

To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA
From: Kathy Glennan, ALA Representative
Subject: Revision to RDA 3.1.4, *Resources Consisting of More than One Carrier Type* and RDA 3.4.1.3, *Recording Extent*

Abstract

Revise RDA 3.1.4, *Resources Consisting of More than One Carrier Type*, to accommodate resources and accompanying material that share the same carrier type and to generalize the alternative instruction to describe the predominant carrier (or the most substantial carriers). Make supporting changes to RDA 3.4.1.3, *Recording Extent*.

Justification

ALA has been considering the instructions relevant to the description of accompanying material. This concept is part of a sequence of instructions dealing with resources consisting of more than one part. Our investigation has revealed a gap in those instructions.

This sequence of instructions begins with guidelines in **1.5.2** (2nd paragraph):

When using a comprehensive description for a resource that has more than one part, record details about the parts of the resource in any of the following ways that are applicable:

- a) as part of the description of the carrier (see [3.1.4](#))
- b) as a relationship to a related work (see [25.1](#))
- c) as a relationship to a related manifestation (see [27.1](#)).

At **3.1.4** (1st-2nd paragraphs), there are additional instructions about recording information about physical parts as part of the carrier description:

When preparing a comprehensive description for a resource consisting of more than one carrier type, apply the method that is appropriate to the nature of the resource and the purpose of the description:

- a) record only carrier type and extent of each carrier (see [3.1.4.1](#))
or
- b) record carrier type, extent, and other characteristics of each carrier (see [3.1.4.2](#))
or
- c) record the predominant carrier type and extent in general terms (see [3.1.4.3](#)).

Record additional characteristics of particular carriers if considered important for identification or selection (see [3.6–3.20](#)).

However, there is a major disjunction between **1.5.2** and **3.1.4**. The former covers *all* resources in more than one part, and refers to **3.1.4** for describing them “as part of the description of the carrier”. However, **3.1.4** is limited to “resources consisting of more than one *carrier type*”

[emphasis added]. There is nothing in **3.1.4** that covers resources with parts of the *same* carrier type, such as a book with a physically separate supplement or index, or a book accompanied by a volume of maps or illustrations. One would assume that this was considered to be obvious: the single content type would be recorded, and the extent of the resource would be recorded by applying **3.4.1.3**. Unfortunately, this apparently went without saying — which is never a good idea.

ALA recommends revising 3.1.4 to correct this problem.

Issues to be resolved

ALA notes some other difficulties with how RDA currently deals with resources consisting of more than one carrier. These instructions are currently concentrated at RDA 3.1.4 which is organized into three sections, based on the actions to be taken:

- Record only carrier type and extent of each carrier
- Record carrier type, extent, and other characteristics of each carrier
- Record predominant carrier type and extent in general terms.

As noted above, these categories do not currently cover the case in which there are multiple carriers of the same type. Furthermore, the first category does not allow the cataloger to distinguish between predominant and accompanying carriers; and the third category does not allow for recording extent of predominant and accompanying carriers separately. These limitations are of particular concern to ALA, because these are two ways of introducing the concept of accompanying material into RDA.

We therefore propose that the relevant RDA instructions be revised to include

- provision for resources consisting of multiple carriers, whether of the same type or of different types
- provision for recording all relevant characteristics of multiple carriers when they differ
- alternative instructions to record characteristics only of the predominant carrier (or the most substantial carriers).

Implementation

RDA 3.1.4 is a summary of the instructions for resources consisting of more than one carrier. The actual instructions should be in the instructions for recording the specific elements. This is true for Media Type, Carrier Type, and Dimensions, which include provisions for resources consisting of more than one carrier (although these differ in detail from what is currently in 3.1.4). The instructions for Extent, however, lack many of the provisions that are currently in 3.1.4. ALA proposes that 3.4.1.3 be revised to include a full set of instructions for resources consisting of more than one carrier.

RDA 3.1.4, then, should be a summary of instructions that exist elsewhere in RDA, but are scattered. It is based on the pragmatic assumption that bringing a summary of all these instructions together in one place is helpful to catalogers.

