

To: Mary Lynette Larsgaard, Chair  
Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access

From: Larry Heiman, Chair, Task Force on the Review of ISBD(A), 2006 revision

Re: Report of the Task Force on the Review of ISBD(A), 2006 revision

## **General Comments of the Task Force**

The Task Force commends the work of the study group for the second revision of *International Standard Bibliographic Description for Older Monographic Publications* or ISBD(A) and its emphasis on the principle of interoperability for facilitating record exchange. The ISBD(A) Study Group's special attention to the examples given in connection with the rules underscores this emphasis (although the TF was puzzled by the fact that the examples in Appendix C were not also examined at this time). The TF also applauds the Group for recognizing that "the identification of editions, and even copies, through detailed descriptions is not a purpose limited to the cataloguing of hand press publications," but, "is the overall goal of all cataloguing."

In our review of the ISBD(A) draft, we have been mindful of a related IFLA activity working towards consolidation of the ISBDs into a single volume and considering the possible future elimination of the individual ISBDs. We understand that ISBD(A) as represented by this draft and any additions or corrections made to it will be included in that consolidation effort. We support consistency among the ISBDs and believe that the stipulations for early monographic publications should not deviate from the other ISBDs, except where absolutely necessary to describe these publications.

## **Comments on specific aspects of the draft revision of ISBD(A)**

The section captions and/or numbers in this TF report refer to existing section captions and/or numbers in the ISBD(A) draft revision. Citations from the draft are indicated through the use of quotation marks. When changes have been recommended, italics are used to indicate additions and strikethrough for deletions. Comments are enclosed in square brackets when given in conjunction with a quoted rule.

### **Introduction to 2006 Revision**

"The identification of editions, and even copies, through detailed descriptions is not a purpose limited to the cataloguing of hand press publications. It is the overall goal of all cataloguing." [We repeat that it is nice to see this point stated!]

"However, we have not revised the examples in appendix C." [Why weren't they revised? Will they be? Are they still accurate in light of the 2006 revisions? We recommend they be reviewed for currency prior to any decision on publication.]

## Introduction to 1991 Revision

The beginning of this introduction speaks to the general philosophy and history behind the creation of the ISBD(A), and so provides an excellent background to the current document. The TF recognizes that it is standard ISBD practice to re-print the introduction from the previous ISBDs. But since the content of the latter third of the introduction is specific to the 1990/1991 documents, the TF was split as to the value of including the entire contents, with some suggesting it would be more useful to include only the parts from this introduction that pertain to the rationale behind the development of ISBD(A).

### 0.1.1 Scope, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph

“Older monographic publications are chiefly those produced prior to the introduction of machine printing in the nineteenth century and include those published for *sale-on-demand* as well as those printed in few, or even single copies, for private or limited distribution.”

### 0.1.1 Scope, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph

We assume the comma at the end is a typo.

### 0.1.3.1 General Use of ISBDs

The RDA draft discusses concepts of Parallel title, Other title information, Parallel edition statement, Statements of responsibility relating to the edition, Additional edition statement, etc., but none of these elements are mandatory. Lack of being mandatory does not mean they will not be used, but cataloguers of antiquarian materials will likely continue to seek guidance for records outside of RDA.

### 0.1.3.2 Use of ISBD(A)

ISBD(A) assigns a higher order (or something akin to that) of description for publications than AACR2R and RDA envision. This is not to say that AACR2 and RDA cannot use notes to expand upon basic descriptions and get to the approach of ISBD(A), but AACR2R and RDA seem not nearly as directed to “the creation of definitive bibliographic descriptions”. The reference to “ideally perfect copies” in ISBD(A) emphasizes further the difference between the ISBD(A) approach and that in AACR2R and RDA.

This may explain what one senses as an ISBD(A) preference for interpolation into areas 1-6, rather than placing the information in a note. Often, the expression “alternatively, an explanation is given in area 7” appears. This leads one to wonder if RDA would not choose the alternative more consistently than the main rules.

Some examples of this “alternatively” are at 1.5.4.2, 1.5.4.3, 1.5.4.10, 2.1.3 (where Optionally, the information is only given in area 7, is used), and 4.1.2. Because the provisions of area 1 apply to area 6, the interpolation should be possible in area 6.

