

CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES ARCHIVES
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES

COMMITTEE ON
DESCRIPTIVE
STANDARDS



COMITÉ SUR LES
NORMES DE
DESCRIPTION

Minutes

Madrid meeting
June 12 - 15, 2002

Present:

Nils Brübach (Germany)
Herman Coppens (Belgium)
Adrian Cunningham (Australia)
Blanca Desantes (Spain)
Vitor Manoel M. da Fonseca (Brazil)
Bruno Galland (France)
Juan Manuel Herrera (Mexico)
Per-Gunnar Ottosson (Sweden)
Dick Sargent (UK)
Hugo Stibbe (Canada - interim Secretary for Kent Haworth)
Eduardo Pedruelo (ICA/CPM Observer)
Stefano Vitali (Italy - Chair ICA/CDS)

Absent with apologies:

Michael Fox (United States)
Lydia Reid (United States)

June 12, 2002

1. Welcome and introductions

Stefano Vitali, Chair, opened the meeting welcoming all present. He asked that all members introduce and/or re-introduce themselves for the sake of ensuring that all know each other.

Stefano mentioned the sad fact that Kent Haworth, the Secretary and Project Director, had to resign for health reasons all know about already. Hugo Stibbe has taken his place for the duration of the current meeting. Hugo brought Kent's greetings and best wishes to all.

The new, slightly modified agenda from the one sent to members, was subsequently introduced with some elaboration on some of its points.

2. Approval the agenda.

Agenda was approved without change.

3. ISAAR (CPF) review of draft

Stefano Vitali introduced this agenda point by thanking Adrian Cunningham and Dick Sargent for doing such a good job producing the current draft based on the decisions made in Brussels.

Members were reminded that the structure of the draft standard had been approved at the Brussels meeting. It does not need re-discussing. There should be no need for large or extensive modifications of the structure. Thus, the discussion should be restricted as much as possible to the wording of the elements, their purpose and rules as well as the preface, scope and purpose and glossary. Modifications may be made as the discussion proceeds point by point.

Discussion

The Committee had set aside 2 days for the review (June 12 and 13). Although the draft was close to finished at the end of this time, the 2 days proved just short of what was needed to thoroughly review the entire document and to finish the final form of the draft. The remainder of the work to finish a draft for distribution to the international archival community to solicit its input will be done by e-mail, and by a discussion list for the members of ICA/CDS, which was proposed to be set up. The draft will be finished at the Brazil meeting in November 2002.

Modifications were made in wording in almost all areas of the draft standard, including the Preface, Scope and Purpose, Glossary of Terms and Definitions, Structure and Use of the Standard and the Elements of Description.

(Note: The precise details of the discussion are reflected in the new draft of ISAAR(CPF) which all members have received. Hence, only a brief summary of some of the more important changes will appear in these minutes.)

In the **Preface**, the Committee decided to note that it has decided to apply to the 2nd edition of ISAAR(CPF) the same review and review cycle that was used for ISAD(G). Also, that the section on the history of the development of the document, the meetings, etc. such as appears in the original ISAAR(CPF) be re-introduced.

In the **Scope and Purpose** changes in wording were made in 1.1, 1.2, and 1.6. At this point it was decided to review the Glossary first as definitions there affect Scope and Purpose.

In the **Glossary** it was agreed to re-introduce the introductory paragraph of the original ISAAR(CPF), i.e., 0.1. It was also agreed that, where possible, in the 2nd edition of ISAAR(CPF) the definitions should conform to those of the 2nd edition of

ISAD(G). However, if a more detailed definition is required, or a new term needs to be defined, this will be allowed to occur. Consequently, a number of definitions were re-worded. Some terms were deleted as superfluous.

BACK TO **Scope and Purpose**

Some minor re-wording of 1.2 and 1.5 was agreed upon.

1.9 was thoroughly revised to make the paragraphs shorter and to change the order of the paragraphs as well as to combine some.

The **Referenced Standards** section generated a long discussion whether the Encoded Archival Description (EAD) and Encoded Archival Context (EAC) belong in the list of referenced standards. It was noted that these may be mentioned elsewhere, for example, in 4.1 or 4.2. There, it may be mentioned that they have been recognised in the work of developing this standard. However, in the end, it was decided to leave it as is for the time being till more information becomes available and the EAC is finished.

It was suggested that ICA/CDS make an appendix or a separate document to list as references all the tools, projects, etc. which exist, with brief descriptions. For example, all DTDs relevant to archival work which are in existence.

In the **Structure and Use of the Standard** section it was noted that throughout ISAAR(CPF) there is a need to be consistent in the use of terminology. For example, the terms 'information element' and 'element of description' are used interchangeably. This is an editorial problem and will be fixed.

