

5JSC/RDA/Full draft/Chair follow-up/1  
29 January 2009

**To:** Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA  
**From:** Margaret Stewart, Chair, JSC  
**Subject:** RDA: Resource Description and Access – Full Draft – Review by the Norwegian Committee on Cataloguing

These are comments on the full draft of RDA received from the Norwegian Committee on Cataloguing.

## **RDA final draft**

### **Comments from the Norwegian Committee on Cataloguing**

**January 29 2009**

It is difficult to understand a set of rules like this without a presentation format and registration format, and it is hard to see how it will work in practical life.

If it is, as we think, that we continue with ISBD/AACR2-presentation and MARC (with different worldwide national and local variations) with the constraints this involves, the profit of RDA will be minor. AACR2 is still better fit for registration. After all, MARC is based on AACR2. When RDA uses words like relationships about simple text-based notes which only can be interpreted by a reading person, not by a computer program, what is the use of that? A relationship needs two entities to be related. To benefit from recording relationships, we need to code the information *as* relationships, not as "notes". For the time present, it is hard to see the benefit of RDA. We don't even need it for the purpose of FRBR and FRAD.

We think the text is still difficult to understand, and the reviewing is made more difficult by the lack of the online version and the presence of numerous misprints and incorrect references. We have done our best to try to understand, also by consulting other resources, but this should not be necessary! It should be put more effort in making language and concepts more clear and consistent.

#### **General comments**

##### **Headings**

Generally, we find the headings unprecise and confusing.

Chapter 1: "General Guidelines On Recording Attributes of Manifestations and Items". After this we expect "Special guidelines on recording attributes of manifestations and items". If there are no "special guidelines..." the word "General" should be removed.

Chapter 2 Identifying manifestations and items. What do you mean by Identifying here? It looks like the chapter mainly refers to recording. We know this is a FRBR term, but we think the FRBR-ization is artificial in many places.

2.0 Purpose and scope say: "This chapter provides general guidelines and instructions on recording the attributes of manifestations and items that are most often used for purposes of identifying a resource". In other words: both chapter 1 and chapter 2 provides "General Guidelines On Recording Attributes of Manifestations and Items". This is not good guidance in creating metadata.

##### **Access points and elements**

The definition of "element" and "access point" is not of much help. We are very uncertain of in what way certain parts of the text should be interpreted in accordance with these definitions:

0.6.3: "Record the elements either as additions to the access point representing the work, as separate elements, or as both."

Questions:

Isn't the addition a part of the access point if it is necessary according to 9.1.1 etc. and 6.2.2.5(sic!), etc.?

Does an access point consist of elements or is it an element itself?

The text under 17.3 indicates that it is an element, as "work manifested" and "expression manifested" are named as (core) elements. But if it is an element, the text in 0.6.3 is very confusing.

### **Access point as a concept**

The concept of "access point" should either be removed from the code or the connection to "preferred access point" should be removed by giving the latter another name, for instance "representative". The term access point is associated to "what can be searched for". The definition of "preferred access point" says it is a representative, which is OK, but it would be better giving it a name that is better fit. We think that "representative" and "variant or alternative representative" will fit well enough. We understand that in RDA anything may be searched for, not only "access points" (information pertaining to work and expression). If this is so, any element will be an access point. We think "access point" should be removed or given another definition. In this case the representative will consist of elements which may be searched for.

### **Scenario for constructing a preferred access point of a work**

To construct a preferred access point for a textual work by a single author by starting with 17.1.3: "The term preferred access point refers to the standardized access point representing an entity. The preferred access point representing a work or expression is constructed using the preferred title for the work preceded by the preferred access point representing a person, family, or corporate body responsible for the work, if appropriate"

Where do I go from here? I cannot find anything more to help me in chapter 17. From 17.4.2.2 I am directed to 6.27.1-6.27.2. I go there and read 6.27.1.1, then go to 6.27.1.2. I read this one, and I am directed to a) 9.1.1 and b) 6.2.2.5. I go first to 9.1.1. I am directed to 9.19.1. I read this one and go on to 9.19.1.1. Here I learn that I shall use the name of the person and additions as instructed under 9.19.1.2-9.19.1.4. Before I go there I want to check out the title part of this preferred work access point. I go to 6.2.2.5 (which is probably meant to be 6.2.2.) as instructed under an earlier stage. I have a work created after 1500 so I go to 6.2.2.4. I have a work without an established work title, and I am directed to 2.3.3 (Which probably should be 2.3.2). Then I go back to 9.19.1.2.-9.19.1.4. to check if any additions are necessary. Puh! I have created a preferred access point for a work, at last, but I had to check many paragraphs.

*If RDA is going to be a good code to use, the web-version must have an extremely good interface to outbalance this directing around.*

### **Other general comments**

We wonder why you have chosen the term "primary relationship" for the FRBR-entities-relationships. Maybe it would be better to use the term "vertical relationship" for this, and "horisontal relationship" for the others (which also are spoken of in the FRBR-report.)