If that assumption is not valid, then 3.1.4 could be deleted completely. If that is done, we note that there are references to 3.1.4 in the following instructions: 1.5.2, 3.4.1.3, 3.5.1.6, 3.21.2.3, and 7.18.1.3; if 3.1.4 is deleted, appropriate provisions will need to be added to at least some of these instructions.

However, ALA does believe that 3.1.4 is useful, but it is not clear to us how much information is needed in the summary. We therefore offer two options: *Option 1* includes a very full set of instructions and duplicates instructions for specific elements. *Option 2* includes a very concise table of contents with links to the relevant instructions for specific elements.

Regardless of the option selected, related changes need to be made to RDA 3.4.1.3, *Recording Extent*. These include the change from “carrier type” to “carrier” and the generalization of the alternative to describe the predominant carrier (or most substantial carriers).

Finally, ALA recommends updating the instruction reference when referring to instructions for additional characteristics of particular physical carriers. Currently, the span is 3.6-3.20, which omits instructions for dimensions.

Impact

These revisions address a gap in RDA instructions and provide further guidance to catalogers seeking to describe resources and accompanying material that share the same carrier type.

Proposal

Revise RDA 3.1.4 – two options

Option 1: Revision and Reorganization of 3.1.4

Replace the current sub-instructions based on methods of describing resources consisting of more than one carrier type with a sequence of instructions for recording media type (proposed 3.1.4.1), carrier type (proposed 3.1.4.2), extent (proposed 3.1.4.3), and other carrier characteristics (3.1.4.4 - new).

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3.1.4 Resources Consisting of More Than One Carrier-Type

When preparing a comprehensive description for a resource consisting of more than one carrier type, ~~apply the method that is appropriate to the nature of the resource and the purpose of the description~~ record the following elements for each carrier, as applicable:

- ~~a) record only carrier type and extent of each carrier (see [3.1.4.1](#))~~
~~or~~
 - ~~b) record carrier type, extent, and other characteristics of each carrier (see [3.1.4.2](#))~~
~~or~~
 - ~~c) record the predominant carrier type and extent in general terms (see [3.1.4.3](#)).~~
- a) media type (see [3.1.4.1](#))
 - b) carrier type (see [3.1.4.2](#))
 - c) extent (see [3.1.4.3](#)).

Record additional characteristics of particular carriers if considered important for identification or selection (see ~~3.6–3.20~~ [3.1.4.4](#)).

Record details of the carriers in a note if considered important for identification or selection (see [3.21.2.3](#)).

For instructions on recording information about the carrier of accompanying material, see [27.1](#) (related manifestation).

~~For instructions on recording extent for a comprehensive description of a collection, see [3.4.1.11](#).~~

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3.1.4 Resources Consisting of More Than One Carrier

When preparing a comprehensive description for a resource consisting of more than one carrier, record the following elements for each carrier, as applicable:

- a) media type (see [3.1.4.1](#))
- b) carrier type (see [3.1.4.2](#))
- c) extent (see [3.1.4.3](#)).

Record additional characteristics of particular carriers if considered important for identification or selection (see [3.1.4.4](#)).

Record details of the carriers in a note if considered important for identification or selection (see [3.21.2.3](#)).

For instructions on recording information about the carrier of accompanying material, see [27.1](#) (related manifestation).

[**DELETE** the remainder of the current **3.1.4** (see Appendix for the current text of 3.1.4) and replace with the following *new instructions*. Only a clean copy is provided.]

3.1.4.1 Media Type

When the carriers are of different media types, record each media type (see [3.2.1.3](#)).

EXAMPLE

computer
audio
unmediated

Media types for a resource consisting of a computer disc, an audio disc, study prints, and a folded sheet

Alternative

Record only:

a) the media type that applies to the predominant carrier (if there is a predominant carrier)

or

b) the media types that apply to the most substantial carriers (including the predominant carrier, if there is one).