Changes were made in 4.4, 4.5, 4.8, and 4.11.

At this point the meeting was recessed till the following day.

June 13, 2002

The review on the Draft ISAAR(CPF) was resumed with discussion on section 5 **Elements of Description**.

It was decided to eliminate the *Purpose* statement for each Area; not for the rules. In the **Identity Area** a minor change was made to 5.1.1. Rule 5.1.2 was revised. 5.1.4 and 5.1.5 were reversed and rules revised. The new 5.1.5 Non-preferred forms of name changed to Other forms of name with new wording of the purpose and rule.

5.1.6 Legal number(s) of entity
Change to: Official number(s)

Purpose and Rule: Restrict to corporate bodies only.
Go back to the original ISAAR(CPF) for rule formulation.

In the **Description Area** it was decided to remove the word “Purpose” and the word “Rule”. The text, amended, will form a preamble. Whatever approach is adopted, **5.2.1 Dates of existence** must be maintained as a separate element. The biographical information and administrative history may be recorded as narrative and/or structured in accordance with the elements enumerated in this description area.

Modifications were made to rules as per draft ISAAR(CPF).

The **Relationship Area** was considered one of the most important and significant areas of ISAAR(CPF). It was generally agreed that this area needed extensive modification. The discussion took up the remainder of the day. It was agreed that it could resume on June 15. The items on the agenda for June 14 would be dealt with first.

Adrian Cunningham and Dick Sargent will draft possible approaches for this area for discussion on June 15.

June 14, 2002

Agenda item 4

Open Source Archival Resource Information System (OSARIS) project

Stefano Vitali opened with a synopsis of what had been discussed before and pointed to the report produced for Unesco.

Unesco asked ICA/CDS to produce a proposal outlining how this project could be moved forward. As there was some money left from the initial Unesco contract, (US\$5000), Kent and Stefano tried to organise a meeting to work on the proposal for further action in the form of a work plan. This meeting was to take place in Toronto in March, but did not materialise because of illness of Kent and other circumstances beyond the control of the participants.

Thus, the planning has to be done here. The Committee received information that Unesco could probably fund a larger project for producing what had been foreseen in the OSARIS document.

The committee is expected to provide a more clear and detailed work plan about the development of the OSARIS software tool foreseen in the report. This would include:

1. A submission of cost. If Unesco is to provide funds, it expects a more precise figure of cost.
2. A plan for the development of the software or tool in general.

The following areas of concern were expressed:

Best results could probably be achieved by dividing the work among the members of ICA/CDS.

The opinion was expressed that the 2nd point, the draft of a more detailed work plan, could probably be done by a small group to meet with the funds left over from the contract. The meeting should perhaps take place this fall. The draft could become the proposal for the contract to Unesco.

However, it is not clear what exactly the project is to develop. Perhaps there is no demand for such a software tool. There seems to be no market analysis done or an inquiry for the demand for such a tool. If all this proposed money gets spent on the effort made to develop such a tool and nobody will use it the effort and money is lost. Nevertheless, there are indicators from colleagues in Brazil and PARBICA as well as opinions expressed by colleagues in Africa, that a simple tool for archives applications such as CDS-ISIS developed for libraries, would be much welcomed. Small archives cannot afford to buy or develop the large complex tools which large archives have developed for their own use.

ICA/CDS could ask Unesco that this analysis be done first or if it has been done ask for the results.

The question was asked how ICA/CDS was allocated this project?

It was explained that, basically, a group of people from the various organisational units within ICA were asked to advise on this project from Unesco. The Executive Director of ICA asked ICA/CDS to take it on.

ICA/CDS feels that it could monitor the descriptive standards compliance of existing software and software that is on the market produced by commercial enterprise or developed by archival institutions. The committee does not have the competence nor the mandate to monitor the technical compliance to archival applications in software that exists. An auditing function, if done, should be set up properly. ICA/CDS should also recommend that such an auditing group, if deemed appropriate and if set up, be an independent one and that the ICA Executive Director of ICA would be the appropriate person and office to set it up.

It was pointed out that the Committee should not kill this project. ICA/CDS should point out that the project is a good one, should go ahead, and should recommend how to do it, (see below). Evelyn Wareham from New Zealand has just been appointed to ICA Headquarters. She is former Secretary-General of PARBICA and very much committed to software development for archives.

