

**TO:** CC:DA

**FROM:** Jennifer Bowen, ALA Representative to the Joint Steering Committee

**SUBJECT:** Report on the October 2005 JSC Meeting

The Joint Steering Committee for Revision of AACR (JSC) met at the British Library in London for five full days, from October 10-14, 2005, to continue work on the new cataloging code, *RDA: Resource Description and Access*, which will replace *AACR2*. I participated in these meetings as the ALA representative to the JSC. The JSC was joined at these meetings by the *RDA* Editor, Tom Delsey, and the new *RDA* Project Manager, Marjorie Bloss.

An Executive Summary <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/jsc/0510exec.html> and the official report (“Outcomes”) <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/jsc/0510out.html> of the meeting are now posted on the JSC Web site. In this report, I will frequently refer back to the Outcomes document (without restating the content of that report in its entirety), adding information and details of particular interest to ALA from discussions at the meeting.

### ***RDA* Project Manager**

Marjorie Bloss, who was recently hired as *RDA* Project Manager, is a long-standing member of ALA, and is well-known to many of us. As the Press Release on the JSC Web site states:

Bloss has held a number of academic and administrative positions in technical services, has been active in domestic and international cataloging organizations, including the Program for Cooperative Cataloging and IFLA, has commercial experience as the Manager of Training Services at Endeavor Information Services and the Manager for Resource Sharing for the Marketing and User Services Division at OCLC, and has valuable project management experience in both academic and commercial environments.

The JSC was very happy to have Marjorie on board in time for her to join us at the London meeting. Marjorie will be coordinating many aspects of the *RDA* project: keeping everyone “on track”, and facilitating publicity and communication with various *RDA* stakeholders, thus allowing the JSC members to devote more of our attention toward developing the content of *RDA*.

### **Meeting with UK Book Industry Representatives**

During the October meeting, the JSC met with representatives of the UK Book publishing and rights management organizations, as described in the Outcomes document. This meeting was particularly useful in that it helped to clarify the needs of the various groups attending, and perhaps opened the door to looking at whether *RDA* and the metadata sets used by these communities could be made more interoperable. In particular, the groups discussed the International Standard Text Code (ISTC), the proposed ISO Party Identifier, and the ONIX code

lists – the latter in the context of having the code lists inform the development of the *RDA* elements for type and form of content and type and form of carrier (possible elements to replace the GMD). The groups reaffirmed their desire to continue these discussions, possibly by setting up a smaller, joint working group.

## Progress on Part 1 of *RDA*

### Comments on the draft of *AACR3* Part 1

The initial analysis of the responses received on the draft of *AACR3* part 1 had a major influence on the JSC/CoP decision to change direction significantly in developing the new code (i.e., moving from *AACR3* to *RDA*). Once that initial decision was made, however, hundreds of other detailed comments from expert catalogers who reviewed the draft still remained from that initial review period. The JSC reviewed most of the comments during the April JSC meeting, but unfortunately was unable to discuss all of them because of time constraints.

The detailed comments on the draft of *AACR3* part 1 included many valuable suggestions either for improving the new code or addressing specific issues from *AACR2*. All of these needed to be reevaluated to see whether they were still appropriate within the new approach to *RDA*. While the sheer number of comments (over 1000 in all – 400 of them from ALA alone!) is quite daunting, the JSC’s goal has been to consider as many of them as possible for incorporation into part 1 of *RDA*. Fortunately, the JSC/CoP decision to basically “start over” on *RDA* gave us a unique opportunity to devote additional time to part 1 of the code, and we have now made significant progress in working through the comments for inclusion in the next draft.

A very rough breakdown of the disposition of the ca. 1000 comments follows:

Category	Number of comments
Comments identified over the summer for inclusion in <i>RDA</i> part 1 (widespread agreement within the JSC) or evaluated as no longer relevant within <i>RDA</i>	ca. 300
Decisions made during London JSC meeting regarding inclusion in <i>RDA</i> part 1 (or decision that comment is no longer relevant within <i>RDA</i> )	ca. 270
GMD, SMD, Area 5 comments deferred until the JSC’s GMD/SMD Group can complete work	ca. 280
Comments on the Glossary (discussion postponed, due to lack of meeting time in London)	ca. 225

While over half of the comments have now been dealt with, the JSC still has a significant number of issues left regarding part 1 and the Glossary terms used in part 1. We will be continuing to work on these two remaining areas during the next few months.

