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IFLA-CDNL Alliance for Bibliographic Standards (ICABS) update

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Abstract:

Almost two years ago the IFLA-CDNL Alliance for Bibliographic Standards has been established at the IFLA conference in Berlin. The following paper gives a short overview about the ICABS-related activities of the alliance partners.

ICABS partners

The National Library of Australia, the Library of Congress, The British Library, the Koninklijke Bibliotheek, and Die Deutsche Bibliothek 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 partner 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.

Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal

The National Library of Portugal took over the responsibility for UNIMARC that is an IFLA Core Activity at the same time.

During WLIC 2004 in Buenos Aires UNIMARC organized a session under the topic “The holdings record as a bibliographic control tool” with the objective of discussing the importance of holdings data and the content and use of holdings records. The session was jointly prepared with the Library of Congress MARC 21 Office thus enabling participants to be informed about both UNIMARC and MARC 21 Holdings formats. In Oslo UNIMARC holds a joint session with the IT section: MARC/XML derivatives: the state of the art.

An UNIMARC XML scheme has been made available at <http://www.bookmarc.pt/unimarc>.

It consists of an XML representation of the UNIMARC Manual in the form of a working prototype that allows the Manual to be presented in both human and machine-readable formats and also provide for the display of UNIMARC records. Designed to be compatible with standard XML transformations, the XML formatting will make it much easier for systems to implement UNIMARC.

“UNIMARC Forum” the new dedicated website with comprehensive information on all aspects of UNIMARC has been presented to the public.

The British Library

The British Library supports the work of the IFLA Division IV FRBR Review Group in developing and maintaining the conceptual model and related guidelines for the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR) and promotes the use of this model.

BL has been involved in the planning of the invitational workshop “FRBR in 21st Century Catalogues” hosted in May 2005 at OCLC with further support from BL. The BL representative in the FRBR Review Group, is developing a questionnaire for system suppliers to gather information about FRBR related system developments as a result of frequently raised system issues during last years IFLA conference in Buenos Aires.

The British Library is also the responsible partner to support the IFLA Division IV Working Group on Functional Requirements of Authority Numbering and Records (FRANAR) and to promote the use of this model for authority control.

Die Deutsche Bibliothek

The German national library (called Die Deutsche Bibliothek) has taken over the responsibility to support the work of the IFLA Cataloguing Section’s ISBD Review Group in developing and maintaining the International Standards for Bibliographic

Description. DDB encourages the harmonization of national practices to follow these standards and to promote the results of the ISBD revisions.

In Buenos Aires the ISBD Review Group set up a Study Group on Future Directions of the ISBDs. Among other terms of reference, the group is considering the use and values of an ISBD that combines into a single document provisions for the entire Family of ISBDs, in order to facilitate revision work and to abolish and further avoid inconsistencies in the ISBD stipulations.

Die Deutsche Bibliothek agreed to support the "ISBD consolidation" work of the Study Group by providing a first cut-and-paste version of current ISBDs for further consideration. Die Deutsche Bibliothek hosted a meeting of the Study Group in the end of April 2005 in Frankfurt.

In addition DDB together with the Library of Congress are partners to support and promote the idea of the Virtual International Authority File (VIAF) in cooperation with the Sections of IFLA's Division IV: Bibliographic Control and the partners in the current VIAF Proof of Concept project. They also want to explore other VIAF models and promote the testing of prototypes.

At the present stage of the project the Library of Congress and Die Deutsche Bibliothek are examining the results of the first matching of records to test the algorithm applied and to analyse the record elements used for the matching process. Further testing is planned.

During the first 3-year term DDB chairs the ICABS Advisory Board and provides the secretary for the group during this period.

IFLA

IFLA Headquarters is responsible for the quarterly "International Cataloguing and Bibliographic Control (ICBC)". ICBC is devoted to issues, projects, research and new development in the broad field mentioned in the title. It provides an international forum for the exchange of views and best practice by members of the library and information management profession in general and those in the sectors of cataloguing, bibliography and indexing in particular.

A substantial number of translations of existing IFLA Publications in the field of bibliographic control was published. Among translations of International Standard Bibliographic Description (ISBD)-, and Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR-) publications - apart from the IFLA working languages (English, French, German, Russian, Spanish) - were those into Croatian, Czech, Italian, Japanese, Korean.

