

BCC2007/SMF/3**REPORT ON MARBI MEETINGS****ALA Annual****June 23-24, 2007****Washington, D.C.**

MARBI met twice at the ALA Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C., considering the following proposals and discussion papers:

Proposal no. 2007-04: *Use of field 520 for content advice statements in the MARC 21 bibliographic format.* This proposal provides for inserting guidance on the usage of media resources in the 520 field. It was primarily intended as guidance for usage of audio books by visually-impaired users, but it could be applied to any media type. 520 fields for advice statements will be tagged with 2nd indicator 4. Source code \$2 will be used to indicate the source of the advice, if applicable.

The proposal was passed, with minor editorial changes.

Discussion Paper no. 2007-DP06: *Representation of the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) System in MARC 21 Formats.* This discussion paper was brought forward by the OCLC Dewey editorial team, the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek, and LC. It discusses provisions and changes needed to fully encode Dewey information in the MARC format. Much of the discussion was given over the parsibility of Dewey numbers in the MARC format, so that numbers could be broken down and the numbers used to create full Dewey strings mined for subject and faceting information. This necessitates the full coding of Dewey table numbers along with the information derived from the tables. The discussion paper was of great interest and not completely uncontroversial among the various Dewey stakeholders, in part because of concern over OCLC's proprietary control of Dewey information but also because of the possibility of having multiple 082s in single records (with the number in full string and also potentially broken down in various ways) and that this could have problematic consequences for copy cataloging and user comprehension. However, the sense of MARBI was that encoding Dewey information in MARC 21 had potential benefits that outweighed such concerns.

The discussion paper will be brought back as a proposal.

Proposal no. 2007-06: *Changes for the German and Austrian conversion to MARC 21.* This extensive proposal (in reality a series of thirteen short proposals) describes additions and changes to MARC 21 needed so that German and Austrian libraries can adopt the MARC 21 format. All of the proposals were passed, many with some emendations, with the exception of the fourth, which involved adding code for normalized forms of dates and numbers in bibliographic information. This was considered to be too difficult to share with libraries that do not use the German/Austrian normalization schemes, and German libraries will adopt a non-MARC solution for this information.

Many of the shorter proposals will be of interest to the music community. These proposals include use of control numbers connecting bibliographic and authority data to their authorized forms, and use of numbers (in addition to such things as series statements) for showing the relationship between bibliographic sets and their component parts. In the German bibliographic tradition, records are created both at the set level (e.g., for a composer's complete works) and at the volume level, and various procedures are used to describe items with "weak titles" (e.g. Volume 1) and those with "strong titles," which are adequately descriptive in their own right. Thus, many of the proposals involved creating subfields for authority control numbers in authority records and the 1xx, 240, and 7xx fields of bibliographic records, and also for series control numbers in the 440 (the Germans have no field analogous to the 490). For complete information, see <http://www.loc.gov/marc/marbi/2007/2007-06.html>.

All of the proposals, with the exception of the fourth, were passed with some editorial changes and additions of examples. This was a significant step, as it allows, eventually, for much more extensive bibliographic data exchange between German speaking nations and the wider MARC 21 community.

Proposal no. 2007-05: *Definition of 022 subfields for recording the linking ISSN (ISSN-L).* This proposal suggests the subfield 1 for linking ISSN and a subfield for canceled or incorrect ISSN-Ls. The proposal was accepted.

Discussion paper no. 2007-DP05: *Data elements needed to ascertain copyright facts*. This discussion paper was brought forward by the California Digital Library. It proposes two broad options: adding data elements to field 540 (rights information) and creating a completely new field for copyright information. MARBI supported the second option.

The discussion paper proposes that more complete information on creator, creator death date, creator nationality, copyright holders and contact information, copyright statement, and many other elements that may or may not be present in other parts of the bibliographic record currently, be added and subfielded for parsing and display. Several concerns were raised, including the applicability of copyright information across national boundaries and the potentially unstable nature of copyright information, with changing rights holders and contact information. The representative presenting the discussion paper (Karen Coyle) noted that copyright information is not inherently volatile (“you can only die once”) and that the data was only meant to present a snapshot of copyright information available at the point of cataloging or digitizing an item. It was also noted that this information would not be required, and could be used in ways deemed fit by the cataloging institution.

MARBI voted that the discussion paper be brought back as a proposal defining a new field for rights information.

John Attig reported on RDA developments relating to MARC 21, recommending that interested parties consult the RDA Prospectus and the Scope and Structure document as well as the additional drafts available from the Joint Steering Committee (JSC). He discussed RDA/FRBR mapping and the outcomes of the April meeting in London between the JSC and representatives of other metadata communities, in which it was decided that RDA would make the RDA Element Vocabulary available to Dublin Core developers for wider metadata applications and the creation of an RDA Dublin Core application profile.

Attig reported that the JSC was working on comprehensive RDA/MARC mapping, and would bring forward a discussion paper at Midwinter next year. In order for RDA development to proceed on schedule, that discussion paper will have to be returned as a proposal at ALA Annual 2008. Attig indicated that there was considerable time pressure on the JSC and the various RDA stakeholders to meet the early 2009 projected rollout of the first release of RDA.

MARBI cosponsored a presentation entitled “Informing the Future of MARC: An Empirical Approach,” by Drs. William Moen and Shawne Miksa. They performed data mining on historical and current sets of bibliographic records made available by OCLC, and found, among other things, that the number of MARC fields has expanded tremendously since 1972. Also, perhaps not too surprisingly, some fields are used more than others. Moen and Miksa were hesitant to draw sweeping conclusions from the study, suggesting that many of the lesser-used MARC fields were used almost exclusively by certain communities (such as music or maps catalogers) and were probably invaluable to those communities, despite the relative rarity of the fields in the wider scheme of MARC bibliographic.

Prepared by Jim Alberts
Chair, Subcommittee on MARC Formats
July 6, 2007

Last updated August 29, 2007