The process of reviewing comments from last year has made it particularly clear to the JSC just how important it is for us to rigorously budget our time in order to remain on schedule for the publication of *RDA*. During the upcoming April 2006 JSC meeting, we will incorporate what we can from these remaining comments and those that we receive on the new draft, but then must turn our attention to *RDA* parts 2 and 3.

### Upcoming Review of the *RDA* Part 1 Draft

Unlike the draft of AACR3 part 1, which was distributed only to the JSC constituencies, the draft of *RDA* part 1 will be made publicly available in December. While we're very happy to have been given approval to make the draft available, the JSC now needs to set up a mechanism for handling comments from outside the constituencies. The JSC will encourage anyone from within the four constituent countries to submit their comments through their relevant national organization (i.e., ALA in the U.S.) but will also allow others to comment directly through the JSC Web site. More information regarding how to submit comments will be included in the cover memo issued with the draft. In the meantime, Mary Larsgaard, as CC:DA Chair, and I are discussing various mechanisms for collecting comments from within the U.S. but from outside the normal CC:DA channels and evaluating them for possible inclusion in the ALA response to the Draft of part 1.

While the upcoming review period may at first glance seem like a repeat of the process that we engaged in last year, I would like everyone on CC:DA to keep in mind that part 1 of *RDA* is now at a much more complete level of development than was the previous draft last year (with the exception of rules for technical description, which will be discussed further below). Many decisions about what will be included in *RDA* have already been made, and will not be revisited at this point. As I prepare the ALA response to the new draft, I will need to be selective about which comments from ALA are still appropriate for submission to the JSC. If a decision has already been made on an issue, then putting it forward again may very well be counter-productive.

As of the date of this report, the JSC is planning to issue the draft of part 1 without Chapter 3 (Technical Description) because the JSC has not yet had an opportunity to review the work of the JSC's GMD/SMD Working Group. ALA should refrain from commenting upon issues related to the GMD/SMD and on other elements of the Technical Description until the draft of Chapter 3 is available for review. It is hoped that Chapter 3 will be made available in time for CC:DA to discuss it at ALA Midwinter.

While the JSC anticipates that the public availability of the new draft will increase the breadth of comments that we receive, the constituencies in particular need to consider what type of comments will be most useful to the JSC and to the Editorial Team at this stage in the preparation of *RDA*. The JSC will be asking the constituent groups (such as CC:DA) to focus their review of the draft on the following two areas, which will really benefit from close scrutiny by practicing catalogers, both generalists and those with more specific subject expertise:

1. Inconsistencies: Recasting existing rules within a new structure may have resulted in new inconsistencies creeping in between rules. We want to catch as many of these as possible and would welcome specific suggestions for eliminating these inconsistencies.
2. Omissions: Are there rules from AACR2 or from the previous draft that have been omitted from the new structure but that are still needed (and why are they still needed?) How could the draft be reworded to accommodate these rules?

The draft of Part 1 will not contain new examples, as the JSC Examples Working Group is still working on reviewing all of the examples from AACR2 and suggesting new ones when needed. Therefore, it will be unnecessary for reviewers to comment on the examples. But please do keep

in mind when reviewing the draft that the addition of examples will help to clarify many situations (although the rules should still be understandable on their own!).

Likewise, the draft will undergo thorough proof-reading at a later point, so it is not necessary for the constituencies to engage in that level of editorial work. It will be much more productive for CC:DA to spend its time considering the substantive issues above.

### ***RDA and MARC 21***

Some decisions about the content of *RDA* (some of which are described below) will have specific ramifications for the MARC21 formats. The JSC will be discussing possible modifications to MARC21 to accommodate *RDA* with the USMARC Advisory Committee and MARBI as work on *RDA* continues. We expect that most *RDA* data elements, however, can be incorporated into the existing MARC21 structure using current MARC21 guidelines for coding and order of data elements, and thus, in most cases, will not force users of MARC21 to make changes to the way their MARC data displays. The JSC will be requesting that comments on part 1 of *RDA* be focused upon changes to the cataloging code itself rather than changes to MARC21, as they are separate standards for different purposes. While CC:DA members understand this very well, we may need to explain this to others in the U.S. who have not participated in the rule revision process before and who may be commenting on *RDA* for the first time.

