

To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA
From: Dave Reser, LC Representative
Subject: Proposed revisions for medium of performance (RDA 6.15.1, 6.28.1.9, 6.28.1.10, and Appendix E.1.1)

LC offers thanks to the RDA Music Joint Working Group for the proposed revisions to the RDA instructions for medium of performance. We agree with the direction taken by the group—and believe the results will mesh well with the *LC Medium of Performance Thesaurus for Music* (LCMPT) currently under development. We're particularly pleased with the movement away from 'implicit' information (such as standard combinations) characterized in the proposal.

General Comments

1. Singular vs. plural

We wondered about the possibility of consistently using a singular name for an instrument when there is more than one part for that instrument and the number of parts has been indicated, or at least giving the option to do so.

Currently, a single part for a flute and a clarinet would yield:

flute
clarinet

But more than one part per instrument would yield:

flutes (2)
clarinets (2)

Since the number of parts is already explicitly indicated, is it possible that input systems, search systems, and vocabularies may find it easier to always use the singular form?:

flute (2)
clarinet (2)

It may be possible for RDA to allow either usage, such as:

flute (*or flutes*) (2)
clarinet (*or clarinets*) (2)

We would be interested in the Joint Working Group's opinion on this question. (Note: we don't think the same concept would apply to terms such as "mixed voices" because it is always plural, so consistency is already enforced.)

2. Medium implicit in the title proper

We applaud the move away from implicit information in the proposal, but note that there are a few instructions remaining that rely on 'implicit' information to substitute for information that could be recorded in the medium of performance in 6.28.1.9.1. We would be interested to know whether the Joint Working Group has considered the 'implicit' exceptions, particularly paragraph a), subparagraph i) (do not add the medium of performance if the medium is implied by the title) and paragraph b) (do not add the number of parts for a particular instrument or voice if the number is implicit in the preferred title)?

Specific Comments

Revision: 6.15.1.5.2 Pitch and Range of Instruments

LC response: We would like the Joint Working Group to consider whether the proposed “optional addition” to record the designation of key for an instrument is actually an “optional addition” or an “alternative” in the RDA context (adding something back that had been omitted seems odd).

Revision: 6.28.1.9.1, Paragraph e)

LC response: We wonder if it would be useful to instruct the cataloger here to consider making a variant access point using the alternative or doubling instrumentation (there is such an example in 6.28.4.1)?