IFLA has two representatives in the ICABS Advisory Board: the chairs of Division IV: Bibliographic Control and of the IT section. These divisions and sections work in ICABS-related fields.

Koninklijke Bibliotheek

Another ICABS partner is the Koninklijke Bibliotheek, the Dutch national library. KB explores the requirements and conditions for long-term archiving of electronic resources. Moreover the library explores and promotes strategies, methods and standards for migration and emulation.

At the time being KB is writing a state-of-the-art assessment on the use of standards in digital archiving, based on the experiences of the worlds leading library institutions in the field of digital preservation. The assessment will address operational and R&D activities aimed at the long-term storage of electronic resources.

The KB ICABS report will be based on desk research mainly, focusing on recent publications and research. Based on their experiences with digital preservation, KB defined four specific questions on standardisation in the field of long-term archiving of electronic resources, which are the main focus of the research.

These questions concern

1. the use of standards in the international library field on developing, implementing and managing electronic repositories
2. standardisation on organizational aspects and work flow within digital preservation
3. the use of standards in the research on the development of digital preservation strategies, for both preservation and permanent access and
4. the need for new standards on the development of future strategies.

Library of Congress

Besides the joint responsibility for the VIAF cooperative mentioned above Library of Congress (LC) is responsible to promote the development and use of MARC21 and its XML derivatives. LC promotes the application and use of Z39.50 and cooperates with its implementors to continue the development of Z39.50 International, Next Generation and its XML-based Search/Retrieve Web Services in order to evolve next generation implementations.

Furthermore LC closely cooperates with the IFLA IT and Cataloguing Sections and their working groups to explore metadata requirements. The Library collects and communicates information on existing metadata schemes and application profiles and monitors the work on persistent identifiers.

LC updated MARC21 and a number of publications i. e. Understanding MARC Bibliographic and Understanding MARC Authority Records; MARCXML on LC's website provides a lossless pathway from MARC 21 to MARC in XML and then back.

MADS, the authority data companion to schema for bibliographic data, MODS, was revised in late 2004 based on the many comments received during the open review period. A new version was prepared and released for review in February 2005. Harmonization with both MODS and MARC 21 and simplification were important objectives for the schema.

Work continued on Z39.50 Next Generation (ZING) services: SRU (Search and Retrieve URL Service) which allows users to send a search using title, name, identifier and other parameters via a URL (http GET) and receive records in response, and SRW (Search and Retrieve Web Service) which supports a web search that operates over the web base protocol, SOAP, rather than directly through http.

The ZING Editorial Board is developing an Update service at the request of several users. Their approach is to profile the use of standards and practices, including web standards and special ones (like METS), for this new service. METS is of special interest because compound documents are a component of the service.

National Library of Australia

The National Library of Australia most of all is responsible to support the exploration and promotion of methods to archive web-based publications collected by web-harvesting. It aims to work out a survey of existing standards, guidelines, and codes for preservation of digital materials in co-operation with the Preservation and Conservation Section of IFLA.

The international conference “Archiving web resources: issues for cultural heritage institutions”, was held at the National Library in Canberra from November 9-11, 2004. Its main objective was to identify significant issues facing cultural heritage institutions in collecting web resources and to explore how the issues are being addressed. Major research programs and projects were included in the program.

Currently the National Library of Australia provides full MARC cataloguing for all web resources selected for archiving in PANDORA: Australia’s web archive. With the aim of reducing the cost of this component of the archiving process, a review of standards and international approaches to metadata creation for web resources will be undertaken, basic requirements determined and options for providing access assessed. An assessment of the new Access Level record proposed by Library of Congress is currently underway. The results of the review will be made available through PADI. It is expected that this action will conclude in late 2005.

In order to avoid duplication of effort and to ensure maximum benefit from resources available at both institutions to carry out research in the area of Long-term archiving of electronic resources, NLA and KB will review actions with the view to working more closely together either on compatible strategies.

If you want to learn more about ICABS’ activities you are invited to attend the ICABS programme session “Maintaining access to digital collections” on Thursday, 18 August 2005 from 8:30 to 10:30 hours.