

US TEST RESULTS FOR RDA

Resource Description and Access (RDA) is the new descriptive cataloguing standard set to replace the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules (AACR2). From June to December 2010 a group of libraries in the United States, including the Library of Congress, the National Library of Medicine, the National Agricultural Library and over 20 partners from the broader American library community tested both RDA and the online Toolkit.

This test aimed to test the operational, technical and economic feasibility of RDA, and generated much interest in the US and around the world. Over 10,000 bibliographic records and over 12,000 authority records were created using RDA. The Test Coordinating Committee also surveyed libraries and users about their views on the implementation and received over 8,000 responses.

In June 2011 the Test Coordinating Committee issued their final report on the Test, the *Report and Recommendations of the U.S. RDA Test Coordinating Committee on the implementation of RDA—Resource Description & Access*. The Library of Congress, the National Agricultural Library, and the National Library of Medicine also issued a statement from the Executives of the three libraries regarding the report. The full report, an executive summary, and the Statement by the US National Libraries are all available on the US National Test website (www.loc.gov/bibliographic-future/rda/rda-execsummary-public-13june11.pdf).

The key recommendation was that the US national libraries should implement RDA no sooner than January 2013, subject to the satisfactory progress or completion of tasks and actions arising from the findings of RDA Test. The key tasks include rewording the instructions, defining the process for future updates and improving the functionality of the RDA Toolkit. A copy editor will be engaged as soon as possible to work on rewording the instructions, with the aim of having 5 chapters completed and accepted no later than June 2012.

AND THE WINNER SAYS...

As INCITE went to press, we heard about Cathryn Harris, Mt Gambier Library Manager, winning the Nokia Business Innovation Award in the Telstra Business Women's Awards (see pic on contents page in this issue). Here's what Cathryn had to say on hearing the news.

"I am overwhelmed by the win considering the calibre of business women in the competition. This is a win not just for me personally but for librarians who dare to be different and take the necessary risks to secure the gains which can be made. Libraries are at the cusp of becoming the next third place in our communities we just need to be brave enough to accept the challenge.

Libraries are a business and we must treat them accordingly – our product may be free, but we still need to produce the results in order to gain the funding to continue. Until now, I had never considered myself a business woman – I am just a librarian doing her job. Having to reflect on my achievements has really made me aware of what I have achieved over the last six years.

Speed dating, fashion parades, Sunday farmers markets, author talks, native animals in the library – all this and more makes our library special. As do the people who work in it – I could not have achieved so much without the support of my family, Council and my wonderful staff. "

The Coordinating Committee also recommended that substantial progress be made towards a replacement for the MARC (machine readable cataloguing) encoding standard to take full advantage of bibliographic relationships recorded using RDA rules. The three US national libraries accepted all the recommendations of the Coordinating Committee. They acknowledged that although there were some anxieties about changing over to RDA, especially in the current economic climate, any further delays will only impact on the relevance of library metadata to the wider information community.

The national libraries of Britain, Canada and Australia discussed their responses to the US decision at the meeting of the Committee of Principals (CoP) in August. All three libraries, along with the Library of Congress, confirmed their agreement of October 2007 to co-ordinate implementation, not sooner than early 2013. A formal announcement on implementation in Australia will be made on the Australian Committee of Cataloguing (ACOC) website soon, but it is likely that we will implement in the first quarter of 2013. In the next 18 months the NLA and the Australian Committee of Cataloguing ACOC will continue to keep the cataloguing community in Australia informed on the progress of implementation and training options via the "RDA-Aust" email discussion list, the ACOC website (www.nla.gov.au/lis/stndrds/grps/acoc/rda.html) and journal articles. Specific queries about RDA implementation in Australia can be directed to the RDA Implementation Project team at nlarida@nla.gov.au.

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