EXAMPLE

projected

Media type for a resource consisting of slides, an audiocassette, and a leaflet, in which the slides are the predominant component

When the carriers are of the same media type, record that media type (see [3.2.1.3](#)).

EXAMPLE

unmediated

Media type for a resource consisting of a volume of text accompanied by a volume of maps

3.1.4.2 Carrier Type

When the carriers are of different carrier types, record each carrier type (see [3.3.1.3](#)).

EXAMPLE

computer disc

audio disc

sheet

Carrier types for a resource consisting of a computer disc, an audio disc, study prints, and a folded sheet

Alternative

Record only:

a) the carrier type that applies to the predominant carrier (if there is a predominant carrier)

or

b) the carrier types that apply to the most substantial carriers (including the predominant carrier, if there is one).

EXAMPLE

slide

Carrier type for a resource consisting of slides, an audiocassette, and a leaflet, in which the slides are the predominant component

When the carriers are of the same carrier type, record that carrier type (see [3.3.1.3](#)).

EXAMPLE

volume

Carrier type for a resource consisting of a volume of text accompanied by a volume of maps

3.1.4.3 Extent

Record the extent of each carrier (see [3.4.1.3](#)).

EXAMPLE

1 computer disc

1 audio disc

4 study prints

1 folded sheet

Extent of a resource consisting of a computer disc, an audio disc, study prints, and a folded sheet

Optional omission

If the number of units cannot be readily ascertained or approximated, omit the number.

EXAMPLE

various pieces

Number of pieces omitted

Optional addition

If the carriers are in a container, record the extent by naming the container.

EXAMPLE

12 slides

1 audiocassette

1 map

box

Extent of a resource consisting of slides, an audiocassette, and a map, all in a container

Alternative

Record only:

a) the extent of the predominant carrier (if there is a predominant carrier)

or

b) the extent of the most substantial carriers (including the predominant carrier, if there is one).

EXAMPLE

50 slides

Extent of a resource consisting of slides, an audiocassette, and a leaflet, in which the slides are the predominant component

For instructions on recording extent for a comprehensive description of a collection, see [3.4.1.11](#).

3.1.4.4 Other Characteristics

Record other characteristics of each carrier (see 3.5–3.20), if considered important for identification or selection.

EXAMPLE

16 × 30 × 20 cm

Dimensions of a container for a resource consisting of slides, an audiocassette, and a map

10 × 7 cm, 4 mm tape

analog

mono

Dimensions, type of recording, and configuration of playback channels for the audiocassette in the same resource

Option 2: Radical Simplification of 3.1.4

Radically simplify 3.1.4 by replacing the current text with a simple instruction and an alternative that would be applicable to any element. *This revision is a complete replacement for the current text* of 3.1.4 and therefore only a clean copy is provided.

3.1.4 Resources Consisting of More Than One Carrier

When preparing a comprehensive description for a resource consisting of more than one carrier, record the media type (see 3.2), carrier type (see 3.3) and extent (3.4) for each carrier.

EXAMPLE

computer disc

audio disc

sheet

Carrier types for a resource consisting of a computer disc, an audio disc, study prints, and a folded sheet

1 computer disc

1 audio disc

4 study prints

1 folded sheet

Extent of the same resource

Alternative

Record these elements only for:

- a) the predominant carrier (if there is a predominant carrier)

or

- b) the most substantial carriers (including the predominant carrier, if there is one).

EXAMPLE

sheet

27 various pieces

Predominant carrier type and extent recorded using a general term

Record additional characteristics of particular carriers if considered important for identification or selection (see [3.5–3.20](#)).

Record details of the carriers in a note if considered important for identification or selection (see [3.21.2.3](#)).

For instructions on recording information about the carrier of accompanying material, see [27.1](#) (related manifestation).

For instructions on recording extent for a comprehensive description of a collection, see [3.4.1.11](#).

Revise RDA 3.4.1.3

Whichever option is selected for 3.1.4, ALA proposes the following revisions to 3.4.1.3. These revisions (a) make 3.4.1.3 consistent with the instructions being proposed for 3.1.4, option 1, and (b) create separate sections for Resources consisting of a single carrier and Resources consisting of more than one carrier.