Which paragraphs are indicating elements and which are not? Why not giving indications on elements, sub-elements and element sub-types as well as core elements? Without the RDA Element analysis, this is very confusing. We cannot find the elements called "Work manifested" and "Expression manifested". In what way are these entities understood as elements?

In what way are language dependant information expected to be exchanged? Example: musical instruments (6.16.1.6), ISO terms for languages (6.12.1.3, 7.13.2 etc.)

Section 5-10, Relationships: When rules of relationships are stated, it is generally very unclear which entities are related by the information in question.

The relationships which are not primary, what are they? Secondary?

The text is extremely confusing. It is so confusing that we start wondering what you mean by simple terms like "identify", "record" and "provide".

## **Specific comments in instruction number order**

### **1.5.2 Comprehensive Description**

In theory, it would probably be OK also to make a reference to a related expression? The same comment are to 1.5.3 Analytical description.

### **1.8.2 Form of numerals**

Under "Alternatives" 2 examples are given. The first one is explained but the last one has no explanation.

### **1.8.4 Inclusive Numbers**

The first example lacks some information.

### **1.8.5 Ordinal Numbers**

Why making explicit rules related to "English-language sources"? We suppose the documents to be catalogued will be of many languages.

### **2.2.2.2 Exception**

The second last paragraph gives no meaning. If none of the sources bears a title, why should we still choose one of them as a source? The last paragraph must be the correct one.

## **2.3**

Is Title an element or is it an element type? The statement "Core element" here is confusing. The use of "element" throughtout the text is not making it clear and the definition is not of any help.

We think it would be of help if the text gave clear indications on which paragraphs/headings are representing elements, sub-elements and element sub-types and which are not. These terms should also be defined.

### **2.3.4.1 Scope**

"Other title information may be supplied for cartographic resources (see **2.3.4.5**) and moving image resources (see **2.3.4.6**)."

Why is this option limited to cartographic resources and moving image resources?

### **2.3.6.3 Example**

The second example is incorrect: The variant title and the title proper are identical.

### **2.3.8.3 Recording Later Variant Titles**

2.3.8 states that later variants of the title proper are a required element. But in 2.3.8.3 it is only required if it is considered to be important. What is correct? This also goes for 2.3.8.4.1 and 2.3.8.4.2.

### **2.9.4.6 Distributor's Name ...**

This section should be deleted or incorporated under 2.9.5 Parallel Distributor's Name, if the definition under 2.9.5 is to be followed.

The same applies to 2.10.2.5: It should be incorporated under 2.10.3

The same applies to 2.10.4.6: It should be incorporated under 2.10.5

The same applies to 2.12.4.4: It should be incorporated under 2.12.5

The same applies to 2.12.6.4: It should be incorporated under 2.12.7

The same applies to 2.12.14.4: It should be incorporated under 2.12.15

### **2.20.7.3 Examples**

"Published in Oslo". This note might be ambiguous. Oslo had the official name Christiania/Kristiania 1624-1924, and if the book was published in that period, the note is incorrect. Otherwise, the explanation seems insufficient.

## **Chapter 4:**

It should be stated whether Chapter 4 pertains to manifestation or item. The document RDA Element Analysis says it is about manifestation. URIs for purchased material is normally related to items. What about contact information? 4.3.1.1 say "**Contact information** is information relating to an organization, etc., from which a resource may be obtained." The term "resource" here (and many other places) doesn't contribute to clarity as it, according to the glossary could be any of all four group 1-entites in FRBR.

## **4.6 Uniform Resource locator**

Shouldn't 4.6 be about the broader category URIs, Uniform Resource Identifiers, and not just about URLs?

## **Chapters 5 and 6**

The concept of "uniform title" is out, and replaced by "preferred title of work" which is indicated as core elements, which we suppose mean that creating "uniform titles" is mandatory and not optional as it is in AACRII? The statement on the first page of chapter 6 says: "Apply the instructions in this chapter according to the policy of the agency creating the data." In what way should this statement be interpreted?

### **6.1.3. Changes affecting the identification of a work**

Will this also apply to single monographs? For instance new editions or translations

(manifestation of expression).

## **6.2. Title of the work**

Is this an element according to the definition in the glossary? It looks more like "preferred title" and "variant title" are elements, while "title of the work" is more like a type of element.

We think that RDA does not answer the question of what is an element and what is not an element.

## **6.10 Content type:**

Does this element pertain to work or expression? We think this should be stated.

It is not obvious to us why this information is not integrated in chapter 7 rather than chapter 6.

### **6.11.**

Date of expression is information that might be hard to verify. As a core element we expect it is going to be a time-consuming part of the work of cataloguing.

### **6.16:**

We suggest changing the heading to: Medium of performance of a musical work.

### **6.17**

We suggest changing the heading to: Numeric designation of a musical work, etc.

