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IFLA-CDNL Alliance for Bibliographic Standards (ICABS) A new approach to international co-operation

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Abstract:

During the World Library and Information Congress in Berlin a new alliance between IFLA and national libraries was established to continue and expand the coordination work formerly done by the IFLA UBCIM and UDT Core Programme Offices. The following paper gives a short overview about the IFLA-CDNL Alliance for Bibliographic Standards (ICABS)

Birth of ICABS

On 7. August 2003 during the World Library and Information Congress in Berlin a new alliance between IFLA and national libraries was established to continue and expand the coordination work formerly done by the IFLA UBCIM and UDT Core Programme Offices.

The IFLA Universal Bibliographic Control and International MARC (UBCIM) Activity was established thirty years ago and came to an end in 2003. UBCIM was originally hosted by the British Library (1973-1989) and later Die Deutsche Bibliothek from 1990 to the beginning of 2003. In early 2003 the Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal took over the responsibility for UNIMARC, and IFLA the responsibility for the quarterly journal "International Cataloguing and Bibliographic Control (ICBC)", both former activities of UBCIM.

Another component of ICABS is a major part of the program of the former Universal Dataflow and Telecommunications Core activity (UDT) which was hosted at the National

Library of Canada (NLC) from its beginning in the late 1980s until it was closed in 2001. UDT also developed and maintained IFLANET, hosted for many years at NLC. In 2001 IFLANET was moved to INIST in France and is not part of the ICABS activity.

And finally, the Conference of Directors of National Libraries (CDNL), which has provided the main support and funding for these Core Activities over many years, also recently established a committee to monitor digital library developments – the CDNL Committee on Digital Issues (CDI). The Committee's work on bibliographic standards and digital preservation is being folded into the ICABS mission, while the Committee's work on deposit agreements will be continued separately by the National Library of Australia.

ICABS partners

The National Library of Australia, the Library of Congress, The British Library, the Koninklijke Bibliotheek, and Die Deutsche Bibliothek have agreed to participate in this joint alliance together with the Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, IFLA and CDNL. They are partnering to assure ongoing coordination, communication and support for key activities in the areas of bibliographic and resource control for all types of resources and related format and protocol standards. Each of the partners in this alliance has agreed to be the lead support agency for one or more of the actions thus realizing the objectives.

Objectives and goals of ICABS

The objectives of ICABS are:

- to coordinate activities aimed at the development of standards and practices for bibliographic and resource control
- to support the international exchange of bibliographic resources by supporting, promoting, developing, and testing the maintenance of metadata and format standards
- to ensure the promotion of new conventions
- to act as a clearinghouse for information on all IFLA endeavours in these fields
- to organize and participate in seminars and workshops
- to enhance communication within the community.

The ICABS objectives will be realized through the following goals agreed to during the IFLA Berlin Conference.

- Maintain, promote, and harmonize existing standards and concepts related to bibliographic and resource control
- Develop strategies for bibliographic and resource control and ensure the promotion of new and recommended conventions
- Advance understanding of issues related to long-term archiving of electronic resources

The goals are primarily linked to IFLA professional priority "Promoting standards, guidelines and best practices". Some may also be linked to "Promoting resource sharing", "Providing unrestricted access to information", "Representing libraries in the technological marketplace", and "Developing library professionals."

ICABS coordination

ICABS coordinate and communicate their work and activities to enhance cooperation and to avoid overlapping or duplicating work between the alliance partners and:

- IFLA Headquarters, Governing Board, Professional Committee, Divisions, & Sections

- CDNL and the regional groups of CDNL
- UNESCO and other funding bodies
- ISO, ICA, and other national and international standard making bodies in the area of bibliographic control

One member of each of the participating libraries (plus two members nominated by IFLA) constitute the ICABS Advisory Board, chaired by one of the participating institutions on a rotating basis. Die Deutsche Bibliothek has agreed to chair the board for the first 3-year-term and thus provides a secretary for the group. The secretary handles various arrangements and communications, for example, creating and maintaining a Web page for the programme and maintaining a Web view that promotes the results of the programme with a link to and from IFLANET.

The ICABS Advisory Board will review and evaluate the actions of this alliance after the first 3 years.

If you want to learn more about ICABS' work you are invited to attend the ICABS programme session on Thursday, 26 August 2004 from 16:00 to 18:00 hours.

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