**0.1.3.2, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph**

“When more detailed records are required, for example for catalogues of incunabula or for fuller bibliographic description, many of the provisions of the ISBD(A) may be thought inappropriate ... some cataloguing agencies may continue to use the ISBD(M) for older publications, with or without annotations, to give further details or to describe variations between exact transcriptions and ISBD(M) practice.” [The wording of this paragraph suggests that ISBD(A) is less comprehensive and detailed than ISBD(M), when, in fact, it is the reverse.]

**0.1.3.2, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph**

“ISBD(A) is concerned with the description of ideally perfect copies of library materials ...” [It said in the introduction that the concept of “ideal copy” was removed from the text.]

**0.2 Definitions, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph**

“The definitions for some of the terms used in the context of the ISBD(A) differ from the definitions for the same terms provided in the other ISBDs, notably ISBD(M).” [This has the potential to create confusion for people using several ISBDs. We strongly recommend that the definitions in the various ISBDs agree whenever possible. If required, additional information applicable to specific materials, e.g. antiquarian materials, may follow the definition. For this reason, we have limited our comments on individual definitions, even though members of the TF felt more of the definitions could use some re-working.]

The TF is aware that the IFLA Study Group on Future Directions of the ISBDs is recommending moving the definitions from 0.2 to a Glossary at the end, leaving only a “see” reference to the Glossary at 0.2 for those used to its current location. We strongly concur with this recommendation and agree that “Glossary” is a better name for this section.

It is not clear why some definitions are included when others are not. This exclusion is especially problematic for terms with particular relevance to the antiquarian community, e.g., Fascicle, Folio, or Letterpress.

The phrase “group of characters” is included in several of the definitions as well as being used throughout the text. The exact meaning should be explained somewhere and examples given to illustrate the concept.

See references within definitions should be in boldface.

**Bound with.** The members of the TF are in agreement that the definition should be re-written.

**Colophon.** This should follow **Collective title**.

**General material designation.** An example of GMD would be useful here.

**Sheet.** Since “Form/forme” gives a See reference to “Type-forme”, shouldn’t this definition read “... to cover the type-forme of the printing press”?

**Specific material designation.** An example SMD would be useful here.

### **0.3 Comparative outline of the ISBD(G) and the ISBD(A)**

Giving the outline of both of these is not particularly helpful. It would be more useful to just give the outline of ISBD(A) and point out when it differs from ISBD(G).

### **0.4 Punctuation**

The use of hyphens within certain words or phrases, e.g. sub-series and half-title, is archaic and contrary to usage in AACR2R. We recommend their elimination.

### **0.5 Sources of Information**

In terms of a serial title, we recommend the concept of “series title page” and “analytical title page” be incorporated into ISBD(A).

#### **0.5.2 Prescribed sources of information**

Series title page should be added to the prescribed sources of information for Series.

### **0.6 Language and script of the description**

“Accents and other diacritic marks not present on the source are not added.” [This is consistent with DCRB, but contrary to AACR2R, which says to “add accents and other diacritical marks that are not present in the data found in the source of information in accordance with the usage of the language used in the context”.]

#### **0.7.6 Abbreviations found in the publication**

“When contractions and abbreviations in continuance of the manuscript tradition of abbreviating words that were long and/or frequently encountered are found, these may be left as they stand or may be expanded wherever possible.” [For reasons of consistency and ease of use, we recommend the conjectural expansions be eliminated as an option.]

### **0.8 Capitalization**

Capitalization includes paragraphs re IU, UW, VV, etc., indicating that 1) agencies, particularly those creating definitive records, may wish to reflect the actual capitalization as found in the publication, or 2) if the capitalization of the original is not reflected, alternating [letters] are transcribed as they appear; 3) and finally large capital I in Latin is a ligature representing ii or ij; it may be expanded or it may be left as it stands. These instructions are followed by an alternative that is close to AACR2R instructions but refers to “modern spelling conventions”, and does not instruct with respect to the first character(s) of a word. AACR2R at 2.14E prefers capitalization based upon the context of the text, and specifies if the text is inconsistent how to render. It does not mention the Latin capital I.

## 0.9 Examples

The examples should only exemplify the specific element being discussed. Also, the layout of the examples should clearly be separated one from another, even if it requires a blank line to see where one ends and the next begins.

## 0.11 Symbols, etc.

The last sentence says “an explanatory note is made if necessary”. “If necessary” is generally not used in the ISBDs and we recommend its removal or replacement with “if considered important to users of the catalogue”.

### 1.1.2.4

“The title proper can consist of two parts (each of which may be considered to be a title) linked by the word “or”, “that is”, etc. (or their equivalents in another language). The second part is defined as the alternative title. (*For the exception, see 1.4.4.3*).”