#### **6.16.1.6**

allows recording instruments in preferred language, but 6.16.1.5/7/8 does not. Why?

### **6.21**

should read Date of a (or "the") legal work

## **6.27.4.4 Examples**

p.173: This extremely long sentence should be split up.

## **Chapter 7:**

We suggest changing the heading to: Describing content of works and expressions.

### **7.22**

Duration (does it refer to work or expression? This should be stated.)

### **7.23**

Performer...of an expression?

### **7.28**

Awards ...work or expression? Awards may also be granted an authorship (like the Nobel price of literature) and should be an attribute of persons as well as works and expressions.

## **11.2.2.8**

We are not happy with the Norwegian example “Norske Nobelinstitut not Det Norske Nobelinstitut”. The Norwegian language uses inflections and the chosen form without the initial article makes no sense. To make it grammatically correct it should be changed to Norsk Nobelinstitut, which is not its name! In the AACR2 Norwegian translation we have added to 24.5A: “... unless they are necessary for grammatical reasons.” This problem also applies to titles. (We know the initial articles are subject to later discussions, and we hope for a change.)

## **11.2.2.13 Exceptions**

References are missing.

### **11.2.3 Variant Name for the Corporate Body / 11.2.3.1 Scope**

Duplicate definitions.

### **11.6 (and MANY other places)**

Two paragraphs that have almost identical wording. One has to read carefully to discover the difference. Is it not possible to build together such paragraphs?

### **Chapter 17, etc. Relationships.**

A relationship has always two "ends", i.e. connecting two entities. We rarely find the two entities mentioned when relationships are spoken of. We would prefer that it was clearly stated which two entities are related. Between what entities are we making relationships?

### **Chapter 17.**

We find it hard to conceive the purpose of this chapter. We understand the FRBR relationships of these entities, but this way of expressing seems rather extraordinary. The text is very blurred about what relationships are established and what the relationship actually is. And it is also incomprehensible how this helps us to create the relationships. How can you say that recording an identifier (like ISBN) is recording a (primary) relationship? Is it a manifestation-work-relationship? Or is it a manifestation-expression-relationship? It could even be a manifestation-item-relationship depending on what is in "the other end"?

The terms "related work" and "related expression" are used in this chapter. Are they used according to the definition in the glossary?

We find it hard to understand the primary relationships in the context of RDA. We will try to exemplify our problems:

17.5.1.3 says: "Record an expression of a work applying the general guidelines on recording primary relationships given under 17.4." Let's say we choose to use the preferred access point-method and record the preferred access point for the spoken word of Qur'an. Question: In what way is this establishing of relationship between the work Qur'an and the spoken-word-expression? A relationship is supposed to link two entities. Where is the work-entity here?

### **17.3 Core elements.**

"Work manifested" and "Expression manifested" are listed as "elements". In what way are these to be understood as elements? Is this according to the definition in the Glossary?

### **17.4.1 Scope.**

We don't understand how this chapter can be implemented in a system while still using the MARC-format. Is this chapter meant for a more advanced format better suited for FRBR?

### **17.4.2**

17.4.2 says: "Record primary relationships using one or more of the described under 17.4.2.1–17.4.2.3 conventions, as applied". Comment: "...more of the described" what? Is anything lacking in this paragraph?

**17.4.2.3.:** What is this? How do we read this rule? What is related to what in the example?

### **17.5.1.3, Recording an Expression of a Work.**

The last example looks like a composite description representing a manifestation, which also is stated. In what way is this example a recording of an expression of a work as the heading states? Is this example a mistake?

### **17.6.1.3, Recording the work expressed.**

The last example looks like a composite description of a manifestation. The explanation says: "Original title of the work combined with the description of the manifestation". There is no such thing as "original title of the work". There are "titles of works". As a relationship, this example is incomprehensible.

**Chapter 17 and Chapter 24** have both a definition of preferred access point. Why do these definitions have to be different? Either they should be the same or there is something very unclear in the definitions.

### **18.3:**

Core elements: creator: How can "creator" be an element according to the definitions of creator and element in the Glossary? It looks more like creator (and other entities) are identified by information from a set of elements.

### **19.3 etc.**

Core element: Other person .... We find this paragraph difficult to understand. The scope note in 19.3.1.1 is much clearer.

### **Chapter 24:**

We suggest changing the heading to: "General guidelines on recording relationships between related works, related expressions, related manifestations and related items".

### **24.1.3:**

The definitions are not good. We understand that it is not easy to define a "related entity". What you really say here is: "The term **related work** refers to a work that is related to the work" The rest of the sentence tell us how the work (which one?) is represented, which is not really interesting for understanding "related work". What is the point of defining related entities? All works and all expression are represented by a preferred access point or are described.

## **Appendix M: Complete Examples**

Why is relationship designator recorded in (700)\$e? Couldn't we use \$4 as well?

What in the rules tell us to record Munro, Alice in 100 in stead of in 700. We cannot find the distinction between main and added entries anywhere.