

5JSC/RDA/Part A/Chapters 6-7/Chair follow-up/4
1 September 2006

To: Joint Steering Committee for Revision of AACR

From: Deirdre Kiorgaard, Chair, JSC

Subject: RDA: Resource Description and Access Part A, Chapters 6-7 - Review by other rule makers of June 2006 Draft - Sweden

These are comments on the draft chapters 6-7 of RDA received from the Swedish National Cataloguing Agency and the Cataloguing Committee of the Swedish Library Association.

Comments on the draft of RDA, chapter 6-7

From the national bibliographic agency, *The National Library of Sweden*, together with *Svensk Biblioteksförnings kommitté för katalogisering* (The Swedish Library Association, Cataloguing Committee)

Anders Cato

General views

As a whole we welcome the new chapters 6 and 7 of RDA, but we find it a bit difficult to interpret the chapters when the coming part on authority control is still lacking.

We believe that new text takes an important step away from the old card catalogue way of thinking when it moves to talking about access points and citations instead of entries.

We do agree that it is far more important to put effort into adding access points and performing authority control than to working with complicated rules on how to decide which should be the primary or secondary access point of a work. However, we cannot leave the discussion on access points out altogether. There is still a need to come to a decision on a primary access point as it is needed to collocate works, expressions, making citations etc. It is also of great help to libraries that use alphabetic shelving for their open shelves. The rules should, however be kept as straightforward as possible. The effort of the cataloguer should be put on making correct access points, not on deciding which one of them is the most important one. Also some of the instructions given here on how to construct access points more suitably belong in the coming Part B of RDA.

The new text takes an important step in the FRBR direction. We are however not absolutely sure that the definitions of various terms follow the FRBR definitions, e.g. we sometimes get the feeling that the definition of work is somewhat different from that in FRBR.

As with the earlier published chapters of RDA we believe the text to be a bit unnecessarily wordy and it could be kept much shorter. The repetition of the same phrase in many subsequent paragraphs makes the reading hard and the usability of the rules questionable.

The use of identifiers is important and could be more stressed in the text. As Diane I. Hillman notes in an email on the RDA list the use of “smart” identifiers could make an access point out of an ordinary text citation, making it possible for the user to go directly from the text citation to the resource cited. The need for making both text citations and added access points to them should be kept as minimal as possible.

Chapter-specific remarks

Chapter 6

The title of chapter 6 could be changed to something more understandable, like the already by the PCC proposed “Relationships with other resources”.

We were to some extent expecting this chapter to be of more guidance concerning what bibliographic relations were needed in various cases. Some parts are too general to give any guidance, whereas in some cases there is very much specificity. We would want the chapter to be more precise on what relations are the most relevant.

The text is very much centered on manifestations which it should be. Then, however, there are made several references to works, expressions, manifestations and items and it should be made clearer what level one should relate to (these levels are clearly indicated in the FRBR report, but are kept more secret in RDA). We lack an order of precedence between the different bibliographic levels, just as we lack clear rules for prescribed sources of information. Controlled identifiers for embedded information and informal references should be used.

Views are asked for on the alternative rule for 6.4.1.2.1c.2 “Record individual elements of the description of the resource from which the reproduction was made in parallel with the corresponding elements for the resource being described, using encoding to indicate that the element applies to the related resource.” We find it a bit difficult to have views on this, and on 6.4.2.2.c) without having any examples of how this parallelism is handled in practice.

Notes or FRBR relations?

The power that comes with FRBR-related levels has to some extent been neglected. Controlled standard phrases, prescribed sources of information, notes about what references should be made, need to be more clearly taken care of in the text, otherwise the relations can never be as clear as they could be according to the FRBR model. Instead they end up being just notes, not much else. Several of the relations expressed in the text are also of a kind that could more preferably be expressed in another way, e.g. through codes in an authority file. We realize that this is a question that is system dependent, but we still wanted to stress the question. It would be unlucky if the rules appeared to be too aimed at card cataloguing. On the manifestation level they make the catalogue record heavy and difficult to read, and can still never be exhaustive. Is it really true that the records on manifestation level should account for all relations horizontally and downwards in the FRBR hierarchy? On reading the text of Chapter 6 it more or less looks that way.

Editing

Does the text really prescribe how the different notes should be written, or, how, and what, information should be extracted from already coded information? E.g. page 6-8 and

6-9 where the standard phrase is written in a way that almost give you the impression that it has been automatically generated. In 6.1.7.0.1. for example, it is stated that “Provide a resource identifier for the related resource, either in conjunction with or in place of a citation, access point, embedded description or informal reference”. This seems to indicate that the resource identifier is meant to be used for automatic generation of a citation/access point.

New editions

Where are new editions of the same work placed? According to FRBR they are new manifestations, and not new expressions. This common and important relation must be easily describable.

Errors?

Compare 6.5.0.1.1 and 6.5.1.2.1. There are inconsistencies between the texts and in the latter part probably an error. The text refers to “resources... containing the same content” and “the content or partial content of the resource”. The latter indicates that this not only is two resources in different format, but also, two resources being different expressions according to FRBR.

Chapter 7

We have no real problems with this chapter. It functions well and the restructuring of the information is done in a good way.