

MUSIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

RDA Music Implementation Task Force Business Meeting Report

San Jose Fairmont, Friday, March 1, 2013, 5:00-6:30pm

Present: Task Force members: Casey Mullin (Stanford University), chair, Mary Huisman (University of Minnesota), Damian Iseminger (New England Conservatory), Nancy Lorimer (Stanford University), Daniel Paradis (Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec), Ray Schmidt (Wellesley College), Hermine Vermeij (UCLA); approximately 15-20 guests

Discussion of best practices drafting process

The Task Force discussed the methods used to deliberate on best practices and compile a draft of a full document. At its last meeting, the Task Force had decided to work on a few RDA chapters at a time, adding more content to each successive version of the draft until the full document was completed. This approach, while not totally ineffective, did have its difficulties. Specifically, the “track changes” feature of MS Word was not utilized, making it difficult to ascertain specific changes in the text from one draft to the next. Secondly, tables used on the wiki to consolidate the numerous discussion threads on each cumulative draft quickly became unwieldy, and unresolved issues were occasionally “buried” in a flurry of wiki edits. So, the Task Force decided to try a different approach for its next round of discussions and document revisions: a separate wiki page for each issue/rule requiring a decision and text revision. Mullin agreed to create a new wiki page on which to formulate a list of outstanding issues; separate wiki pages for each issue will be created and linked from this list as needed.

Another troublesome aspect of the asynchronous wiki approach to this collaborative work had to do with the difficulty of establishing and adhering to internal deadlines. Since not everyone has time to spend on Task Force during the workweek, it was decided that a time interval for completing a certain task must include at least one weekend (e.g., Friday to Friday or Monday to Monday). The Task Force also decided to meter the next phase of work more granularly: a few issues/rules at a time, spending a week or two on each group.

Another issue the Task Force identified is the inter-dependencies among rules; textual changes under one rule number in the document need to be cross checked with all potentially affected rule numbers.

Future of best practices document

The Task Force discussed the steps that are needed for the current draft to become a bona fide “version 1.” In addition to deliberation by the Task Force on outstanding issues, including those based on feedback sent to Mullin since the draft was released on February 2, 2013 and those raised during the RDA preconference and best practices discussion session, vetting by BCC will be required. Once “version 1” is released, it is unclear at this time which body/bodies will be responsible for ongoing revision and evolution of music best practices; however, it will likely be one or more permanent BCC subcommittees rather than the present Task Force.

The Task Force also explored different scenarios for what a “version 1” would look like: where it would be “published” and in what form. Currently, the draft is in the form of a MS Word document, which is relatively easy to maintain, but is not the most technologically sophisticated or user friendly format. One possibility would be an interactive web document in the MLA-BCC web space. A more highly-favored option would be integrated links in the RDA Toolkit (similar to the LC-PCC PS), with the full text accessible directly in the Resources tab. This option will require working with Troy Linker at ALA Publishing to structure and mark-up the best practices guidelines in the proper way. Concern was expressed with the recent delays in Toolkit updates and how they might affect release timelines of future content, including the MLA best practices; Kathy Glennan (University of Maryland) assured the group that these delays are anomalous, and should not deter MLA from pursuing this publication method. Paradis, who recently went through this process during his work preparing the French translation of RDA, can offer guidance to the Task Force in this endeavor.

Aside from the aforementioned delays, the standard lag associated with RDA Toolkit content additions and updates was a matter of concern, especially as regards its impact on version control of the music best practices. To mitigate this, the Task Force suggested maintaining a canonical version of the best practices guidelines (perhaps in a “plain” format such as PDF) in the MLA-BCC web space, which could be consulted in cases of conflict between the latest MLA recommendations for an RDA rule and the best practices thereof currently displaying in the Toolkit.

Other Toolkit content

Part of the Task Force’s original charge was to create workflows for the RDA Toolkit for use in cataloging music resources. However, it was noted that workflows seem better suited as training tools rather than instantiations of MLA best practices. Workflows also do not appear to be commonly used or in high demand at this time. Rather, the Task Force felt that detailed MARC mappings would be a stronger addition to the Toolkit in the short term, and that designing workflows would be better handled by a group charged to create and develop RDA training materials. The Task Force will therefore develop MARC mappings, to be based at least in part on those created by Lorimer during the U.S. Test in 2010. Additionally, Kevin Kishimoto (University of Chicago) offered to share spreadsheets he has created for local use. Mullin will ask BCC to revise the Task Force’s charge accordingly.

Full MARC record examples

The music best practices document is intended to include full MARC bibliographic and authority record examples, in addition to the existing in-line examples given in the context of individual RDA rules. Due to the tight timeline required for releasing the current draft, the Task Force decided to defer adding full record examples until a future version of the document. At its business meeting, the Task Force discussed strategies for identifying and selecting appropriate examples. Potential sources include those prepared by the PCC RDA Records Task Group, curriculum from the RDA Preconference, and WorldCat at large. Each of these sources has its drawbacks. Discussion on this point was wide-ranging, and the following key points were raised.

- Examples ought to be based on real resources, not contrived

- Examples should be reproduced in full in the document (as opposed to, say, merely identified by OCLC accession numbers, since WorldCat is dynamic)
- Examples taken from the “wild” may need to be tweaked to ensure full adherence to the MLA best practices
- Examples should reflect a variety of relatively common scenarios catalogers face
- In a broader sense, examples need not necessarily be in MARC, but for the current best practices guidelines--which are MARC-focused--they ought to be

Relationship between MLA best practices and LC-PCC PS

Currently, MLA’s best practices are intended to supplement RDA and acknowledge, but do not presuppose full adherence to, the Library of Congress-Program for Cooperative Cataloging Policy Statements (LC-PCC PS). Specifically, there are numerous elements MLA recommends recording that go well beyond LC-PCC’s “core-plus.” The Task Force explored the question of whether these two community standards should be more closely intertwined. That is, should some of MLA’s best practices be “elevated” to the level of a LC-PCC PS? There is not currently a formal protocol for making proposals to add or change existing LC-PCC PSs. The Task Force determined that any such proposals, should they be possible, should be proposed through BCC at a minimum, and from there perhaps through CC:DA or another body. In order to have a better understanding of the extent of the differences between MLA’s best practices and LC-PCC PS, the Task Force decided to make a list of rules where MLA’s recommendations differ or augment LC-PCC PS; Schmidt agreed to compile the first draft of the list.

Open discussion

The meeting concluded with a brief open discussion on issues raised during the session “RDA Best Practices for Music: A Conversation.”

Submitted by Casey Mullin, Chair