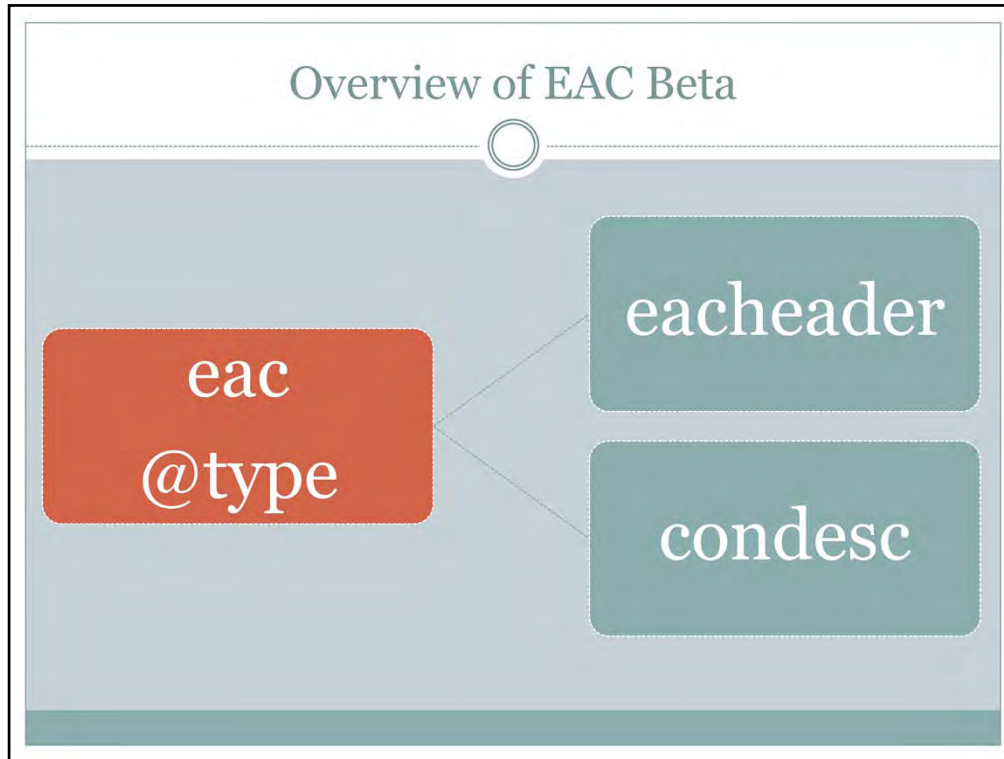


## EAC Overview



by Katherine M. Wisser

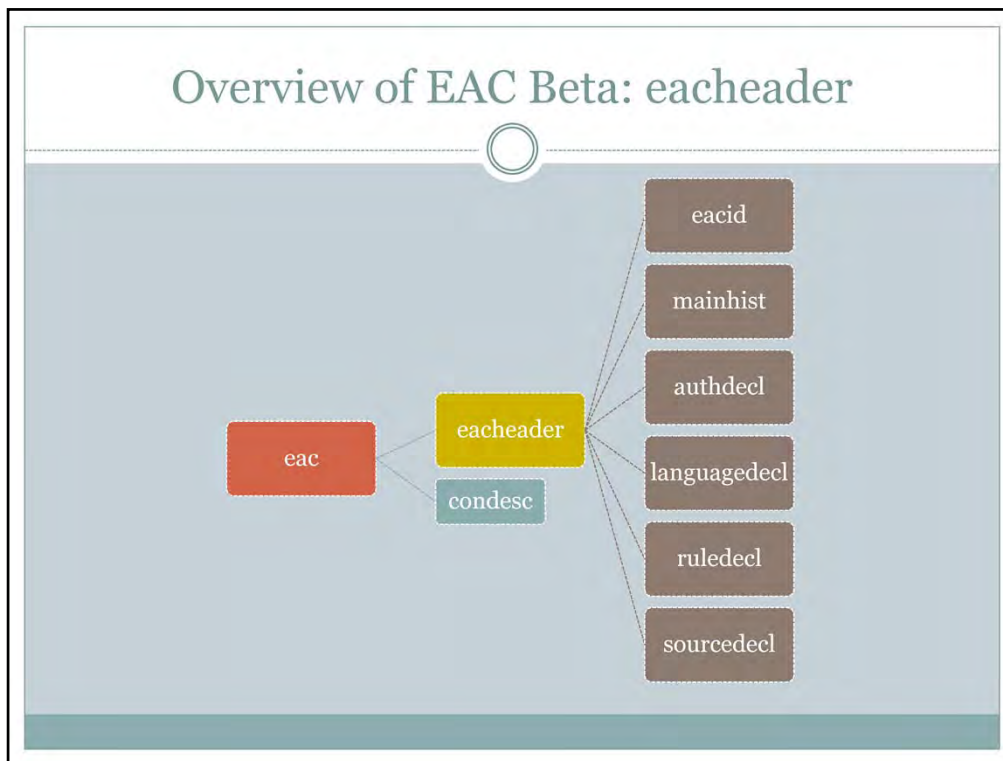
Society of American Archivists Description Section  
Annual Meeting, 2007



