

RDA: Approaching Implementation

Program sponsored by the Bibliographic Control Committee (BCC)

This timely and well received presentation outlined issues associated with RDA that have a particular impact on the musical community. Damian Iseminger (New England Conservatory), Chair of BCC's Authorities Subcommittee, and participant in the MLA/OLAC RDA testing funnel, quickly brought us up to speed on the implementation plans for RDA. Next, Kathy Glennan (University of Maryland), BCC chair and member of the RDA/MARC Working Group spoke about the changes made to MARC in order to accommodate RDA. Daniel Paradis (Concordia University) spoke next about the significant changes for Cataloguing music under RDA versus AACR2. Last on the program was Mark Scharff (Washington University in St. Louis), chair of BCC's Subcommittee on Descriptive Cataloging, who spoke about deferred issues of interest to the musical community.

Damian first listed institutions and organizations involved in the RDA testing process set to begin later this year. Along with the US national libraries – Library of Congress, National Library of Medicine, and the National Agricultural Library – test libraries include academic and public libraries, library related service providers, museums, school districts, and of course, the MLA/OLAC funnel, in all, totaling close to 30 test partners.

The first stage of the test period, beginning July 2010, will offer testers an opportunity to gain familiarity with RDA, and allow for local policy decisions on implementation. Formal testing will begin in October, running for three months. During this phase, cataloguers will work with a “common set” of 25 titles, representing textual monographs, audio-visual material, serials, and integrating resources. These records will be cataloged by each participating institution using both AACR2 and RDA; however, only bibliographic records will be created. In addition to the “common set”, participants will catalog items from their regular work flow; this work will conform to local cataloging practices; authority work and subject analysis included. The final stage of the test project will begin in January of 2011, when the national libraries will analyze the submitted records and individual cataloger's reports.

Damian also discussed the publication of RDA. RDA is envisioned as an online product (see <http://www.RDAonline.org>) with no plans for a print counterpart. The base price for U.S. subscribers is \$325 annually, for a single user at a time, with unlimited user profiles. The pricing for additional users is: 2-9 concurrent users - \$55/year per additional user; 10-19 concurrent users - \$50/year per additional user; 20 or more concurrent users - \$45/year per additional user. The RDA Toolkit will be available for a free trial from its release in June through August 31, 2010.

Kathy discussed changes in MARC21, intended to accommodate the granularity offered by RDA. Some of the changes were required for implementation, some were created more for experimentation (e.g. for those working towards more FRBRized displays), and some resulted from earlier attempts to apply RDA. All of the changes she discussed have been incorporated into the online MARC documentation at: <http://www.loc.gov/marc/> and will be available for use in May 2010.

One of the required changes was establishing a Bibliographic 040 \$e code for RDA. Catalogers creating RDA records in MARC will record “rda” in this subfield, using Leader/18 value “i” for ISBD.

The 336-338 fields offers examples of new coding options of particular interest to the musical community. These new fields effectively replace the GMD, and are for content, media, and carrier type. Each of these fields offers the option to record the information as a term, or as a code, (with the option of using the \$2 subfield for validation source). The MARC21 documentation has established lists for content types, media types and carrier types for use as a controlled vocabulary.

Next Kathy spoke about attributes of names and resources. New fields have been defined for names (authority format only), and works/expressions (bibliographic and authority formats). Kathy

noted that issues around encoding, relationships between other fields, what to do with the information, and how to display the data would need to be resolved at an institutional and national level.

A few of the new fields include “special coded dates” (046) for information such as birth and death dates as well as start and end periods; “associated place” (370) for information such as place of birth or place of origin of work; and the somewhat controversial “gender” field (375).

Similarly, the attributes of works/expressions brings us a choice of new fields including “content type” (336); “other distinguishing characteristics of work/expression” (381); and “key” (384).

MARC will also be able to represent the possibilities for defining relationships detailed in RDA Appendix I, J and K: name to resource, resource to resource, and name to name. Examples include the use of subfields for conductor, or relating a name with a “real identity”.

Other changes that have been made to MARC include subfield specificity and repeatability, as well as additional codes in various 007 and 008 character positions.

Daniel spoke about changes to the glossary, rules for description, choice of access points, and uniform titles. The terminology Daniel used is primarily from AACR2, and therefore more familiar to the audience.

Changes in the glossary section of AACR2 include terminology for describing printed music, such as definitions for “chorus score”, “score” and “vocal score”.

Modifications from AACR2 to RDA for rules of description include sources of information, the GMD, edition statements, physical description of notated music and sound recordings, place and date of capture, and publisher numbers.

