RDA Music Implementation Task Force Annual Report, July 2012-June 2013
Casey Mullin, Chair

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The RDA Music Implementation Task Force's work continues apace, as Best Practices for Music Cataloging Using RDA and MARC21, currently in draft form, is evolving into a bona fide "Version 1.0", to be vetted by BCC, permanently published on the MLA website, and ideally integrated into the RDA Toolkit.

The Task Force continues to conduct its business primarily in the BCC wiki space. Whereas a table-based approach was followed during the previous report year, a more modular approach, with separate pages for most issues, is being followed now. In addition to being more manageable for Task Force members, this approach is also intended to facilitate the tracking and summarization of changes from version to version of the best practices document.

The Task Force co-sponsored a session at MLA San Jose entitled "RDA Best Practices for Music: A Conversation"; Mullin moderated, and Lorimer and Paradis served on the panel. In addition to being a well-attended, content-rich session, it generated a substantial amount of feedback, which is informing the revision process for the next version of the best practices document.

Past Goals

Create music-related best practices documentation to supplement RDA.

A full draft of Best Practices for Music Cataloging Using RDA and MARC21 was released for public comment in February 2013. A complete "Version 1.0" is in progress, and will incorporate recent RDA and LC-PCC PS changes, as well as substantial feedback from the music cataloging community. Despite its draft status, the document has been praised for its timeliness (released just prior to RDA implementation by LC and many other agencies) and thoroughness. Anecdotal evidence suggests it is already heavily used by practicing catalogers.

Monitor progress on RDA change proposals that would affect the best practices decisions.

The Task Force is currently evaluating the RDA and LC-PCC PS changes which were part of the July release on the RDA Toolkit.

Identify a means for continually reviewing, updating and disseminating the best practices document.

Mullin has been receiving feedback on the best practices document from members of the music cataloging community, and has conveyed it as appropriate to the Task Force via the wiki. He has also participated in e-mail discussions with other members of BCC regarding potential future changes to MARC, RDA and LC-PCC PS.

The Task Force strongly supports integrating the music best practices into the RDA Toolkit (analogous to the LC-PCC PSs). This would be in addition to a version-controlled "canonical" document (i.e., a Word document or PDF file).

Reviewing and updating beyond "Version 1.0" will be a continuous task; the Task Force feels this should eventually be absorbed into the work of one or more permanent BCC subcommittees.

Make recommendations regarding the relationship between the MLA music-related best practices document and other official RDA policies such as the LC-PCC PS and decisions disseminated by the Program for Cooperative Cataloging.

The Task Force is currently evaluating the RDA and LC-PCC PS changes which were part of the July release on the RDA Toolkit.

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? Any such proposals will be proposed through BCC, and from there proposed to PCC and LC as possible policy statements. 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.

Develop official MLA workflows to be shared in the RDA Toolkit for score and sound recording cataloging, and other music formats if the need arises.

The Task Force 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. Mullin asked BCC to revise the Task Force's charge accordingly.

Create complete examples: scores, sound recordings, musical works, and musical expressions.

These will be incorporated as an appendix of the next version of the best practices document.

Goals 2013-2014

Complete "Version 1.0" of the best practices document and seek endorsement from BCC.

Work with ALA Publishing to publish the best practices content to the RDA Toolkit.

Work with the appropriate MLA parties to determine the proper permanent "home" for the canonical, version-controlled best practices document.

Advise the BCC Chair and other BCC members of RDA policy statements which are discovered to be needed in the course of the Task Force's work.

Prepare and convene a program session at the MLA 2014 Annual Meeting in Atlanta entitled "RDA: Where We Are, One Year Later"; Mullin will co-moderate.

Prepare music-specific mappings for the RDA Toolkit.

Prepare complete MARC record examples, to be incorporated into the best practices document.

These goals relate to the MLA Strategic Plan goal area of Education, as the work products of the Task Force will directly benefit MLA members who are music catalogers, whether or not they are able to attend official workshops or conference sessions. Issuing up-to-date best practices and related documentation is also related to the MLA Strategic Plan goal area Value of the Profession, as such materials sustain MLA's high profile in the cataloging community. Thirdly, the issuing and continual updating of music cataloging materials, especially those in electronic form, contribute to MLA Strategic Plan goal area Advocacy, through publishing open access content.