### **Specific Decisions on Part 1 of *RDA***

ALA members may be particularly interested in the following decisions made by the JSC for inclusion in Part 1 of *RDA* and how they relate to the responses to the earlier draft of *AACR3* Part 1:

***RDA chapter numbering*** has been changed from that in the Prospectus so that the first chapter of Part 1 will be Chapter 1, with the other chapters numbered sequentially, with no gaps.

***Order of the rules:*** As described and outlined in the Prospectus, the rules in *RDA* will be in a totally different arrangement than the rules either in *AACR2* or in the earlier draft of *AACR3*. Rules for notes will now appear along with the data elements that they relate to, rather than in a separate section on “Notes” – this is in response to suggestions received in this regard to make the rules more logical for metadata communities. At the October meeting, the JSC decided to reverse the order of the rules on Place of Publication and Publisher in *RDA* to better reflect the relationship of these elements: Place of Publication is an attribute of the publisher, rather than the other way around. However, as I noted above, the order of placement of the rules within *RDA* does not in itself affect MARC coding or display.

***Separation of content from display:*** As the JSC discussed Part 1, we continued to work through issues resulting from the separation of guidelines for providing content from those related to how data should be displayed. This change will require a significant adjustment for catalogers. Cataloging agencies will need to make local decisions about whether or not to continue to use ISBD display (both order of elements and punctuation) when they implement *RDA*. Once these decisions are made, however, catalogers will still have the guidance that they need within *RDA* to deal with those display issues that were handled explicitly within the actual rules within *AACR2* – the guidance on display will simply move to an Appendix. But *RDA* will also provide more flexibility to tailor such displays to the needs of different catalogs and databases, both MARC and non-MARC.

**Transcription:** The general guidelines of *RDA* will instruct that the transcription of capitalization, abbreviations, etc. follow the guidelines in *RDA*, including those in the Appendices. However, there will also be the option to either use in-house guidelines or take data “as is” if it is captured during a scanning or copying process from a digital resource. This has some implications, for example, for ALA’s recommendation that the *AACR2* rule 2.14E (transcription of I/J, U/V) be reinstated. While that particular rule will not appear in the draft of part 1, a cataloging agency will now have the option to create its own in-house guidelines that would allow the provision of the former rule (or, alternatively, could allow for Latin capitals to be transcribed as capitals, thus avoiding the confusion that comes with making these letters lower case to begin with).

In general, the JSC is moving toward transcription guidelines that will allow catalogers to “take it as you see it”, as a way to simplify the rules for transcription. In another example of this, the changes to practices for transcribing inaccuracies will do away with the use of [sic] and [i.e.].

For early printed resources, catalogers will also have an option for transcribing numerals and numbers expressed as words in the form that they appear (see 1.6.2 in the Draft).

**Levels of description:** ALA submitted a response to *5JSC/ACOC rep/1* (Levels of description) that, overall, was in favor of defining levels of description in part 1 of *RDA*. The LC response to this document proposed a different approach: simply to define a set of mandatory data elements for *RDA*. During the October JSC meeting, the JSC decided to implement the LC approach because it allows cataloging agencies more flexibility to set their own levels based upon local needs. This simplified approach has the advantage of allowing *RDA* to avoid adding to the list of existing standard levels, such as those already defined in *FRBR* and in *MARC 21*, while still ensuring the interoperability (for copy cataloging, etc.) of records cataloged according to *RDA*. The list of mandatory elements appears in the full JSC Outcomes document, and will appear in Chapter 1 (probably at rule 1.4) in the draft of part 1 of *RDA*.

Another advantage of this flexible approach to levels of description is that it addresses many of the recommendations requested by the CC:DA Early Printed Resources Task Force to allow catalogers to record data more fully for Early Printed Resources for the edition and publication areas. *RDA* will not limit the option of recording this data more fully just to early printed resources, however, but will allow a cataloging agency to set its own policies for transcription, no matter what type of resource is being described.

The JSC decided that the rule listing Mandatory Elements of Description (1.4) will also include an option to provide a controlled name access point in lieu of the statement of responsibility (which otherwise is a required element). Responses to the draft of part 1 of *AACR3* indicated a strong desire to move away from requiring the statement of responsibility to be recorded twice: once as a descriptive element and again as a controlled access point.