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3.4.1.3 Recording Extent

3.4.1.3.1 Resources Consisting of a Single Carrier

Record the extent of the resource by giving the number of units and the type of unit. For the type of unit, use an appropriate term from the list of carrier types at [3.3.1.3](#). Record the term in the singular or plural, as applicable.

if

~~the resource consists of more than one carrier type~~

and

~~information about the different carrier types is considered important for identification or selection~~

then

~~record the extent by giving the number of units and the term for each carrier type.~~

Specify the number of subunits, if applicable (see [3.4.1.7–3.4.1.9](#)).

[Examples unchanged]

Alternative

Use a term in common usage (including a trade name, if applicable) to indicate the type of unit:

a) if the carrier is not in the list at [3.3.1.3](#)

or

b) as an alternative to a term listed at [3.3.1.3](#), if preferred by the agency preparing the description.

[Examples unchanged]

If an applicable trade name or other similar specification is not used as the term for the type of unit, record that information as instructed at [3.20.1.3](#).

Exceptions – unchanged

For a resource that is part of a larger resource, see [3.4.1.12](#).

3.4.1.3.2 Resources Consisting of More Than One Carrier

For resources consisting of more than one type of carrier, see [3.1.4](#).

If

the resource consists of more than one carrier

and

information about the different carriers is considered important for identification or selection

then

record the extent by giving the number of units and the term for each carrier.

Specify the number of subunits, if applicable (see [3.4.1.7–3.4.1.9](#)).

Optional omission

If the number of units cannot be readily ascertained or approximated, omit the number.

EXAMPLE

various pieces

Number of pieces omitted

Optional addition

If the carriers are in a container, record the extent by naming the container.

EXAMPLE

12 slides

1 audiocassette

1 map

box

Extent of a resource consisting of slides, an audiocassette, and a map, all in a container

Alternative

Record only:

a) the extent of the predominant carrier (if there is a predominant carrier)

or

b) the extent of the most substantial carriers (including the predominant carrier, if there is one).

EXAMPLE

50 slides

Extent of a resource consisting of slides, an audiocassette, and a leaflet, in which the slides are the predominant component

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3.4.1.3 Recording Extent

3.4.1.3.1 Resources Consisting of a Single Carrier

Record the extent of the resource by giving the number of units and the type of unit. For the type of unit, use an appropriate term from the list of carrier types at [3.3.1.3](#). Record the term in the singular or plural, as applicable.

Specify the number of subunits, if applicable (see [3.4.1.7–3.4.1.9](#)).

[Examples unchanged]

Alternative

Use a term in common usage (including a trade name, if applicable) to indicate the type of unit:

a) if the carrier is not in the list at [3.3.1.3](#)

or

b) as an alternative to a term listed at [3.3.1.3](#), if preferred by the agency preparing the description.

[Examples unchanged]

If an applicable trade name or other similar specification is not used as the term for the type of unit, record that information as instructed at [3.20.1.3](#).

Exceptions – unchanged

For a resource that is part of a larger resource, see [3.4.1.12](#).

3.4.1.3.2 Resources Consisting of More Than One Carrier

If

the resource consists of more than one carrier

and

information about the different carriers is considered important for identification or selection

then

record the extent by giving the number of units and the term for each carrier.

Specify the number of subunits, if applicable (see [3.4.1.7–3.4.1.9](#)).

Optional omission

If the number of units cannot be readily ascertained or approximated, omit the number.

EXAMPLE

various pieces

Number of pieces omitted

Optional addition

If the carriers are in a container, record the extent by naming the container.

EXAMPLE

12 slides
1 audiocassette
1 map
box

Extent of a resource consisting of slides, an audiocassette, and a map, all in a container

Alternative

Record only:

- a) the extent of the predominant carrier (if there is a predominant carrier)
- or**
- b) the extent of the most substantial carriers (including the predominant carrier, if there is one).