I am going to take this opportunity to provide a brief review of the EAC beta standard. Presentations at previous annual meetings have gone into some detail on the standard and the hand out on some of the resources also cover in more detail the standard. The tag library reflects the details broadly outlined here as well as the many the elements available through the standard for in-depth, granular descriptions of record creators.

For those folks that are familiar with EAD, TEI, METS or other XML standards used in our profession, the structure of EAC will be familiar. An EAC instance is divided into two required parts: the eachheader, which retains information about the creation and maintenance of the electronic document (the instance itself); and the contextual description, which retains information about the entity being described by the instance (person, corporate body, or family). The eachheader element itself contains the code declarations used within the eac instance.

The root element includes a required attribute that identifies the type of entity being described by the EAC instance. This is significant in various areas of the condesc portion of the document.



Focusing on the first part, the eachheader, there are six sub-parts. The first is the required element that provides a unique identifier, eacid. Attributes such as countrycode and ownercode assist in the “unique-ness” of the identifier.

Mainhist allows for a recording of the maintenance of the record, including information about record creation, update, deletion, and importation, specified for each maintenance event.

Then follows a series of declarations, including

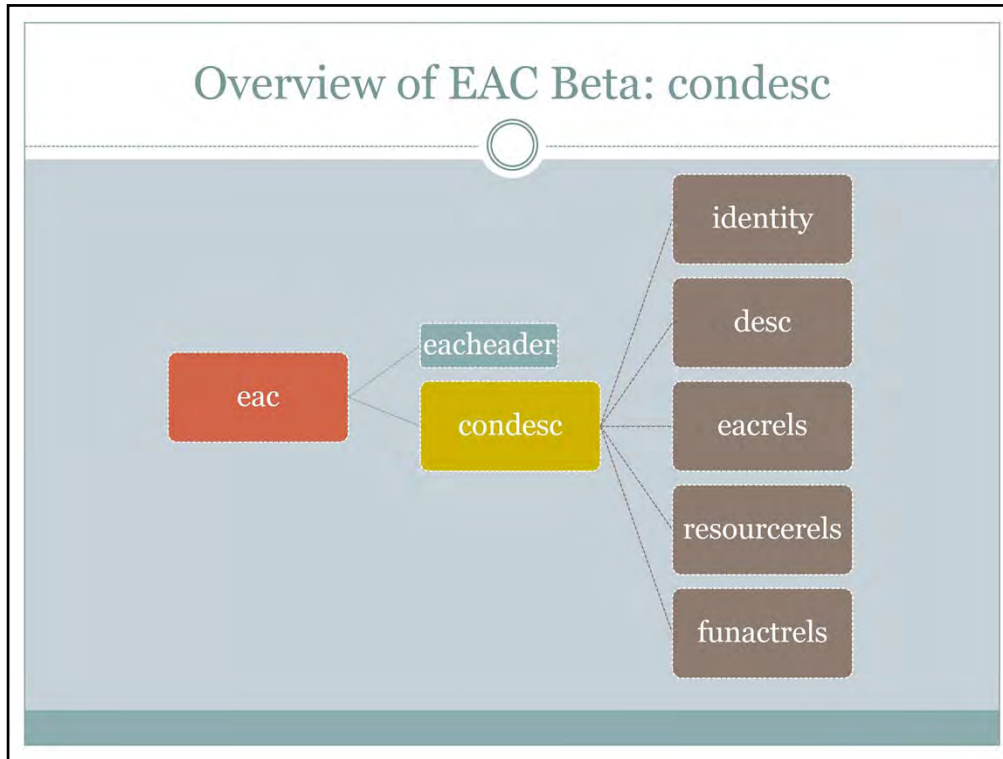
- authority declaration which refers to authorized controlled vocabularies or thesauri used in the description

- language declaration which refers to the language of the descriptive content of the record

- rules declaration which refers to the rules used in creating the EAC instance

- source declaration which refers to the sources used in the creation of the

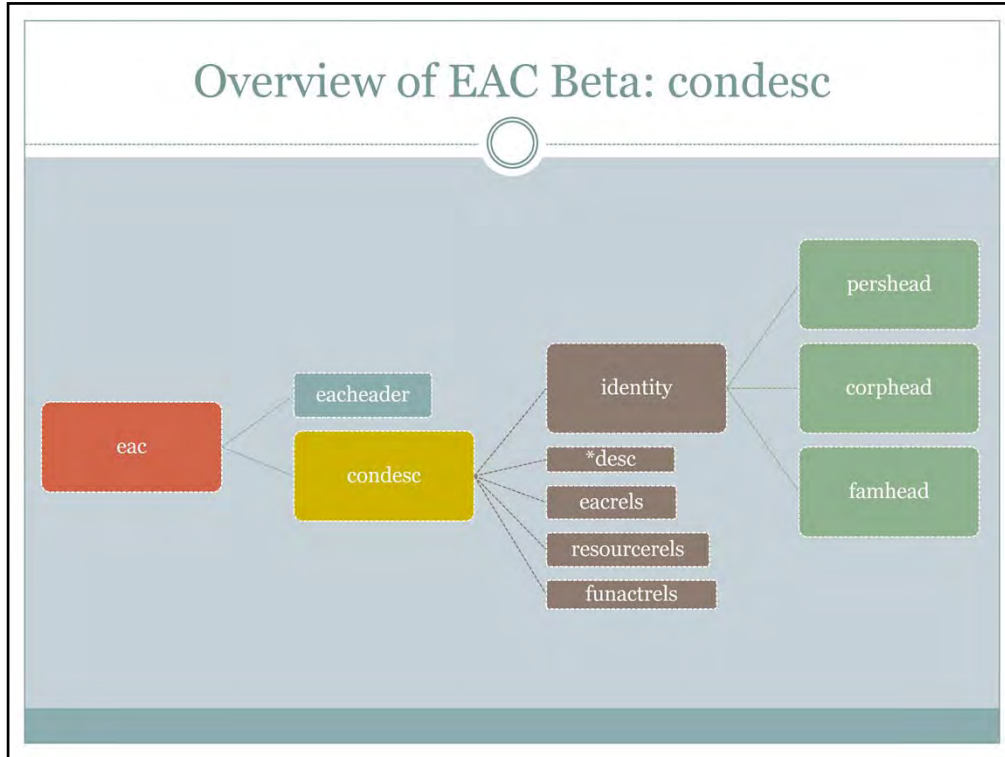
EAC instance. This latter is particularly interesting to me because it encourages us to tie existing biographical and historical resources with the EAC instance.



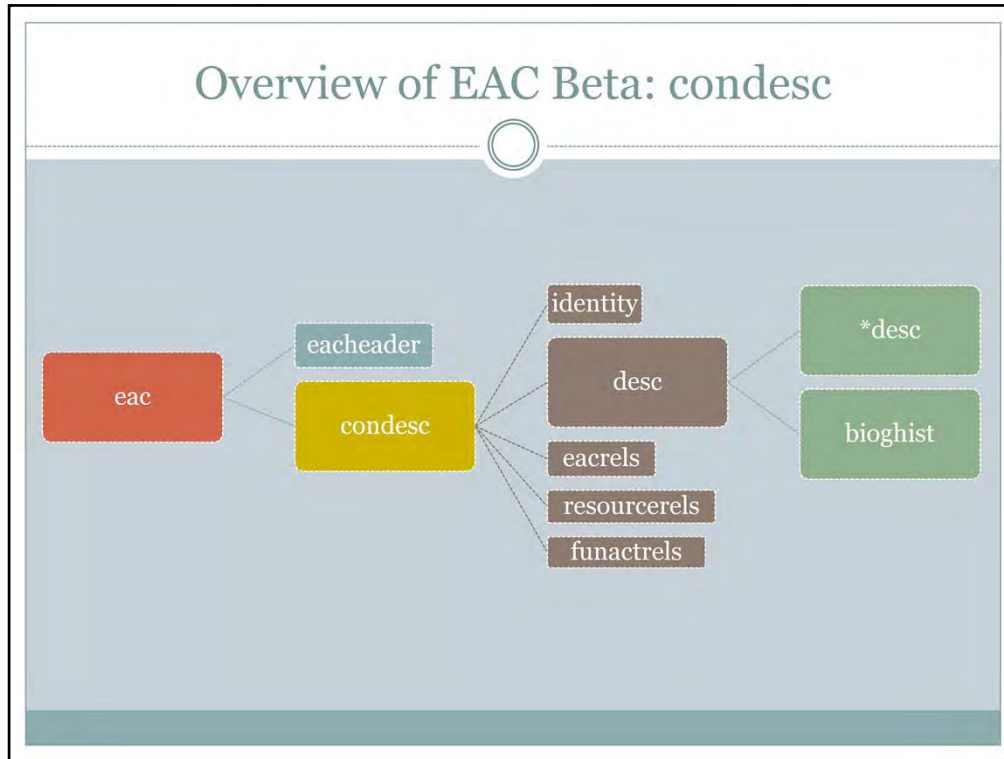
The condesc is the real “meat” of the EAC record. It includes five main parts.

