

To: Renate Behrens, Chair, RDA Steering Committee
Cc: Anne Welsh, RSC Secretary
From: Elisa Sze, Education and Orientation Officer
Subject: Formal response to RSC/ExtentWG/2024/1/rev2 – Discussion paper on the development of extent elements in RDA

Thank you to the Extent Working Group for their detailed examination of extent, and recognizing the ways in which extent of expression and extent of manifestation have been entangled. Their discussion paper puts forward a convincing case for reconceptualizing Manifestation: extent of manifestation as a superelement to improve the flexibility of RDA application for a variety of libraries and cultural heritage institutions. Although I approve of most of the recommendations, I will identify specific ones that may generate confusion for RDA Toolkit users who have not participated in the ISBDM review process. Some RDA Guidance pages should be reviewed in light of any approved recommendations, with a goal of facilitating teaching and training. Two such pages to review and revise are [Content and carrier](#) and [Describing a manifestation](#).

Recommendation 1.1. Convert Manifestation: extent of manifestation to a superelement. Many current instructions will become string encoding schemes in Community Resources and other instructions will be moved to new subelements of Manifestation: extent of manifestation.

I approve of the recommendation to convert Manifestation: extent of manifestation into a superelement, to enable communities to define their own string encoding schemes for the element.

I would like to clarify if the option to record an unstructured description for the superelement would remain available as a means of ensuring backwards compatibility. Currently, other superelements such as Manifestation: publication statement or Manifestation: series statement allow for unstructured description as a recording method.

Recommendation 2.1. Add Manifestation: extent of unitary structure as a subelement of Manifestation: extent of manifestation.

I approve of the subelement in principle.

I understand that the term “unitary structure” has been used in the context of developing ISBDM, but it is otherwise a new term for practitioners. I have a slight reservation against introducing the term “unitary structure” into RDA when the proposed definition for this element (“A number of

units of the same carrier of the manifestation”) does not differentiate a “unitary structure” from a “unit”. The examples that follow Recommendation 2.2 demonstrate that this new subelement is not simply for recording a number of units but also to specify the categories of carriers (not “carrier types”) that are being counted or measured. To help educators and trainers better understand and more effectively teach the difference between “unitary structure” and “unit”, Guidance: [Content and carrier](#) should be updated to address this point. Examples to denote the distinction between extent of unitary structure and extent of unit (as per Recommendation 3.1) will also be critical.

Recommendation 2.2. Create a new RDA Extent of Unitary Structure value vocabulary, which includes appropriate terms moved from RDA Carrier Extent Unit.

I approve.

Recommendation 3.1 Add Manifestation: extent of unit as a subelement of Manifestation: extent of manifestation.

I approve, but would like to caution that there is potential for new RDA Toolkit users to confuse Manifestation: extent of unit with Manifestation: extent of unitary structure (as per Recommendation 2.1) due to the similarities between these element labels, and the absence of a proposed definition for extent of unit to compare at this time against the proposed definition for extent of unitary structure.

Recommendation 3.2. Add Manifestation: numbering of recording tracks as an element subtype of Manifestation: extent of unit. Move the instructions for Manifestation: tape configuration to this element.

I approve.

Recommendation 3.3. Move Manifestation: bibliographic format to become an element subtype of Manifestation: extent of unit.

I approve.

Recommendation 3.4. Move Manifestation: dimensions to become an element subtype of Manifestation: extent of unit. Update the instructions to reflect the focus on structured descriptions for two to three dimensions.

I approve.

Recommendation 4.1. Add Manifestation: extent of embodied content as a subelement of Manifestation: extent of manifestation.

I approve.

Recommendation 4.2. Add Manifestation: dimensions of embodied content as a subtype of Manifestation: extent of embodied content.

I approve.

Recommendation 4.3. Add Manifestation: designation of sound channels as a subtype of Manifestation: extent of embodied content. This partly replaces Manifestation: configuration of playback channels.

I approve.

Recommendation 4.4. Add Manifestation: number of sound channels as a subtype of Manifestation: extent of embodied content. This partly replaces Manifestation: configuration of playback channels.

I approve.

Recommendation 4.5. Replace Manifestation: configuration of playback channels with Manifestation: designation of sound channels and Manifestation: number of sound channels.

I approve.

Recommendation 4.6. Add Manifestation: reduce ratio as a subtype of Manifestation: extent of embodied content.

I approve.

Recommendation 4.7. Add Manifestation: image resolution of as a subtype of Manifestation: extent of embodied content.

I approve.

Recommendation 4.8. Create an RDA Layout of Embodied Content value vocabulary. Alternatively expand the RDA Layout value vocabulary to include terms that could be used in Manifestation: extent of embodied content.

I approve.

Recommendation 4.9. Add the terms column, frame, and page to a value vocabulary for layout of embodied content.

I approve.

Recommendation 5.1. Add Manifestation: extent of aggregated content as a subelement of Manifestation: extent of manifestation.

I approve in principle, but would like to seek clarification.