### 1.3.3

There should be an equal sign (=) between the parallel titles in the first example.

### 1.5.2.6

A sponsor of a publication is not necessarily the same as “prefaced by a phrase such as ‘published for ...’”

## 2 Edition Area

This heading should all be in caps (**2 EDITION AREA**) for consistency with the other area headings.

### 2.1.1, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph

“The edition statement can also include other phrases, ~~that~~ *which* may be linguistically associated, linking the edition to other elements of the description (e.g., original title in a form such as “abridgement of ...”).

## 4 PUBLICATION, PRINTING OR DISTRIBUTION, ETC., AREA

The instructions on p. 48-62 are more detailed than AACR2R, but not different from what we are accustomed to seeing.

### Form and order of elements

There should not be a separate Option A and Option B. One or the other should be chosen, with the knowledge that some people won’t follow what is recommended. It is inconsistent with the rest of the draft and results in unnecessary redundancy.

If it is decided that the unique information from both options is to be included, then what is now “Option B” should appear as an alternative under the “rule” in what is now

“Option A”. At the beginning of the section it could then be indicated that if one is to choose the alternative, it should be done so consistently throughout this area.

The statement “It is assumed that agencies applying exact recording will always create authority forms and/or supplied standardized or controlled form for the different elements in area 4” is a departure for the ISBDs that have to our knowledge not spoken of authority data with relation to description in this manner.

#### 4.1.3

“When there are two or more places of publication, printing, etc., and when the second and subsequent places are ~~not included inseparably within~~ *linguistically separate from* the name of publisher, printer, etc., all are recorded in the order in which they appear on the source used.”

#### 4.1.4

“If a single bibliographical record is being created for a publication that is either issued in more than one physical part and the place of publication, printing, etc. information of each part changes during the course of publication, or the publication contains individual title pages ~~which have~~ *with* places of publication, printing, etc. ~~which that~~ differ to that pertaining to the whole publication, the place of publication, printing, etc. statements from the first or earliest part are transcribed and the places of publication, printing, etc. of the other part(s) *are* given in a note. (See also 4.2.3.4 and 4.4.9)”

#### 4.1.11

The s in [s.l.] in the first example is not capitalized. We assume this is a typo.

#### 4.2.2

In the fourth line down of the opening paragraph, what determines when some names “may be safely omitted”?

#### 4.2.3.1, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph

“Insignificant information [What falls into this category?] in the middle or at the end of the statement of publication, printing, etc., may be omitted. Such omissions are indicated by the mark of omission.”

#### 4.4.3 (cf. B 4.4.2), 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph

“Dates given in roman numerals are transcribed as they appear, omitting internal spaces. The Gregorian year is supplied in Arabic numerals in square brackets.

e.g. , M.DC.III. [1604]

*Editorial comment:* Imprint date reads: M. DC. IIII

[This differs from DCRM(B), which states in section 0F3. Punctuation, “When transcribing dates expressed as roman numerals, omit any internal marks of punctuation; and again in section 4D2.1. Roman numerals, “If the date appears in roman numerals,

transcribe the date as it appears. Omit internal spaces and punctuation” Thus, the example above according to DCRM(B) would be written as “MDCIII”.]

#### 4.4.8

We recommend the table of examples of dates included here be removed.

There is no explanation provided for the use of the “-” to represent an unknown integer.

#### 4.5.1. & 4.6.1 and 4.7.1

The “first” should be dropped before “prescribed source of information” in 4.5.1 & 4.6.1 and in 4.7.1.

#### B 4.1.1

The insertion of colophon information into this area identified by “[Colophon]” is a departure from current practice. We are opposed to using “[Colophon]” like a print constant. Why treat this differently? Why not just give the source in area 7?

RDA (at 2.8.0.3) treats this information simply and without interpolation:

Transcribe the place of publication, distribution, etc., in the form in which it appears on the source of information, following the general guidelines on transcription given under 1.6. Include both the local place name (city, town, etc.) and the name of the larger jurisdiction (country, state, province, etc.) if present on the source of information.

If clarification of the place name as transcribed is considered to be important, make a note (see 2.8.5) as follows:

- a) if the place name is known to be fictitious, make a note giving the actual place name
- b) if the place name is in an abbreviated or unusual form, make a note giving the usual form of the place name
- c) if the place as it is identified in the resource is not the only place with that name, make a note giving additional information (e.g., the name of the country, state, province, etc.) to differentiate the name.

