will of the RSC to include elements for *scribe agent, etc.* in RDA and it was unanimously decided that it was the will of the RSC to do so.

The rationale behind this decision is that the term *scribe* is in current use by rare materials cataloguers working on *unpublished* resources. The voting members of the RSC unanimously considered it important to make *scribe agent, etc.* available to cataloguers of these resources. A consideration of the issue for *published* resources could be made later.

Chair Elect Robert Maxwell and the RSC Secretary shared that they had worked with facsimiles for decades and that they (and others in the rare materials cataloguing community) were aware that there is a long-standing lacuna in RDA in clear directions for cataloguing facsimiles. This is inherited from the Anglo-American cataloguing tradition, in which those

dealing with facsimiles made do with the instructions available to them and applied cataloguer judgment.

Robert stated that he would be happy to see an exploration of facsimiles in a Discussion Paper. The issue raised repeatedly by the Europe Representative around the use of *scribe agent, etc.* in facsimiles is an issue shared by several other elements in RDA. The Technical Team Liaison Officer highlighted that the Technical Working Group is aware that inheritance is an issue in some cases, and gave the example of a publisher agent of an Early Modern book. When a facsimile is published, he posited that we would not want the metadata for the facsimile to inherit the Early Modern publisher agent. As a longstanding rare books cataloguer, Robert Maxwell stated that we would want the facsimile to be found by library users searching under the publisher agent of the original Early Modern book. The Examples Editor and RSC Secretary agreed that (a) there are many research use cases of library users in which the facsimile would be wanted in a search of this kind and (b) the *principle* of inheritance in this situation is acknowledged but the *practicality* of cataloguing the facsimile to meet the user needs usually takes priority. The Technical Team Liaison Officer agreed he would be happy to work with the Chair Elect in a wider consideration of issues in cataloguing facsimiles.

The Oceania Representative asked whether short-cut elements could afford a solution. The Technical Team Liaison Officer and Translations Team Liaison Officer said that this may be a route forward and the Technical Team Liaison Officer committed to exploring these within the context of the exploration of facsimiles.

In the Minutes of this meeting, this discussion will be included with the following actions:

- | | |
|---------|--|
| ACTION: | Chair Elect to take the lead in formulating a plan to explore the issue of facsimiles and discuss with the Technical Team Liaison Officer in the first instance |
| ACTION: | Chair Elect and Technical Team Liaison Officer to bring a plan for the exploration of facsimiles to the Executive Committee |
| ACTION: | RSC Chair and Secretary to add to the agenda of the next Executive Committee the scheduling of the facsimile discussion to the agenda of the appropriate Executive Committee |

Issue To Be Decided by the Voting Members of the RSC

Here are the three options discussed for the hierarchy and definitions of *scribe agent, etc.* The RSC Secretary would like to thank the North America Representative for sharing her working table with her. This did not change the content of this summary document, but provided a valuable double-check for the Secretary, working at speed. The Secretary would also like to thank the Translations Team Liaison Officer and the Technical Team Liaison Officer for checking that she had set out the Recommendations accurately.

Option 1: Original Recommendation (RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/1)

[RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/1](#) provides a definition and hierarchy for each of the *scribe agent, etc.* elements. This paper contains the definition and hierarchy for *scribe agent, etc.* but voting members are asked to refer to the entirety of RSC/TranslationTLO/2026/1 Change 5.

Option 1.1 Toolkit

scribe agent

An agent who is responsible for producing an unpublished manifestation by making handwritten copies of manuscripts.

Domain: Manifestation

Range: Agent

Alternate labels: has scribe agent

Broader element: **producer agent of unpublished manifestation**

Option 1.2 Glossary

scribe

See: **scribe agent**

scribe agent

An agent who is responsible for producing an unpublished manifestation by making handwritten copies of manuscripts.

Inverse: **scribe agent of**

Use for: **scribe**

Option 1.3 Registry

has scribe agent

Relates a manifestation to an agent who is responsible for producing an unpublished manifestation by making handwritten copies of manuscripts.

Option 2: RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2

[RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2](#) provides a definition and hierarchy for each of the *scribe agent, etc.* elements. This paper contains the definition and hierarchy for *scribe agent, etc.* but voting members are asked to refer to the entirety of RSC/TranslationTLO/2026/2 Recommendation 1.

Option 2.1: Toolkit

scribe agent

An agent who is responsible for producing a manifestation by making a handwritten copy of a manuscript.

Domain: Manifestation

Range: Agent

Alternate labels: scribe ; has scribe agent

Broader element: **producer agent of unpublished manifestation**

Option 2.2: Glossary

scribe

See: **scribe agent**

scribe agent

An agent who is responsible for producing a manifestation by making a handwritten copy of a manuscript.

Inverse: **scribe agent of**

Use for: **scribe**

Option 2.3 Registry

has scribe agent

Relates a manifestation to an agent who is responsible for producing a manifestation by making a handwritten copy of a manuscript.

Option 3: RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2/NARDAC

[RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2/NARDAC](#) highlighted an issue with the hierarchy of *scribe agent*. In the Public Session, the North America Representative stated that the issue pertained

to the proposed change from *unpublished* to being able to be used for published or unpublished materials. If we are dealing with the facsimile issue as a separate stage, she stated that the solution proposed in RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2/NARDAC may no longer be relevant. However, voting members outside North America had earlier expressed a liking for the hierarchy, so it is reproduced here.

Please note: RSC/TranslationsTLO/2026/2/NARDAC (authored by the NARDAC Backup Representative) used a paragraph format. The RSC Secretary has organized this in the same way as Options 1 and 2, and again thanks the North America Representative for sharing her personal spreadsheet which confirmed the Secretary had understood the Broader element correctly.

Toolkit text only (Glossary and Registry implied):

scribe agent

An agent who is responsible for producing a manifestation by making a handwritten copy of a manuscript.

Domain: Manifestation

Range: Agent

Alternate labels: scribe ; has scribe agent

Broader element: **creator agent of manifestation**