EXAMPLE

50 slides

Extent of a resource consisting of slides, an audiocassette, and a leaflet, in which the slides are the predominant component

APPENDIX

Current Text of RDA 3.1.4

3.1.4 Resources Consisting of More Than One Carrier Type

When preparing a comprehensive description for a resource consisting of more than one carrier type, apply the method that is appropriate to the nature of the resource and the purpose of the description:

a) record only carrier type and extent of each carrier (see [3.1.4.1](#))

or

b) record carrier type, extent, and other characteristics of each carrier (see [3.1.4.2](#))

or

c) record the predominant carrier type and extent in general terms (see [3.1.4.3](#)).

Record additional characteristics of particular carriers if considered important for identification or selection (see [3.6–3.20](#)).

For instructions on recording information about the carrier of accompanying material, see [27.1](#) (related manifestation).

For instructions on recording extent for a comprehensive description of a collection, see [3.4.1.11](#).

3.1.4.1 Recording Only Carrier Type and Extent of Each Carrier

If a detailed description of the characteristics of the carriers is not considered necessary, record only

a) the applicable carrier type or types (see [3.3](#))

and

b) the extent of each type of carrier (see [3.4](#)).

EXAMPLE

computer disc

audio disc

sheet

Carrier types for a resource consisting of a computer disc, an audio disc, study prints, and a folded sheet

1 computer disc

1 audio disc

4 study prints

1 folded sheet

Extent of the same resource

Optional Addition

If the carriers are in a container, name the container and record its dimensions (see 3.5.1.5).

EXAMPLE

slide

audiocassette

sheet

Carrier types for a resource consisting of slides, an audiocassette, and a map, all in a container

12 slides

1 audiocassette

1 map

Extent of the same resource

box 16 × 30 × 20 cm

Name and dimensions of the container of the same resource

3.1.4.2 Recording Carrier Type, Extent, and Other Characteristics of Each Carrier

If a detailed description of the characteristics of each carrier is considered important for identification or selection, record:

- a) the applicable carrier type (see 3.3)
and
- b) the extent of each carrier (see 3.4)
and
- c) other characteristics of each carrier (see 3.5–3.19).

EXAMPLE

slide

46 slides

5 × 5 cm

Carrier type, extent, and dimensions for the slides in a resource consisting of slides and an audiocassette

audiocassette

1 audiocassette

10 × 7 cm, 4 mm tape

analog

mono

Carrier type, extent, dimensions, type of recording, and configuration of playback channels for the audiocassette in the same resource

Optional Addition

If the carriers are in a container, name the container and record its dimensions (3.5.1.5).

EXAMPLE

audiocassette

1 audiocassette

10 × 7 cm, 4 mm tape

analog

4.75 cm/s

Carrier type, extent, dimensions, type of recording, and playing speed for the audiocassette in a resource consisting of an audiocassette and a leaflet in a container

volume

24 pages

15 cm

Carrier type, extent, and dimensions for the leaflet in the same resource

container 18 × 12 × 2 cm

Name and dimensions of the container of the same resource

3.1.4.3 Recording Predominant Carrier Type and Extent in General Terms

For a resource consisting of many different types of carriers, record:

- a) the predominant carrier type (3.3)

and

- b) the extent of the resource as a whole, describing the units as *various pieces* (see 3.4.1.5).

EXAMPLE

sheet

27 various pieces

Predominant carrier type and extent recorded using a general term

Record details of the pieces in a note if considered important for identification or selection (see 3.21.2.3).

Optional Omission

If the number of units cannot be readily ascertained or approximated, omit the number.

EXAMPLE

sheet

various pieces

Predominant carrier type and extent recorded using a general term, omitting the number of pieces

Optional Addition

If the carriers are in a container, name the container and record its dimensions (see [3.5.1.5](#)).

EXAMPLE

sheet

42 various pieces

Predominant carrier type and extent recorded using a general term

box 20 × 12 × 6 cm

Dimensions of the container

For instructions on recording extent for a comprehensive description of a collection, see [3.4.1.11](#).