The Extent Working Group noted on page 9 that to maintain backwards compatibility, communities would need to develop a string encoding scheme for Manifestation: extent of manifestation that can be mapped to current practice. Some communities have a practice of noting the presence of colour content as part of recording the presence of illustrative content. The Extent Working Group noted that illustrative content could potentially be captured by the subelement Manifestation: extent of aggregated content. Does the Extent Working Group see colour content being potentially included in either a description of the extent of aggregated content or a description of the extent of manifestation?

Recommendation 5.2. Create a value vocabulary for RDA Extent of Aggregated Content, which will include applicable terms moved from RDA Carrier Extent Unit and RDA Format of Notated Music. Alternatively expand the RDA Content Type value vocabulary to include terms that could be used in Manifestation: extent of embodied content.

I approve of the creation of a value vocabulary for RDA Extent of Aggregated Content, but I disagree with the choice of terms “performed song” (as opposed to “performed music”) and “recorded song” (as opposed to “recorded music”).

I understand that in the music discipline, “song” refers to a specific type of musical composition and can therefore only be used to refer to a subset of music. While in popular culture in the English language, the term “song” is often used broadly by non-music specialists to mean pieces of music, whether or not they constitute “songs”, I am uncertain that this provides justification for preferring the term in an RDA VES.

Recommendation 6.1. Add Manifestation: number of containers as a subelement of Manifestation: extent of manifestation.

I approve.

Recommendation 6.2. Add Manifestation: dimensions of containers as a subelement of Manifestation: extent of manifestation.

I approve.

Recommendation 6.3. Add Manifestation: extent of storage space as a subelement of Manifestation: extent of manifestation. This element will only be used for collection manifestations.

I approve.

Recommendation 6.4. Create an RDA Container Type value vocabulary for case, portfolio, and other terms commonly used for containers.

I approve, but recommend that Guidance: Content and Carrier be updated to differentiate between the use of RDA Container Type VES versus RDA Extent of Unitary Structure VES (as per Recommendation 2.2).

Recommendation 7.1. Add a new manifestation statement element: Manifestation: manifestation extent statement.

I approve.

Recommendation 7.2. Add a new manifestation statement element: Manifestation: manifestation numbering of extent statement.

I approve.

Recommendation 7.3. Add a new set of RDA transcription guidelines “Guidelines on transcription of numbering of extent.” The guidelines will be derived from the current instructions in Manifestation: extent of manifestation related to transcribing the numbering of sequences of pages, leaves, etc.

I approve.

Recommendation 8.1. Review instructions and examples that may need to be added to Manifestation: note on manifestation after reworking the other extent of manifestation elements.

I approve.

Recommendation 9.1. Update the definition of Expression: extent of expression to parallel the definition of Manifestation: extent of manifestation.

I would like to request further discussion of the proposed definition for extent of expression.

While I understand the need to update the definition for this element, the proposed definition (“A quantification of an aspect of the extent of an expression”, page 30) still does not answer the question, “What is extent in the context of Expression?” Examples could potentially improve understanding of this element.

Recommendation 10.1. Update the definition of Work: extent of representative expression.

My response to this recommendation is dependent on the discussion around Recommendation 9.1.

Recommendation 11.1. No change to Expression: duration is recommended.

I approve.

Recommendation 12.1. No change to Work: duration of representative expression is recommended.

I approve.

Recommendation 13.1. Remove *atlas* from the value vocabularies for extent in RDA.

I approve.

Recommendation 13.2.1. No change to the definition of *sheet* is recommended.

I approve.

Recommendation 13.2.2. Update the definition of *folded sheet* and move the term to the new RDA Extent of Unitary Structure value vocabulary.

I approve.

Recommendation 13.2.3. No change to the definition of *gathering* is recommended.

I approve.

Recommendation 13.2.4. Update the definition of *leaf* and remove the term from value vocabularies in RDA for carrier extent units. The term *leaf* will remain as a glossary term and used as a value for Manifestation: extent of unit.

I approve.

Recommendation 13.2.5. No change to the definition of *double leaf* is recommended.

I approve.

Recommendation 13.2.6. Add *folded leaf* to the glossary, treating the term like a *folded sheet*, but bound in a *volume*.

I approve.

Recommendation 13.2.7. Update the definition of *updating loose-leaf*.

I approve.

Recommendation 13.2.8. Add *panel* to the glossary, treating the item similar to *leaf* as a unit of extent derived from a sheet that has been folded.

I approve.

Recommendation 13.2.9. No change to the definition of *plate* is recommended.

I approve.

Recommendation 13.2.10. Move the term *page* to a value vocabulary for layout of embodied content and update the definition.

I approve.

Recommendation 13.2.11. Move the term *column* to a value vocabulary for layout of embodied content and update the definition.

I approve.

Recommendation 13.3. Add the new term *photographic print* to the RDA Extent of Unitary Structure value vocabulary and add the term *photograph* to the Extent of Aggregated Content value vocabulary. The use of the term *photograph* in illustrative content will require a future decision for that value vocabulary for the kinds of expressions embodied in augmentation aggregates.

I approve.

Recommendation 14.1. Remove RDA Carrier Extent Unit value vocabulary from the Toolkit after decisions are made for each current term.

I approve.

Recommendation 14.2. Review RDA Format of Notated Music value vocabulary from the Toolkit after decisions are made for each existing term. Terms linked to other extent vocabularies will include a scope note for manifestations embodying notated music.

I approve.