**Sources of Information:** As of this writing, the JSC is still finalizing the wording of guidelines for determining Preferred Source of Information for inclusion in the draft. In general, there is a strong desire to come up with an easy-to-apply, principled approach that will further simplify the guidelines from those in *AACR2*, eliminate exceptions for particular types of resources, and provide options for cataloging agencies that do not choose to mount or process resources that require special equipment in order to access descriptive information, so that those agencies can prefer eye-readable sources instead.

**Publication information:** The JSC has consciously worked toward the simplification of rules regarding transcription of publication information. In these discussions, we have been guided by the quote from Albert Einstein, “Things should be as simple as possible, but no simpler” (or some words to that effect!). Our starting point was the LC proposal, *5JSC/LC/2*, as well as comments received on the earlier draft of part 1 of AACR3.

In response to concerns from the constituencies (including ALA) about the need to continue to distinguish a published from an unpublished resource, the JSC decided to reinstate the recording of data in *RDA* for the publication area to indicate when place of publication, publisher, and date are unknown. Instead of reinstating the Latin abbreviations “S.l.” and “s.n.”, however, the phrases [place unknown] and [publisher unknown] will be used instead for published resources, as described in the Outcomes document.

**Dates (and chronological designations) not in Western-style Arabic numerals:** Rule 2.10.0.3 in the Draft will provide an option for adding a date in Western-style Arabic numerals following a date that is not in Western-style Arabic numerals. In addition, Rule 1.5 (Language and Script of the Description) will provide an option to record any elements (including dates) in a transliterated form when that element cannot be recorded in the script used on the source. The Library of Congress is considering whether to present a separate proposal to further internationalize the recording of dates. Such a proposal would likely be considered by the constituencies along with the draft of part 1.

**Archival and manuscript resources:** After considering proposals in *5JSC/LC/3*, the JSC agreed to introduce some concepts and rules from *DACS* into *RDA*, although these additions will not go as far as the original proposal in bringing the principles of archival description into *RDA*, an approach that reflects concerns expressed by constituencies such as ALA. The specific decisions regarding implementation of *DACS* rules are outlined in the JSC Outcomes.

**Musical Presentation Statement:** In response to concerns from constituencies regarding *5JSC/LC/4*, the JSC decided **not** to record Musical Presentation Statements as edition information, as was proposed, because doing so would further complicate the concept of “edition”, which is already problematic. Instead, the JSC decided to create a new data element that will be described in Chapter 4 of *RDA*. Information for this element will be able to be taken from any source.

**Technical Description:** At the time of the London meeting, the JSC had not received a proposal from the GMD/SMD Working Group. The JSC decided not to discuss any comments received on the Draft of part 1 of AACR3 related to Technical Description (ISBD Area 5) or its inclusion within *RDA* until we have something from this group in hand. As I mentioned above, the draft of part 1 of *RDA* will most likely be released for review without Chapter 3 (Technical Description), but it is hoped that Chapter 3 will be issued during the review period for the draft so that it can still be considered by the constituencies along with the rest of part 1. We will need to postpone our comments on these aspects of part 1 until the draft of Chapter 3 is available, which I hope will be before ALA Midwinter so that we can still consider it during discussions in San Antonio.

## Parts 2 and 3 of RDA

During the London meeting, the JSC had very little discussion of Parts 2 and 3 of *RDA*. The Editor will be working on incorporating those simplifications related to rules in *AACR2* Chapter 21 that were agreed to in constituency responses to *5JSC/Chair/5* into part 2. The JSC decided not to put forward a similar call for constituencies to propose simplifications to the rules in Chapters 22-25.

The timeline for release of drafts of parts 2 and 3 of *RDA* remains basically unchanged from that posted on the JSC Web site, with the draft of part 2 scheduled for review from May through September 2006, and part 3 from Fall 2006 through Spring 2007.

## Other Topics

### Examples Group

As mentioned above, the JSC Examples Group is continuing their task of reviewing all of the examples in *AACR2*. According to their timeline, they will complete work on part 1 examples in March 2006, the part 2 examples in September 2006, and the part 3 examples in March 2007. (Jay Weitz serves as a member of this group).

