

To: RDA Steering Committee (RSC)  
From: Gordon Dunsire, Chair  
Subject: Stabilization of the English text of RDA

At its meeting in Montreal in October 2018, the RSC developed a broad plan for the stabilization of the English text of RDA.

A stabilized English text means that there will be a complete final draft of the English text from which translators, policy statement writers, the RDA Examples Editor, and writers of supplemental materials (such as cataloguing textbooks or other tools that need to be synchronized with RDA) will be able to carry out their work. This does not preclude the addition of new instructions such as options required by new RDA communities. There will still be the possibility of minor editorial changes to RDA text, such as correcting typos, inconsistencies in wording, etc.

RDA content in English will be declared stable in stages. Those stages, with their target dates for completion, are as follows:

**Stage 1** is finalizing the RDA value vocabularies and element sets in the RDA Registry. All except two of the value vocabularies have already been released to the translators, so this stage is underway. The next step is to finalize changes to the English element sets; the stabilization of the element labels and definitions will allow translations of the Registry to proceed. With this stabilization, a new release of the RDA Vocabularies (v3.1.0) is intended to be published via GitHub by the end of 2018.

**Stage 2** is finalizing the instruction wording in the RDA entity and element chapters. The RSC has already completed preliminary review of a large number of sample elements but work on some of the longest and most complex elements remains in progress. The RSC is committed to reviewing all the elements before declaring the English text stable. Entity chapters, including all their elements, may be released as they are completed rather than all at once. The goal for completion of all entity and element chapters is March 2019.

**Stage 3** is finalizing the text of the guidance and resource chapters. The RSC has identified some concepts that need further explanation and is aware that more editing is needed for consistency and readability. This work will proceed in parallel with the entity and element review work and will also be reviewed by the RSC. The goal for completion of this stage is April 2019.

Following the Toolkit release at the end of stage 3 the RSC will make a public announcement that this milestone has been achieved and the English Toolkit is now stable, although still subject to minor editorial revision. This public announcement will not mean that the 3R Project has been completed nor that the “countdown clock” for transition to the new Toolkit has begun. The transition from the original Toolkit to the now-beta Toolkit will not be made until several other steps are taken:

“The beta site will remain in beta status until the RDA Steering Committee, the RDA Board, and the RDA Co-Publishers have unanimously agreed that the redesign of the site is complete, the RDA standard text is stable, and the full site content (translations and policy statements) is available. Shortly after that decision, public notice will be given and the beta site will become the official RDA site. The current site will remain available for one year following that notice to allow for a smooth transition.” [Text from the blog post “What to expect from the RDA Toolkit Beta Site,” June 6, 2018, <https://www.rdatoolkit.org/3Rproject/Beta>]

Cataloguers are reminded that RDA text in the [original Toolkit](#) remains the official version of RDA until it is officially replaced by the new site. The stabilized English text will become the “baseline” for future release notes about additions and significant changes to RDA.

The RSC has been [accepting feedback](#) from the cataloguing community since the beta Toolkit was released in June 2018 and encourages feedback on RDA content from the greater community so that all comments may be considered before the English text is declared stable.