Rules governing sources of information were generalized in three categories: Those consisting of leaves, sheets, or cards; resources consisting of moving images; and other resources (including discs). The latter category essentially identifies the source as the label, with no option to choose another source if it furnishes a collective title when the label does not.

The general material designation (GMD) will be replaced by three elements: “content type” “media type”, and “carrier type”.

The edition statement encompasses more than in AACR2, including musical presentation statements and statements of responsibility for format of music. Now voice range statements are explicitly mentioned.

Physical description of notated music will be narrowed down. Now, statements such as “v. of music”, “p. of music”, or “leaves of music” will be notated as “score”. The term “closed score” will be replaced with “condensed score” and “miniature score” will be classified as “study score”. Physical description of sound recordings will change a fair bit as well, with changes primarily focusing around substituting the term “audio” for “sound”, (e.g. “audio cartridge” instead of “sound cartridge”). Other details, even if they are standard, are also given, such as “playing speed of digital discs”. Units of measurement will be metric, with the option of other units being used, and encoding format is added as an element, (e.g. CD audio or SACD).

Place and date of capture are two separate elements, providing more granularity. As well, there will be a specific format for date: year, month day, hour, (e.g., 2002 September 13).

Publishers’ numbers, as well as plate numbers, are recorded as written on the source. Those with multiple numbers will be transcribed without omissions.

The addition of “Adaptations” as a choice for access points is new. Access points for librettos will be affected, as well as variant access points for cadenzas and librettos.

With the “Adaptations” option, a performer can now be notated as an adapter, in place of composer as creator, particularly affecting works where the performer substantially adapts or alters a piece, as is typical in jazz.

Librettos will now list the author as the creator. During discussion, concern was raised about composers of operas who also wrote the libretto, a known problem with the current RDA instructions.

RDA contains new instructions on the variant access points for librettos and cadenzas. The variant access points for librettos will be the musical work. Cadenzas will follow a similar pattern.

Some changes will appear with uniform titles. Abbreviations will be removed, modifications to titles, rules governing notation of medium of performance, and notation of “Key” will be changed. Access points for expressions will be enhanced, and issues involving compilations will be addressed.

RDA has separate instructions for recording attributes and creating access points; with the creation of the new MARC fields, we can add separate fields in addition to the established heading.

Many abbreviations, such as “acc.,” have been removed; yet most abbreviations for numbers, such as, (op, no. or BWV), will remain.

In regards to modifications of a title, now the accepted form, when a title consists solely of the name of one type of composition, (e.g., “Song”), will be recorded in the language preferred by the cataloging agency.

Medium of performance has changed in some important ways. For example, the limit of three elements has been removed. Terms for groups of instruments or solo voices are used only for standard combinations in chamber music such as string quartet, piano, strings, accompanying ensembles, and cases where composer did not indicate instrumentation. And, instructions on indeterminate medium have been developed.

Mark summarized the JSC’s “Deferred issues” – items from the review of RDA which elicited objections, yet could not be resolved prior to publication. Some of these issues resulted from the shift in emphasis from the creation of AACR3 to the creation of RDA, some from compatibility with AACR2, some from attempts to align with FRBR entities, and others were deferred due to the need to get RDA published.

Music issues were deferred for various reasons including: a relatively late agreement to retain special instructions for music, the complex issues raised in the LC/12 proposals (relating to naming musical works), limited time on the JSC’s agenda, as well as the effort to gain various organizations’ approval of proposed solutions.

Working from the official “Deferred issues” document, ALA’s Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access (CC:DA) prioritized concerns at the ALA 2010 Midwinter meeting. This incorporated feedback from CC:DA constituencies, including MLA. Mark brought forth the following “big three” issues for resolution on MLA’s behalf: 1) remove confusion associated with balancing the recording of data elements that name musical works with the creation of preferred access points; 2) resolve the ambiguity of containers being permitted as a preferred source of information; 3) lessen the Western bias in instructions about arrangements/adaptations to better represent world and folk musics and work on the problem of naming a libretto whose author is also the composer of the dramatic work.

Other deferred issues of high priority include: clarification on situations of music where the intention is for variation between performances; refining the language in relation to choosing preferred titles; expanding the terms available for large ensembles when recording medium of performance; determining if music-specific instructions are needed for devised titles; removing ambiguities in collective titles for composers who are literary authors, or vice versa; improving the definition for “distinctive title”.

Other deferred issues include: technical details for sound recordings; initial articles; naming musical works by composer with “multiple identities”; names that consist of a phrase/additions to names.

The JSC will develop a procedure for consideration of proposed revisions; CC:DA will work on its own procedure to accept proposals from its various constituencies. BCC will determine which subcommittees should be involved in preparing revisions for CC:DA review.

Submitted by James Mason, University of Toronto