

To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA
From: Dave Reser, LC Representative
Subject: RDA models for authority data

Thanks to the JSC Technical Working Group for identifying the issues related to the future RDA models for authority data.

Recommendation 1: RDA should represent sub-types of *Nomen* as element sub-types of the appellation element.

LC Response: We will defer to the experts on the Technical WG to decide the best approach. We noted that the paragraph on “Literal form” under **Nomen entity** (see page 3) says it is intended to be "non-repeatable." Does this approach allow for certain types of repeatability (e.g., a person entity could have several variant names)?

Recommendation 2: Review and develop appropriate RDA elements for compatibility with the appellation-*Nomen* model by assigning element sub-types and ranges.

LC Response: Agree.

Recommendation 3: **a** Consider adding the RDA elements *family name* and *given name* as sub-elements of *name of the person*. **b** Develop these for the RDA Registry in any case, to improve interoperability of RDA linked data.

LC Response: We would need to have more information to respond to this discussion. The working group did note that the given/family name substructure is not universally applicable. RDA already allows for preferred names for persons that do not contain given or surnames (e.g., phrase name) or contain words, etc., that are not given/family names (e.g., some titles, indications of relationship, associated phrases), so we believe more than two sub-elements would be needed if this level of granularity is provided for family name and given name. Finally, RDA instructs that many names that are not truly surnames should be *treated as* surnames or parts of surnames because of the way they presented in reference sources. Examples of these include *Filho, Junior*, etc., in Portuguese names that are treated as part of the surname; some titles of nobility; some titles for judges of the Scottish Court of Session, and names that are not surnames but function as such like X, Malcolm and Hus, Jan. It is unclear to us whether names covered by 9.2.2.9.3 (e.g., Read, Miss) intend the entire name to be considered a surname or if the part following the comma is considered a given name or some unlabeled type of name. We would like to hear more about how the Technical WG proposes to treat these types of names.

Recommendation 4: *a* Investigate the functionality and utility of “preferred” forms of appellation element sub-types in relation to RDA and application profiles in the context of the appellation-Nomen model. *b* Investigate the utility of relationships between Nomen and how RDA should accommodate them.

LC Response: The discussion notes that “problems occur if an alternate label becomes preferred, and vice-versa”; this does of course happen, since how an entity is “commonly known” can change. The RDA instructions, by and large, refer to the first establishment of a preferred name and usually don’t discuss when to change a preferred name that has already been recorded. This topic is often left to policy statements now. Other complicated situations common to the maintenance of large files occur, such as the case of resolving duplicate records for the same entity that were established because different preferred names were chosen—at least one preferred name always becomes a variant name.

Recommendation 5: The RDA instructions for constructing AAPs should be replaced with general guidelines for assigning *Nomens* for applications supporting the user task explore, as part of the development of guidelines and instructions for creating *Nomen* data.

LC Response: While we agree in principle, it is still not clear to us how this will be communicated within the *RDA Toolkit*. If the generalized instructions for AAPs are removed, the Toolkit user will need to be able to specify which application profile they are using, and that profile must serve the same functional purpose as the AAP instructions do now. We think that we are a long way off from implementing this recommendation.

Recommendation 6: The development of RDA guidelines, instructions, and elements with respect to entity labels, identifiers, and access points should be carried out in consultation with international cultural heritage communities.

LC Response: Agree. However, we note that the FR models may not be accepted in certain communities, which may limit the JSC's ability to develop RDA to accommodate these communities. For example, in DACS, Susan B. Anthony is considered to be the creator of the Susan B. Anthony papers, because she is the person around whom this archival collection is formed. In RDA, the Susan B. Anthony papers are considered to be a compilation of works by multiple creators (if the collection includes letters to Anthony by various correspondents, scrapbooks assembled by her sister, etc.), so the compilation has no creator. While both the DACS and RDA treatment of this archival collection are valid, they are based on very different principles.