In this area of RDA (as in AACR), information about authority forms (ISBD(A), p. 62, bottom) or controlled forms for elements is not mentioned. We wonder if ISBD(A) option B is treading close to FRBR or FRAR considerations.

#### B 4.1.7 (cf. 4.2.1)

The stipulation says to use the mark of omission and put the information on what is omitted in area 7. We recommend continued use of “[et al.]” or “[and others]”.

#### 5.1.2.3

“The extent of a publication with more than one column to a page (*where the columns are numbered rather than instead of the pages) being numbered, is given in terms of columns. When there are more than two columns to a page, this fact is stated in area 7. The total number of pages or leaves are stated within square brackets or in a note.”*

**5.1.2.6, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph**

“Unnumbered pages at the end of a sequence are given in Arabic numerals within square brackets.

e.g. . – 93, [3] p.

. – xv, [1], 160 p.

. – iv, [100] p.

[Commas have been added between sequences in the first two examples.]

**5.1.2.6, 5<sup>th</sup> paragraph**

“When any such unnumbered page, leaf or column is found within a numbered sequence, the first and last pages, leaves or columns are given for the surrounding material.

e.g. . – 1-200, [8], p. 201-232

[This is compatible with an example given in DCRB, section 5B3, but we could find no similar instruction in AACR2R or RDA. Our understanding is that we would not do this under AACR2; each element of pagination or columns is identified as such and there is no element that doesn't have an indication of what it is. The only instructions in AACR2R that result in having p., for example, put in front of pagination are for in-analytics.]

**5.1.2.9**

We recommend that a comma rather than a semicolon separate the number of pages and number of plates.

**5.2.4**

In the examples given here, were the illustrations numbered or did the numbering result from counting by the cataloguer? If counted by the cataloguer, should they be in brackets?

**5.3.3**

We recommend an example be given for “when the dimensions or shape of the publication are unusual”.

**6 SERIES AREA, Introductory note, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph**

“When a publication belongs to more than one series and/or more than one sub-series, the area is repeated”. [The area is not repeated; the statements are.]

**Prescribed source**

Title page (“analytic title page”) should be included in the list of prescribed sources for the series.

**Prescribed source, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph**

“When any information in this area except the International Standard Serial Number is not taken from the ~~title page~~ *prescribed source of information*, its source is indicated in area 7.”

**6.1.3**

“When a sub-series has a distinctive title, this is given in area 6. The title of the main series is given in area 7. [This is consistent with other ISBDs, but differs from AACR2R in which both are given in area 6.]

**6.1.5**

Please give example.

**7 NOTE AREA, Introductory note**

“Notes qualify and amplify the formal description ~~where~~ *when* the rules for such description do not allow certain information to be included in the area ~~where~~ *to which* it applies. They can, therefore, deal with any aspect of the bibliographic history and physical make-up of the publication or its contents.”

**7.0 Bibliographic reference note, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph**

“*When the information is available, the note should always be given for incunabula, and preferably is should be given in the description of any early printed book.*”

**7.1.1.2**

“Cover-title” should not be hyphenated.

**7.1.5**

In the example, should it be “Alexander Wolcott” with 2 Ts?

**7.2 Notes on the edition area and the bibliographic history of the publication**

The examples should only include the elements being exemplified.

**7.5 Notes on the physical description area, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph**

“The number of lines to the page and the type used are given if these aid in the identification of the printer or are considered important to users of the catalogue.”

**7.6 Notes on the series area, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph**

“When series information, other than *the* ISSN, has been obtained from a source other than the ~~title page~~ *prescribed source of information*, the source from which such information has been obtained is given.”

## **8 FINGERPRINT AREA (OPTIONAL)**

The ISBD Study Group on the Future Directions of the ISBD may be changing the name of area 8 to “Resource Identifier and Terms of Availability Area” or something similar.

Note: The Koninklijke Bibliotheek (Netherlands) has an excellent explanation and example of formulating a fingerprint under “STCN-fingerprint” at:

<http://www.koninklijkebibliotheek.nl/stcn/vingerafdruk-en.html>

### **8.1 Fingerprint**

Please give example. See comment re: Koninklijke Bibliotheek above.

## **APPENDIX C: EXAMPLES**

We have not commented on the examples since the introduction indicates they have not been revised. For more comments, see comments under **INTRODUCTION TO 2006 REVISION**.