### Web-Accessible *RDA*

The JSC forwarded a document outlining functional requirements for the web-accessible version of *RDA* to Don Chatham at ALA Publishing on November 13th. This document was the result of discussions and consultations undertaken by the JSC, and includes many of the suggestions put forward during the Monday June 2005 CC:DA meeting at ALA Annual. The functional requirements document was discussed recently during the first meeting between the *RDA* Editor, the *RDA* Project Manager, representatives of ALA Publishing (Don Chatham and Troy Linker) and representatives of Coe-Truman Technologies, Inc. (Mark Coe, Howard Diamond, and Terry Davis). The latter is a firm that ALA has engaged to assess the feasibility of producing the kind of product that is planned for *RDA*. The meeting was a successful one with Coe diagramming the requirements. As the next step, Coe will create a web prototype using some of *RDA*'s rules as a test.

[Just as a reminder: while the new *RDA* is being conceived primarily as an electronic product, a **print version** will still be available. CC:DA members may want to reassure colleagues of this if they express concern about it during the review of part 1].

## Other JSC Documents

The JSC will be issuing several other documents (either new or updated) at around the same time that the draft of Part 1 is issued. These will include:

1. an updated **Strategic Plan**, rewritten to reflect specifically the goal of publication of *RDA* in 2008 and related goals for its content.

2. an **RDA FAQ**, which will be mounted on the JSC public website. Parts of it will also be published in forthcoming issues of the *ALCTS Newsletter Online*. (I would be happy to hear your suggestions for questions to be included in this document, as we intend for it to be updated frequently)
3. a revised **Statement of Policy and Procedures for JSC** that will define the *RDA* Editorial Team and *RDA* Project Board, and also explain the procedures that will be used by these two new groups and the JSC from now until *RDA* is ready for publication in 2008. After *RDA* is published, a new document of this type will be issued to define revision procedures for *RDA* – this new document will be broadly in line with the previous policy document (*5JSC/Policy/4*) dated February 2005.
4. an updated statement of **RDA Objectives and Principles**. The earlier statement of Objectives and Principles appeared in the cover memo to the draft of Part 1 of *AACR3*, but taking into account the constituency comments on the Objectives and Principles. Eventually, this working document will also incorporate the corresponding Objectives and Principles for *RDA* Parts 2 and 3.
5. an updated version of the **Prospectus**, to take into account changes in the chapter and rule numbering of *RDA*, among other things.

### ***RDA* Outreach/Communications**

As *RDA* Project Manager, Marjorie Bloss, is now working closely with the members of the JSC and with the *RDA* Outreach Group (chaired by Matthew Beacom; Everett Allgood is also a member) to develop and implement a comprehensive Communications Plan. This plan includes communication with groups within the JSC constituencies, other international rule makers, other metadata communities, and other stakeholders in the development of *RDA*.

A list of past and future presentations on *RDA* is now posted on the JSC website at <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/jsc/rdapresentations.html>, and an *RDA* PowerPoint presentation is also available on the website in English, Chinese, French, and Spanish.

An *RDA* Forum is planned for Saturday afternoon, Jan. 21, 2006, from 4-6 PM during ALA Midwinter in San Antonio; additional events of this type will be planned for forthcoming ALA Annual and Midwinter meetings until *RDA* is published. These events will include a short presentation with significant time allowed for questions and answers.

The JSC is developing an *RDA* FAQ that will soon be posted on the JSC website. I will also be publishing a version of some of the general questions and answers from the FAQ, along with some additional questions that have been asked at various *RDA* outreach sessions and on discussion lists, in the next issue of the *ALCTS Newsletter Online* (*ANO*). This will be the first in a series of articles on *RDA* in *ANO* that will draw on text from the “official” FAQ, but specifically targeted toward members of ALA.

Finally, the JSC is planning to implement an *RDA* discussion list that will be open to anyone who is interested. Messages posted to the list will be archived and shared among members of the JSC, the *RDA* Editorial Team, and JSC Outreach Group. The list will not be an official mechanism for

commenting on the draft of *RDA*, but rather a forum for discussion that will allow contributors to share their thoughts on *RDA* informally without officially contributing them to their national association for possible inclusion in their constituency's response to the draft. Details about the discussion list and how to subscribe will be posted on the JSC website in the near future.