

To: Joint Steering Committee for Revision of AACR
From: Canadian Committee on Cataloguing
Subject: Persistent identifiers and URLs

CCC has discussed the ACOC proposal and offers the following comments.

General comment

CCC would prefer to avoid introducing the term "persistent identifier" in *RDA*. If the term is used, however, then it must be based on a Glossary definition that clearly distinguishes this concept as a separate type of resource identifier.

The proposed definition of the term does not adequately define "persistence" as an inherent attribute of the identifier. CCC feels that this is because "persistence" is actually an attribute of well-maintained location information regardless of where that location information is stored (e.g., the Handle system for the DOI) or how it is associated with the identifier (either directly as an embedded link or indirectly through some other metadata field).

Background (p. 1) re: use of term "online resource":

CCC supports using the term "online resource" in place of "remote access resource" on the grounds that the term "online resource" is more easily understood by users of these resources. If the term "remote access resource" does not mean the same as "online resource" then perhaps it should be defined in the Glossary.

Proposed revision of Instruction 2.12.2.1 (p. 3):

As stated above, CCC does not feel it is necessary to introduce the term "persistent identifier".

Proposed definition for inclusion in the Glossary (p. 3):

The proposed definition does not adequately define the term "persistent identifier", at least not in a way that justifies its inclusion in *RDA* as a distinct type of identifier. As it stands, the proposed wording applies equally well to "standard number", if one were to substitute that term in the definition, i.e.:

"A standard number is a permanent, location-independent and globally unique identifier for a resource."

X.X.0.5. Restrictions on access to, or use of, remote access resources (p. 5):

CCC is concerned about the current wording of the instruction at X.X.0.5, i.e. "*Prefer Uniform Resource Locators associated with free and open access to the resource.*" As written, this instruction would have the cataloguer prefer a pirated copy of a publication or sound recording over a copy that is legally available from its publisher, record company, etc.

Regardless of the wording, however, CCC feels that this instruction should be a matter of organizational policy and does not belong in *RDA*, however admirable the intent.

Placement of the proposed instruction (p. 5):

CCC prefers option 3 which is to record the URL with the information on terms of availability etc. in Chapter 5.

Other comments on 5JSC/RDA/Part 1, section 2.12.0:

CCC notes that the term "standard number" as defined in *RDA* does not accommodate identifiers that are alphanumeric (e.g. ISRC) and hexadecimal (e.g. ISAN). This could be solved either by replacing the term "standard number" with the broader term "standard identifier" or by rewording the definition of "standard number" at 2.12.0.1 to read "A standard number is a number or code that"

CCC also suggests that the definition of standard number be expanded slightly to accommodate international standard identifiers developed by organizations having an equivalent status to the ISO in their particular spheres of activity. For example, the URN schema developed by the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) is not covered by the current definitions of "standard number" and "other resource identifiers" in *RDA*. Since those are the only two categories of "resource identifier" in *RDA*, something would have to change in order for URNs to be recorded as a resource identifier in the description.

To address both of the above concerns, the definition of "standard number" at 2.12.0.1 could be revised to read:

"A **standard number** is a number or code that is assigned by an authorized registration agency for an identifier scheme approved by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) or an equivalent international standardization body, such as the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF).