

SAA Standards Committee Annual Report 2007-2008

Prepared by Nancy Kunde, Chair -2006-2008

Membership:

Nancy Kunde, Chair (2006-2008)  
Polly Reynolds, Chair (2008-2011)  
Marcy Flynn (2005-2008)  
Steven Mandeville-Gamble (2005-2008)  
Chatham Ewing (2008-2011)  
James Cassidy (2008-2011)  
Sybil Roud (2008-2011)  
Aprille Cooke McKay (2006-2009)  
John Murphy (2006-2009)  
Kate Colligan (2007-2010)  
Lisa Carter (2007-2010)  
Michael Rush, Chair of TSDS  
Kris Kiesling, *ex-officio*  
Mary Lacy, *ex-officio*  
Kathleen Dow, *ex-officio*

*Technical Subcommittee on Descriptive Standards*

Technical Subcommittee on Descriptive Standards

Michael Rush, Chair

Doris Malkmus

Kelcy Shepherd

Martha Mahard

Michelle Light

Megan Friedel

New Members 2008-2011: Laura Davis, Cory Nimer, Mark Matienzo, Kathryn Young

Ex-officio:

Mark Matienzo (Description Section chair)

Lynn Eaton (RAO chair)

Dan Santamaria (EAD Roundtable liaison)

Kris Kiesling (EAD WG chair, possibly still MARBI liaison)

Lisa Carter (CC:DA liaison)

Gerald Stone (CCAD rep)

New Members 2008-2011: Laura Drake, Cory Nimmer, Mark Matienzo, Kathy Young

*EAD Roundtable Liaison:*

Kate Bowers

### **General Comments:**

I want to express my sincere thanks to the members of the Standards Committee for their hard work during this past year. Special thanks to outgoing committee members Steven Mandeville-Gamble and Marcy Flynn who completed their terms on the Standards Committee in 2008 and outgoing TSDS members Michelle Light (ended her term early to become a member of the SAA Editorial Board) ..... Special thanks are extended again this year to Kathleen Dow, NISO liaison, for her continued efforts to alert the SAA Standards Committee to proposed standards and standards projects coming through NISO and ISO and gathering comments on them. I also extend a heartfelt thanks to Margery Sly, the SAA Council liaison to the Standards Committee. She provided an excellent communications link to the Council and sound guidance on the numerous topics that have come to the attention of the Standards Committee this past year.

The work of the SAA Standards Committee continues to grow, and it is only with the active participation of Committee members that the work of the Standards Committee can move forward. I extend best wishes for a successful year ahead to Polly Reynolds, Chair-Standards Committee, and Mike Rush-Chair-TSDS.

### **Committee Highlights for 2007-2008:**

\* *Native American Protocols*. In response to a request from Frank Boles, President Elect, the Committee reviewed and provided comments on the Native American Protocols Statement. While the Protocol statement does not address standards per se, it does challenge long standing archival principles and practices. Therefore, there is potential for impact on professional standards. Following action by SAA Council at their August 2008 meeting to conduct forums on the Protocols statement at the next three annual conferences, Aprille McKay, Standards Committee member, agreed to serve as liaison to those events and report back to the Committee.

\* *Committee Survey on Standards*. In preparation for an initiative to re-structure and re-mission the Standards Committee, a survey of the SAA leadership was conducted during the spring of 2008. There were 66 respondents, 26 of whom left contact information as well as narrative comments. The survey revealed much about the view of standards within SAA. The survey showed a continuing interest in and a desire for more standards. Respondents also expressed a desire for a more active SAA role both within the US and internationally. It was also clear that there is a general lack of understanding about how standards are developed, their value to the profession, and how the standards development process works within SAA. The full report of the survey appears at <http://www.archivists.org/saagroups/standards/>. The following are some major points from the survey:

- Confirmed that some SAA members don't understand the committee's role, function, and processes.
- Displayed a split between those who viewed SC's role solely from a 'description' perspective and those who wish/hope it would expand to include other topics. Those other topics include electronic records, digital issues, reference, access, and appraisal.
- Asked the SC to collaborate with other information management organizations
- Emphasized an important new role for the Committee: Education, through website content, AO articles, program session, pre-conferences workshops. View standards as an education

resource. Suggested listing all standards and best practices on a web site as well as using tools such as wikis and blogs for standards development activities.

- Expressed concern about work load for committee if roles/mission changed.
- Suggested interest in creating task forces for standards development on specific topics.
- Reflected a sense of the need to address perception that SC is a rubber stamp vs. a belief that SC can only oversee review and then approve, but is not large enough to perform other suggested functions.
- Noted the need for better definitions and understanding of what SC is responsible for—standards, guidelines, best practices, protocols, etc.
- Suggested changes: expand the committee; appoint committee members who have a minimum of 10 years of experience; improve communication between the committee and the profession/membership; have Council do the approval.

\* *Current Standards Development Projects.* Work continued on the Standards development projects that were chartered via the Standards Committee; Guidelines for Archival Facilities, DACS, and EAC. Reports on these projects are attached to this report.

\* *MOU with ARMA International.* Three years in the making, the Memo of Understanding with ARMA International with regard to standards development was finally approved and signed by both organizations. Implementation discussions need to begin along with the identification of a project/s that would be suitable for collaborative development. The SAA leadership should be made aware of this agreement and input sought with regard to potential standards projects that might be approached collaboratively with ARMA. The MOU is available on the Standards Committee website.

\* *Re-Missioning of the Standards Committee.* Work began on re-missioning, re-restructuring of the Standards Committee. The aforementioned survey provided significant information and ideas for the Committee to ponder as it moves forward with re-structuring the Committee. A lengthy discussion occurred at the Committee meeting in San Francisco. The outgoing chair, Nancy Kunde, and new chair, Polly Reynolds, will craft a purpose and functions statement to begin the process. The Committee will report its progress to the SAA Council at its January 2009 meeting.

### **Potential Future Projects:**

The interest in and desire for more professional standards continues to grow. The following are potential areas of standards projects—

- SAA Records Management Roundtable Thesaurus project. (Sybyl Roud volunteered to serve as liaison to this project.)
- Use of XML for archival management of email. The Standards Committee chair was contacted about this potential project, but no actual proposal has come forward to date.
- Certification process to support trusted digital repository development. This is actually an ISO standards development project. Bruce Ambacher and Mark Conrad are serving on the ISO committee working on this project and can serve as conduits for the SAA Standards Committee depending upon the level of involvement that SAA wishes to have in this project.

The Standards Committee survey pointed to a strong interest in a more active role in the international standards arena, particularly with ICA. There is also the opportunity to work more

closely with our Canadian colleagues to contact both with standards activities within Canada but also internationally as well.

### **ARMA / SAA Task Force on Technology and Best Practices**

In 2007 the Standards Committee was alerted to the existence of another collaborative committee with ARMA –the Task Force on Technology and Best Practices that has a potential relationship to standards and standards development. The goal of the Task Force is to identify best practices relating to electronic records. The Task Force has created some measurement criteria to review best practices relating to email, but it has not met with success in terms of identifying best practices that might meet criteria of being broadly applicable in variety of organizational environments. Naomi Nelson, chair of the task force, attended SC meeting in San Francisco and discussed the work of her group. She agreed to provide a copy of the Task Force report to the SAA Standards Committee.

### **Committee and Liaison Member Reports:**

As in past years, the many liaisons who work and or share information with SAA Standards Committee have graciously provided reports on their groups' activities. These reports contain a wealth of information about standards and best practice developments. Appended to this report are project reports from current standards development projects as well as reports from various liaison groups.

- \* TSDS Annual Report for 2008
- \* CCAD Report to SAA 2008
- \* Archival Facilities Guidelines Project
- \* Encoded Archival Context Working Group
- \* ALA's Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access
- \* ICA Report to SAA Standards Committee.

It has been my pleasure to serve as chair of the SAA Standards Committee. I extend best wishes to the Committee for a successful and productive future.

Respectfully submitted, Nancy Kunde, Chair-SAA Standards Committee (2006-2008)

### **Technical Subcommittee on Descriptive Standards (TSDS)**

### **Annual Report 2008 Society of American Archivists Meeting**

From September 2007 to August 2008, TSDS worked to review and promulgate standards related to archival description. Our primary activities consisted of reviewing a proposed standard from the ICA (International Council on Archives) and an independently proposed set of standards for dealing with Native American archival materials. In the upcoming year, we expect to review the revised Encoded Archival Context encoding standard, and participate in reconfiguring the Standards Committee.

**ISDIAH**

In July 2007, ICA called for comments on a draft standard, *ISIAH: International Standard for Institutions with Archival Holdings*. TSDS closely reviewed the draft standard and submitted comments to ICA in October 2007. TSDS endorsed both the concept of a standard for describing holders of archival materials and the particulars of the draft, with some comments. We voiced some questions about the extent to which the standard would be implemented in the United States, but they did not affect our endorsement.

ICA's Committee on Best Practices and Professional Standards revised ISIAH based on feedback received, renamed it *ISDIAH: International Standard for Describing Institutions with Archival Holdings*, and published the standard in May 2008.

## **ISDF**

ICA also published *ISDF: International Standard for Describing Functions* in May 2008. ISDF is a revised version of the draft standard *ISAF: International Standard for Activities and Functions*, which TSDS commented upon last year.

## **RAD**

In January, the Canadian Committee on Archival Description released a draft revision of *Rules for Archival Description* (RAD). TSDS reviewed the revision and submitted comments in March 2008.

## **Protocols for Native American Archival Materials**

In December, TSDS reviewed the proposed *Protocols for Native American Archival Materials* (<http://www2.nau.edu/libnap-p/index.html>) in response to a call for comments from SAA Council. TSDS comments were incorporated into the Standards Committee response to council, which recommended SAA not endorse the protocols without further consideration. TSDS comments on the protocols focused specifically on the section entitled "Providing Context", which would have the most impact on archival description.

## **EAC**

TSDS charged the EAC Working Group in 2006 and gratefully acknowledges the progress made on developing the revised schema and tag library during the past year. We look forward to reviewing both in the next year. Full details on the working group's progress are available in their separate report.

### **Others Issues**

During the past year the Standards Committee began to reevaluate and revise its mission and organization. One change under consideration is whether or not it is necessary for TSDS to continue as a standing subcommittee. TSDS will continue to fulfill its current responsibilities for the next year and will participate in the discussions regarding reorganizing the Standards Committee.

Respectfully submitted by Michael Rush, Chair, TSDS

**DATE:** July 17, 2008

**NAME:** Report on the Canadian Committee on Archival Description (2007-2008)

**SOURCE:** Hilary Morgan, Library and Archives Canada

**SUMMARY:** This document describes activities of the Canadian Committee on Archival Description, a committee of the Canadian Council of Archives, for the period April 1, 2007–March 31, 2008.

**STATUS:** Made available to the Society of American Archivists' Description Section, Standards Committee and Technical Sub-committee on Descriptive Standards, July 17, 2008, for presentation at the Society's annual conference, San Francisco, August 26-30, 2008.

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### **Committee membership:**

The Canadian Council of Archives (CCA) Canadian Committee on Archival Description (CCAD) met by conference call in late 2007 and in-person in Ottawa on March 18-19, 2008. The chair of the Committee is Sharry Watson (Provincial Archives of Alberta). At the March meeting, Tim Hutchinson (University of Saskatchewan Archives) and Gerald Stone (Library and Archives Canada) stepped down as members of CCAD. Hilary Morgan succeeded Gerald Stone as the Library and Archives Canada (LAC) representative. CCAD will actively solicit additional members in the coming year.

CCAD agreed that Hilary Morgan will act as the CCA representative on the Canadian Committee on Cataloguing (CCC), and the Bureau of Canadian Archivists' (BCA) representative on the Canadian Committee on MARC (CCM).

### **RAD revisions:**

Following the 2005 community consultation on draft RAD2, CCAD developed revisions to *Rules for Archival Description (RAD) / Règles pour la description des documents d'archives (RDDA)*. These revisions reflect areas of consensus reported by the Canadian archival community, including:

- a Statement of Principles;
- rules that permit the series to be the highest level of description;
- rules for the description of collections and;
- a chapter for the description of discrete items.

Revisions were distributed to the archival community for comment in January 2008. In March, CCAD reviewed the feedback and completed amendments, as required. Revised versions of *RAD* and *RDDA* will be released to the community in summer 2008.

### **Concise RAD:**

Library and Archives Canada has developed and implemented internally a web-based, abridged version of *RAD / RDDA*. *Concise RAD / Abrégé des RDDA* provides guidance for the description of archival material at aggregate levels (e.g., fonds, collection, series, files). With the support of CCAD, LAC is working with the BCA and CCA to make *Concise RAD* publicly available on the Internet.

The *Concise RAD* initiative was introduced to the Canadian community in a poster session at the Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA) annual conference held in Fredericton, New Brunswick, on June 11-14, 2008.

### **Invitational Meeting of Experts on Description:**

Feedback from the draft RAD2 community consultation revealed divergent viewpoints on a number of key issues (e.g., the structure of *RAD*). In 2006-2007 CCAD began planning for a meeting of experts to address these and other issues related to archival descriptive standards. Planning for this event is currently in abeyance. The meeting of experts will be reconsidered following the release of revisions to *RAD / RDDA*.

## **Report: Archival Facilities Guidelines Development Group**

**(Prepared by: Thomas Wilsted and Michele Pacifico, Co-Chairs)**

### **BACKGROUND**

At its November 2006 meeting, the SAA Council authorized Tom Wilsted and Michele Pacifico to “seek external funding for support of development of a guideline/standard on building archival facilities which, if awarded, will be administered by the SAA staff; and THAT a report on the results of that effort be presented to the Council by March 31, 2007.”



As the Executive Committee was informed in mid-January: After approaching two other possible funding sources (Mellon and Graham), SAA was awarded an unrestricted “grant” (really a “gift”) of \$15,000 from Spacesaver Corporation to support the work of the development group, as well as online and/or print production of the guidelines. Spacesaver has no expectations about being mentioned in the text; there will simply be an acknowledgment in the front of the guidelines that the company provided support for the project. The money was received just before the end of the year.

Members of the development group reflect a wide range of professions and skills and include representatives from SAA and COSA as well as the architectural, fire protection, and engineering communities. They include: Patrick Alexander, National Archives and Records Administration (Retired); Nick Artim, Heritage Protection Group (Fire Safety Representative); David Carmicheal, The Georgia Archives (COSA Representative); Ernest A. Conrad, Landmark Facilities Group (ASHRAE Representative); Michele Pacifico (Co-Chair), archival facilities consultant; Gregor Trinkaus-Randall, Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (Security Representative); Scott C. Teixeira, Hartman-Cox Architects; Diane L Vogt-O'Connor, Library of Congress (Preservation Representative); and Thomas Wilsted (Co-Chair), Thomas J. Dodd Research Center.

The following is a list of responsibilities by section/subject. The person whose name appears in *italics* has primary responsibility for the topic.

Introduction / Scope / Definitions - *Tom Wilsted*, Michele Pacifico

Building Site – *Scott Teixeira*, Patrick Alexander

Building Construction – *Patrick Alexander*, Scott Teixeira

Storage Environment – *Ernest Conrad*, Diane Vogt-O'Connor

Fire Protection – *Nick Artim*, Gregor Trinkaus-Randall

Security – *Gregor Trinkaus-Randall*, Nick Artim

Lighting – *Diane Vogt-O'Connor*, Scott Teixeira

Building Materials/Finishes – *Michele Pacifico*, Diane Vogt-O'Connor

Specific Functional Spaces – *David Carmicheal*, Tom Wilsted

Storage Equipment – *Michele Pacifico*, David Carmicheal

Bibliography – *Tom Wilsted*, Michele Pacifico

## **STATUS UPDATE**

Since the committee's third meeting in January, 2008, each author revised their section of the guidelines and shared it with the remainder of the Committee. Michelle Pacifico agreed to edit the entire text to put the document into a common form and "voice" as well as checking recommendations against NARA and other guidelines and standards.

The Committee had a conference call at the end of July to discuss this draft and made minor revisions and recommendations during the call. The committee delivered a final draft along with a cover letter to the SAA Office at the beginning of August.

By the time this report reaches Council, the draft will be available on the SAA website for comment and suggestions from SAA members and others. Letters requesting comment will be sent out to interested groups within SAA as well as the Archives Listserv and NAGARA, COSA and Rare Books and Manuscripts Section of ALA. Readers will have 60 days for comment and any changes or suggestions will be shared with the Committee.

Following the comment period, the Committee will reconvene either in person or by telephone to discuss what changes are required. Once revisions are made, the manuscript will be submitted to the SAA Publications Committee and to the SAA Editorial Office for publication by the end of 2008.

We hope to have the final volume in print and online by the 2009 SAA Annual Meeting.

**Encoded Archival Context Working Group**  
**Report, Annual Meeting 2008 Society of American Archivists**

**Submitted by Kathy Wisser**

**Chair, EAC Working Group**

Objective

In 2006, the Encoded Archival Context Working Group (EACWG) was charged by the Technical Subcommittee on Descriptive Standards with the oversight of the intellectual and technical development of an XML standard for name control and description of record creators. Specifically, the working group was charged with five objectives:

- developing and reviewing the data model based on ISAAR
- evaluating and selecting the appropriate XML schema representation or representations
- testing and evaluating the schema in consultation with the international archival community
- developing the Tag Library and related documentation
- developing funding proposals to provide support for design and development meetings

Membership

- Anila Angjeli, *Bibliothèque nationale de France*
- Basil Dewhurst, National Library of Australia
- Wendy Duff, University of Toronto

- Hans-Joerg Lieder, *Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin*
- Dennis Meissner, Minnesota Historical Society
- Per-Gunnar Ottosson, National Archives of Sweden
- Victoria Peters, University of Glasgow
- Daniel Pitti, University of Virginia
- Chris Prom, University of Illinois
- Jennifer Schaffner, RLG Programs
- Bill Stocking, The British Library
- Stefano Vitali, *Archivio di Stato di Firenze*
- Kathy Wisser, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

### Grant Funding

In order to achieve these objectives and maintain the intentionally international character of the Working Group, support was sought for a face-to-face meeting. The EACWG was grateful to receive support from the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation, OCLC/RLG Programs, the *IBC (Istituto per I beni artistici culturali e naturali)* of the *Regione Emilia-Romagna*, the *Archivio di Stato* of Bologna, and the National Library of Australia. This support afforded us the opportunity to meet in Bologna, Italy for three days of discussion and a two-day conference.

### Preparing for Bologna

In order to enhance our effectiveness when we were together, we began our communication and preparations well in advance. In addition to regular email contact, we held four conference calls (26 October 2007, 11 December 2007, 25 February 2008, and 17 March 2008). The conference calls gave us the opportunity to speak to each other as we sought consensus on goals and strategies. Our calls prompted us to create the EAC Working Group wiki, hosted by the School of Information and Library Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The wiki proved an effective tool for organizing and disseminating documents and provided a virtual discussion space. It will continue to be used by the Working Group as we move forward.

Early in the process, we sought external input from the international archival community as to the composition of the standard and ways in which it could be improved. The beta standard and tag library were initially posted in 2004 and many projects have implemented or considered the standard in the intervening time. We invited comments through postings to various relevant email lists. We received over thirty responses, ranging from general impressions to detailed project implementation documentation. In order to facilitate the Working Group's evaluation of this input, it was summarized and posted on the wiki.

### Bologna meeting

The EAC Working Group met for three days (5-7 May) in Bologna, Italy at the *Archivio di Stato di Bologna*. We were hosted by the *Archivio* and the *IBC (Istituto per I beni artistici culturali e naturali)* of the *Regione Emilia-Romagna*. The *Archivio di Stato* provided meeting area with a

projector and a whiteboard to facilitate deliberations. The working sessions began at 9:00 am, and we worked until 7:00 pm each day. The Working Group attended the companion conference, “Standards and exchange formats for interoperability among archival information systems” sponsored by the *IBC* and held at the *Oratorio San Filippo Neri*, on 8-9 May. Several Working Group members presented at the conference alongside Italian archivists and scholars. The audience included over 120 international archivists and informatics specialists, including a handful of advanced students and younger professionals.

### **Principles of design**

We reviewed our goals and objectives in order to use the time effectively. We began with discussion of conceptual issues and revised the high-level architecture of the EAC beta standard. Several issues raised during Working Group conference calls were resolved, while others were postponed. The group debated the concept of “contextual information” both before the meeting in May and on the first day. The statement of purpose was revised to reflect concurrence with the objectives outlined in ISAAR(CPF). We discussed other contextual information, represented by other international standards, and various extensions possible to those standards.

In the course of developing the EAC schema, the Working Group built a philosophy for design aligned with the new model of description. Tenets articulated include:

- a) Keep it simple: Everything besides control in the schema is “pure archival description.” The structure should be streamlined.
- b) Parsimony is a design principle to make the EAC schema interoperable and data-base friendly: Design for reuse in some other context and use of the same information in several places and from the point of view of sharing, expressions of elements are shared pieces.
- c) Avoid doing things in the schema just for presentation: The EAC data structure standard is for communication of information, not the way it is stored and maintained. This will help avoid creating problems for aggregators.
- d) Facilitate smart structured data: Move as many things out of attributes as possible and eliminate mixed content in elements. Grouping is for communication.
- e) If you can't explain it, don't do it: We need to be able to teach it, so pedagogy informs logic and simplicity. We must consider the user's perspective in design.

We concluded that our revised design should implement the facilities that eXtensible Markup Language (XML) provides. This reflects a more nuanced and mature understanding of XML capabilities and practical implementation. The Working Group benefitted from external input gathered at the end of 2007 as well as experiences from Working Group members to find the right balance.

Following these large conceptual issues, the group reviewed the architecture of the EAC beta standard. As we moved through the elements, we refined definitions and created a simplified architecture. Three members of the Working Group kept notes to ensure that discussion was recorded and decisions could be revisited. Two members recorded the skeleton of the schema in Oxygen.

After completing the analysis and reviewing our output, we discussed the next steps. Four working group members agreed to develop the schema. Another subset of the Working Group will refine element and attribute definitions for the Tag Library. Work in progress will be posted to the wiki. Finally, a schedule of upcoming work was established.

#### Current Status and Next Steps:

- The EAC website, hosted at the *Staatsbibliothek* in Berlin, is in a beta stage and is ready for content.
- Schema development is underway with Daniel Pitti, Chris Prom, Basil Dewhurst and Victoria Peters all contributing to the development. They are using ‘subversion software’ for development in a distributed virtual environment.
- Tag Library documentation is being created in parallel with the schema and distributed via the wiki for working group input on tag definitions. Tag Library will be encoded in TEI (P-5) once complete. Kathy Wisser will serve as editor.
- The draft schema and documentation will be examined by corresponding members and allies of the EACWG: Michelle Coombs (Syracuse), Giovanni Michetti (*Università di Roma*), Michael Rush (Yale), and Michelle Light (UC Irvine).
- We will distribute the schema and documentation to our pre-existing community of enthusiastic volunteers for testing.
- We also need to develop a plan for translations into other languages.
- The Working Group will develop dissemination plan for standard and consider on-going sustainability of Working Group for development of other contextual information encoding standards (EAC-F, Encoded Archival Context-Functions; and EAC-IAH, Encoded Archival Context- Institutions with Archival Holdings, based on the international ICA standards ISDF and ISIAH).

**Report from Lisa Carter, SAA liaison to the ALA's Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access**  
**August 1, 2008**

Throughout 2007-2008, the ALA Committee for Cataloging: Description and Access (CC:DA) continued to review drafts of *Resources for Description and Access* (RDA), which will supersede the current Anglo-American Cataloging Rules (AACR2).

At their October 2007 meeting the Joint Steering Committee for the Revision of AACR (JSC) agreed on a new organization for RDA to align it more closely with FRBR entities and user tasks. The new organization and description of the sections can be found at

<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/jsc/rda-new-org.html>. Minutes from the October 2007 meeting <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/jsc/docs/5m170-215.pdf> also include a detailed discussion on the definition of “families” and creating access points for families (the new Sections 3 and 9).

This new organization and a revised draft of Sections 2-4, 9 of *RDA: Resource Description and Access* were the main topics of discussion at the CC:DA meetings in January 2008 and online throughout the spring. Section 2 covers attributes of work and expression, Section 3 instructs on recording attributes of person, family, and corporate body, Section 4 details attributes of concept, object, event, and place and Section 9 contains rules on relationships between persons, families, and corporate bodies. These sections (and background comments) can be viewed at <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/jsc/docs/5rda-sec2349.pdf>. Issues discussed by CC:DA included the use of “selections” in titles, organization of RDA, required elements, scope guidelines, status of place entity, and reconsideration of significant features of AACR2. Comments were taken through March 2008 and feedback was discussed at the JSC meeting in April 2008.

In April, the JSC decided against ALA's reorganization suggestions, their suggestion that certain attributes be treated as relationships to entities and moving all punctuation instructions to the appendix. The JSC did agree with ALA's suggestions to make the table of contents clearer, move the instructions on access points to the end of chapters, and that preferred and variant names and titles would be treated as sub-types of related elements. More details on the actions taken by the JSC are detailed in the ALA Representative to the Joint Steering Committee's Report at <http://www.libraries.psu.edu/tas/jca/ccda/docs/jsc0806.pdf>. Other outcomes of the April 2008 meeting of JSC are listed more formally here: <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/jsc/0804out.html>

Of particular interest to archivists may be the treatment of the concept of “originating body”. The JSC decided to include the intent of AACR2 21.1B2 in RDA by including those provisions in the definition of creator. Chapter 19 (Persons, families, and corporate bodies associated with a work) will no longer include an element for originating body. Also, the JSC agreed to add the following roles at the work level to the proposed appendix on *Designation of roles*: Film director; Cinematographer; Producer; Production Company; Screenwriter (as a subcategory of Author). A number of roles were also added at the expression level for moving image resources, e.g., Costume designer and Film editor. Additions were made to the RDA element set including manufacture statement to chapter 2

(Identifying manifestations and items), interpretive content to chapter 7 (Describing additional attributes of works and expressions), which includes captioning and audio narration that is added to video content, and numbering of issue or part to chapter 24 (General guidelines on recording relationships between works, expressions, manifestations, and items). Due to the proliferation of the number of elements in RDA, the JSC decided it would be preferable to designate certain elements as “core” rather than categorizing elements as either “required” or “optional”. It will be possible to restrict the view in the online incarnation of RDA to just the core elements. The discussion of these matters will be detailed in the April 2008 meeting minutes.

The JSC changed the date on which the complete draft will be available for constituency review to October 2008 and the review period will go through January 2009. The plan is still to release RDA in 2009. Updates on the RDA planning process and release schedule are available at <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/jsc/rda.html>.

As a result of the JSC’s decision that the extensive list of specialist cataloging manuals prepared by ALA appear as a wiki appended to but not inserted into the text of RDA, the CC:DA Task Force on Specialist Cataloguing Manuals compiled and fine-tuned the *Standards, Manuals and other Resources for Use with RDA*. The final report of that task force and the list is available at <http://www.libraries.psu.edu/tas/jca/ccda/docs/tf-scm3.pdf>. This list will make catalogers aware of most of the special collections and archives tools such as DACS, RAD, CCO, DCRM, etc.

For further information on RDA, please consult the JSC site at <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/jsc/rda.html>, as well as the CC:DA site at <http://www.libraries.psu.edu/tas/jca/ccda/>.

The CC:DA Task Force to Review the *Statement of International Cataloguing Principles* provided feedback on the April 2008 draft document. The Task Force considers the draft an improvement over earlier versions, yet found the language imprecise and inconsistent in some sections, with visible conceptual gaps. General concerns mentioned include a possible continued bias towards printed resources and some inconsistency in the use of the terms “authorized”, “controlled”, and “preferred” throughout. More specific feedback is outlined in the report <http://www.libraries.psu.edu/tas/jca/ccda/docs/tf-icp4.pdf>.

The CC:DA Task Force for the Review of *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Serials)* submitted a report on July 22, 2008 to the RBMS Bibliographic Standards Committee regarding their review of the draft of DCRM(S). The assessment of the CC:DA Task Force was that DCRM(S) was a huge improvement over the previous state of affairs for cataloging rare serials. While the Task Force had many specific suggestions on details of the draft, generally DCRM(S) seems to embrace current trends in appropriate and sufficient description, provides greatly expanded guidance for problems specific to serials while holding to the context of related standards around it (RDA, DCRM(B)) and contains extremely helpful appendixes, including one on the creation of collection-level records. The included section on precataloging decisions particularly lends further guidance to the field on keeping descriptive efforts appropriate to the



context of institutional mission, relevance of the item and use. DCRM(S) is available at [http://www.rbms.info/committees/bibliographic\\_standards/dcrm/dcrms/dcrms.html](http://www.rbms.info/committees/bibliographic_standards/dcrm/dcrms/dcrms.html).

**INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES  
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## **Committee on Best Practices and Standards / Comité des normes et des bonnes pratiques**

Report to SAA Standards Committee, 2008, August

Under the direction of the Programme Commission (PCOM), the Committee on Best Practices and Standards (CBPS) serves as the professional home for the maintenance and development of standards and best practices and related activity within ICA. In the past attention was mainly concentrated on descriptive standards, but from 2004 onwards, the initiative was enlarged to encompass all those professional and related activities that would benefit from the development of standards and best practices, including, for example, appraisal, legislation, dictionaries, *Archipaedia*, archives buildings, etc. CBPS welcomes the opportunity to participate in the meeting of the SAA Standards Committee and to make this report.

### **Database of standards**

CBPS entered into a partnership with the Standards Committee of the Canadian Council of Archives (CCA) to expand the scope of CCA's Database of Archival Best Practices and Standards to include languages other than French and English. The objective of the Database is to provide an easy and efficient means of accessing archival standards and best practices from around the world. The database is searchable by archival functions, by bodies that endorsed standards, and by key words. Information on how a standard can be obtained and an abstract explaining the standard is also included. A link from ICA/CBPS webpage to the CCA database will be provided as soon as it is ready. Volunteers are being sought to assist in the identification

of standards particularly in languages other than English and French and to help in translating the abstracts. The development and availability of the Database on Standards is a critical tool for collecting and disseminating information on standards and best practices wherever they are developed and it is a priority project for CBPS.

