TO: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA DATE: July 25, 2012

FROM: Barbara B. Tillett, LC Representative

SUBJECT: Revisions to Date Associated with the Person (9.3) when recording more than a year alone

Background

There are a few irregularities with recording the Date associated with a person in RDA:

  1. RDA 9.3.1.3 (the basic rule for recording dates associated with a person) indicates that a Date associated with the person is recorded by giving the year alone. An exception is allowed for recording month and day of birth when two or more persons with the same name are born in the same year. This exception is not extended to Date of death, although the scope for that element indicates that a date of death may also include the month and day of the person's death. LC believes, at the element level, that the most specific date should be recorded when readily available; a more general date (year alone) may still be used in the authorized access point.

  2. There is an instruction for recording the name of a month in the language and script preferred by the agency creating the data in 9.3.2.3 (Date of birth) when recording more than the year of birth alone. RDA 9.3.3.3 (Date of death) lacks that instruction (even though the scope indicates a month and day may be part of a person's death date).

  3. LC has also encountered a few situations where only the year and month of birth are known, but the instruction in 9.3.2.3 says to record the [year][month][day], which seems not to allow recording [year][month]. In order to break conflicts, LC believes that the day should not always be required.

Proposed Changes
LC proposes to:
1) Remove the exception at 9.3.1.3 and allow for dates more specific than the year for all types of dates at the element level. LC recognizes that it may still be preferable to record the year alone when including the date in an authorized access point, so changes to 9.19.1.3 are also proposed.
2) Move information about recording the month in the language and script preferred by the agency creating the data found in 9.3.2.3 (Date of birth) to the general rule (9.3.1.3) so that it applies to more than just Date of birth.
3) Adjust the instruction for adding Date of birth and/or death to the authorized access point for a person to retain the general concept of 'year alone' in an access point.

Proposed Change 1

9.3.1.3 Recording Dates Associated with Persons

Record dates in terms of the calendar preferred by the agency creating the data. For details on the Christian calendar, see appendix H RDA.

Record dates either as parts of the authorized access point representing the person, or as separate elements, or as both. 2012/01

Record a date associated with a person by giving the year alone.

> *Optional addition*
> Add the month or month and day in the form [year][month][day] or [year][month]. Record the month in the language and script preferred by the agency creating the data.
>
> ~~*Exception*~~
> ~~For instructions on recording dates of birth for two or more persons with the same name born in the same year, see 9.3.2.3 RDA~~

[Rest of instruction unchanged]

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[Rest of instruction unchanged]

Proposed Change 2
Remove last instruction paragraph of 9.3.2.3 (now covered by general instruction); the final set of examples at 9.3.2.3 can be incorporated into the first set of examples in 9.3.2.3.

~~If the person was born in the same year as another person with the same name,~~

~~record the date of birth in the form *[year] [month] [day].* Record the month in the~~
~~language and script preferred by the agency creating the data.~~

Proposed Change 3
Modify the instruction for adding Date of birth and/or death to an authorized access point
for a person to indicate that generally the year alone is given, with an optional addition
for adding month or month and day.

9.19.1.3   Date of Birth and/or Death

Add the date of birth (see 9.3.2 RDA) and/or date of death (see 9.3.3 RDA), if
necessary, to distinguish one access point from another, <u>generally recording the
year alone.</u>

> EXAMPLE
> Smith, John, 1978–
> Smith, John, 1718-1791
> Smith, John, born 1787
> Smith, John, died 1773

<u>Optional Addition</u>

<u>Add the month or month and day if necessary to further distinguish one
access point from another.</u>

> EXAMPLE
> <u>Smith, John, 1936 May 5 -</u>
> Date of birth for a person named John Smith born in 1936
> <u>Smith, John, 1936 December 17-</u>
> Date of birth for another person named John Smith born in 1936

Optional Addition

Add a date or dates associated with the person even if there is no need to
distinguish between access points.

> EXAMPLE
> Hemingway, Ernest, 1899-1961
> Gregory IV, Pope, died 844
> Arundel, Philip Howard, Earl of, Saint, 1557-1595

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