The first, Identity, focuses on the name formation. Within identity, you use a \*head element which is individualized based on the kind of record you are creation

## Overview of EAC Beta: condesc



(next slide). Within these heads, you can identify whether or not the name is “authorized” using an attribute, and then the head itself can contain a variety of elements, including part, existdate, usedate, place, name additions, and descriptive notes



The second section shown here is the description part.

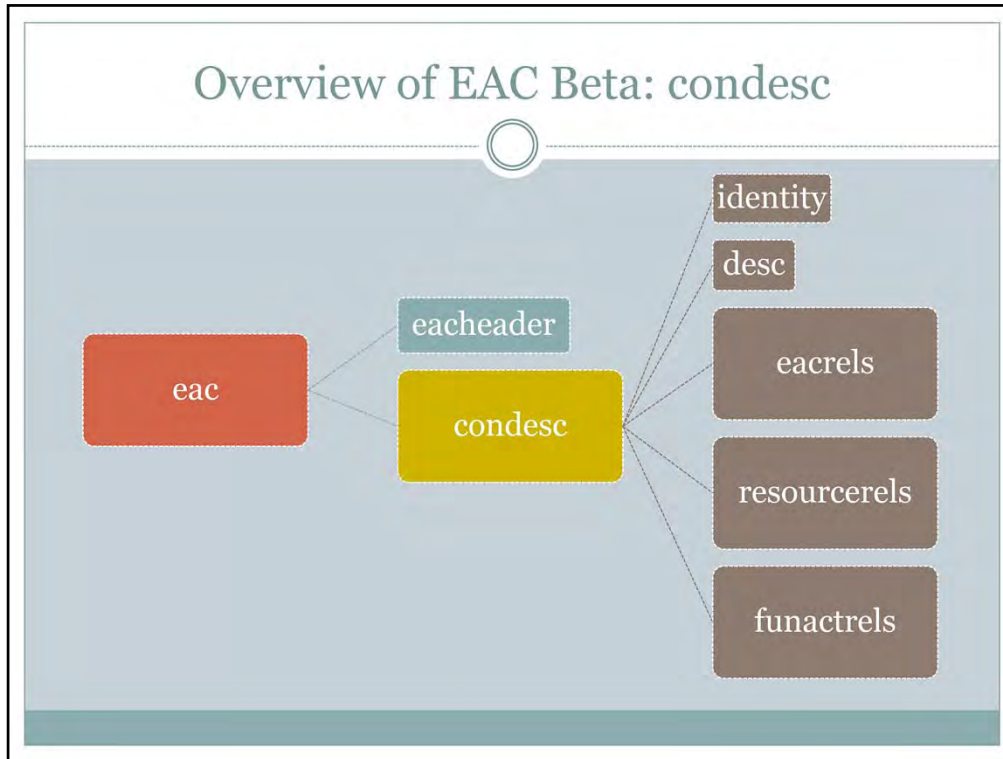
The description section is divided into two subparts: the first is a formal description elements section (represented as \*head: the asterix is used to indicate that there are really three different elements that are used, depending on the type of record you are creating – persdesc, corpdesc, and famdesc). The other subpart is the biographical and historical note, which may contain a chronology as well.

The third through fifth sections of the EAC standard focus on the relationships the entity has. The first, eacrels allows the record author to create relationships with other entities, be they persons, corporate bodies, or families.

The second, resourcerels, allows the record author to make relationships with resource. This section allows you to specify the relationship in the context of actions with the records (destruction, causation, control, or authorship) or if the resource is about the entity being described.

The last relationship structure is the least well-defined, but it focuses on functions or activities related to the entity being described. This is intended as a controlled vocabulary term. The ISAF standard, which was published in draft form in May 2006 will held in further refining this area of the beta standard.

All relationships allow for a variety of description sub-elements relevant to the particular relationship you are constructing. Each is optional in the eac record and are to be used where appropriate.



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