## **Standards Development**

### **Archival Description**

Two working groups developed archival standards in the domain of archival description. These are the *International Standard for Describing Functions* and the *International Standard for Describing Institutions with Archival Holdings*. Both standards were made available on the web, reviewed and revised based on input during the vetting process. They were presented to the Programme Commission with a report on the process that was followed and forwarded to the Executive Committee for formal endorsement. For further information, see: <http://www.ica.org/en/node/38665> and <http://www.ica.org/en/node/38884>

### **Guidelines on Appraisal**

The Appraisal working group drafted guidelines for appraisal including: criteria for selection; sampling; process of appraisal; electronic records; and examples from the countries represented on the working group. A need was identified for best practices for sampling of case files. Difficulty in funding travel to meetings prevented completion of work in this area.

### **Electronic records Area and Exchange Standard**

The short lifespan of record systems leads to a key challenge in preserving digital records: ensuring that the digital records can be extracted from the record systems that currently store and manage them and be reliably transferred to another system. This is the scope of the recently developed record exchange standard, which provides a generic model for transferring records between systems. This standard, endorsed by UN/CEFACT and ICA, addresses the transfer of custody on records, either from an agency to an archive, from an archive to another archive, or from an archive back to an agency and describes the submission process (messages related to the transfer proposal and to the transfer as such) as well as the structure of submitted data and metadata (submission information package). The standard relies on the open archival information system model (OAIS - ISO 14721). A Business Requirements Specification (BRS) describing a portion of the process of transferring of custody of digital records from one system to another in either the public or private sector is available at: <http://www.ica.org/en/node/38983>

### **Preservation**

Guidelines on the Exhibition of Archival Materials have been developed by the former previous preservation committee.

### **Other activities**

#### **International Archival Congress 2008**

ICA/CBPS participated in the International Archival Congress in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 2008, 21-27 July, by organizing two sessions and four workshops on archival description, including a forum on ISAD(G) and ISAAR(CPF) review and revision, a session on sample on personal files and a roundtable based on the ICA manual on appraising and selecting documents.

The Committee also had its annual meeting during the Congress.

#### **Projects led by other ICA bodies but involving CBPS**

The ICA AtoM project aims to develop a web-based archival description software. 'AtoM' is an acronym for 'Access to Memory'. The purpose is to provide a free and open-source software:

1. that enables institutions to make their archival holdings available online, especially those who could not otherwise afford to do so
2. that manages archival descriptions in accord with ICA standards
3. that provides multi-lingual interfaces and content translation features
4. that supports multiple collection types
5. that is fully web-based, user-friendly and follows accessibility best practices
6. that is flexible and customizable
7. that is useful to both small and large institutions alike
8. that supports single or multi-repository implementations

AtoM also enables anyone to convert archival descriptions into EAD instances. The beta version has just been released and it may be downloaded at: <http://ica-atom.org/>.

Another project concerns archival terminology. Since 1984, there were 2 printed editions of the ICA Dictionary of Archival Terminology. But the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition was not published because a more conceptual tool was needed. It is the reason why ICA is developing a multifaceted, multilingual and multimedia tool. The tool box will include a dictionary providing definitions, synonyms, antonyms and nearing concepts (with terms and explanations and thesaurus functionalities), translations, citations and basic texts explained. The implementation plan aims to develop an open source software tool on ICA website (a 'Wiktionary'), unilingual linguistic modules with dictionaries available online (the dictionary of the Society of American Archivists, the glossary of the international portal of French language archival community and the project of dictionary of the Spanish-speaking world).

**Action Plan 2008-2010**

An action plan for the 2008-2010 term was drafted with activities to include on-going tasks related to monitoring standards development, etc. for all archival functions; maintaining and developing the Database on Archival Best Practices and Standards; enhancing promotion of standards; improved communication through the web site (see: <http://www.ica.org/en/standards>); consultation on and identification of needed standards, best practices; implementation guidelines for ICA Descriptive Standards (illustrating how ISAAR, ISAD, ISDF and ISDIAH are used together); review of ISAD(G) and ISAAR(CPF) and in respect to recent developments in EAD and EAC recommendations for harmonization; this review could be the first step toward the development of a single reference model to reconcile and harmonize the four international descriptive standards which have been developed since the 1990s, following the approach that has been successfully applied within both the international library and museum communities (e.g., Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR), CIDOC Conceptual Reference Model (CIDOC CRM)); cooperative projects with ICA Section for Archival Education and Training to develop an e-learning instrument on description that is compliant with ICA standards and an e-learning instrument on appraisal that follows ICA guidelines; development of guidelines for sampling of case files.