Various further points were made in the discussion, but in the end it was decided that the following plan of action would give best results, would hopefully result in long

range needed commitment of ICA at a higher level than committee level, and would not discourage the project from going ahead:

There should be a September meeting in Paris where the following delegates should meet:

- 3 persons from ICA/CDS (the following persons are suggestions only: Stefano Vitali, Adrian Cunningham and Bruno Galland)
 - 3 persons from ICA/ICT
 - Evelyn Wareham & Joan van Albada from ICA Headquarters
 - representative from Unesco, Division of Informatics (Axel Plathe)
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This group would have to do the following:

- consider / confirm OSARIS report recommendations and proposed functional requirements
 - consider & agree on criteria for evaluation of existing software
 - agree on process for evaluation of existing software
 - consider possible feasibility study (including development, maintenance and training infrastructure and cost) for ICA/Unesco to either use existing software or develop new software tools.
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An official letter will be sent to Joan van Albada.

Agenda item 5

5a Appointment of new Secretary and Project Director

Adrian Cunningham was proposed by Stefano and Hugo Stibbe. Reasons: Native English speaker and continuity of membership from old to new committee.

Adrian accepted, subject to the consent of his superior. The committee unanimously agreed that Adrian is the best candidate. A letter will be sent to Joan van Albada asking him to appoint Adrian as soon as Adrian has indicated that his superior has approved his service. It was suggested that Gavan McCarthy who is currently an corresponding member, be raised in status to full membership since the member from the European Commission resigned.

5b Web site

Stefano thanked the Historical Manuscript Commission, Dick Sargent and Hazel Bagworth-Mann in particular for hosting and maintaining the ICA/CDS Web site. Dick said that they would be ready to set up the links page. He said to send any suggestions and changes members feel should be made. It is OK to send any documents in any language as well as links directly to Hazel with a copy to Stefano and Adrian.

6. Other business

Agenda for the next meeting postponed till after the next point.

At this point the meeting went back to the discussions on ISAAR(CPF) revision.

Relationship Area

There ensued a long discussion where many aspects of this area and its possible reconstruction could be handled. There was general agreement that the area needs extensive review. There was a general feeling that it needs to be extended, developing fuller text explaining more what is meant. Also, how the rule works in regard to linking one authority to another.

Many suggestions were made and discussed. Dick and Adrian produced an expanded draft of this element for the committee to examine. This was done and the discussion continued June 15.

Two approaches were presented.

The first proposal is based on divisions by type, precise description of the relationship, name ID and date(s);

the second one is based on divisions by hierarchical, temporal, name ID and date(s).

Although it was mentioned that discussion on 5.4, Related Archival Materials and Other Resources Area will be postponed to Brazil, there was some discussion as to how the changes in 5.3 affect rule 5.4. Some were of the opinion that the related materials are not only archival materials and to eliminate the term 'archival'. In fact, it was suggested to link 5.3 with 5.4 and make one rule out of the two. The linking to other resources is just another type of relationship.

The discussion highlighted all aspects of the possibilities that this element potentially provides. It was emphasised that in the wording of the to be refined rules there should stay a clear distinction between the creator link, the link to material related and related resources. This is necessary not to create confusion. Adrian and Dick will work this out and present it in Brazil.

The last Area to be reviewed was **5.5 Description Control Area**

5.5.1 International record identifier was renamed 'Authority record identifier'

In 5.5.2 Institution identifier(s), elements were re-worded and re-ordered (See draft ISAAR (CPF) document)

June 15, 2002

Agenda item 6. Other business

Apart from the Relationships Area, already noted above, there remained two other

points that needed discussion, the examples and the agenda for the next meeting in Brazil.

6a) Next meeting and its agenda

Vitor Fonseca gave details of the invitation for the meeting of ICA/CDS in Rio de Janeiro, November 18 to 22, 2002. He read the letter of invitation and related the detailed information in it regarding program, accommodation, facilities, transportation, etc.

Agenda for Brazil meeting

1. ISAAR(CPF) review and completion for presentation to for comments
2. Study the relationship of ISAD(G) and ISAAR(CPF) with Encoded Archival Description and Encoded Archival Context. This should not be done till the EAC has been published or on the Web.
3. Propose policy and procedures for maintaining standards for ICA Executive approval.
4. OSARIS: status of the project
5. Review of the Strategic Work Plan

Strategy for examples

Two kinds of examples are in the 1st edition and these should continue in the 2nd edition:

In-text examples

Appendix with full examples

For the purposes of the Brazil draft, only examples are needed to clarify text that is not clear, i.e., in-text examples. The full examples would come after the draft has been released for comment to the archival community.

Members are asked to take as many and as complete examples along to Brazil for discussion purposes. It was pointed out to include also minimum records, not only complete or exhaustive examples. Also, examples in different languages. Perhaps it would be a good idea to also let members concentrate on particular kinds of authority records. Dick suggested, for example, to provide family authority records because he has many of them. Somebody else should concentrate on corporate body authority records.

However, for the draft that will go out to the archival community for soliciting comments, there should be a limited number because there should not be the impression created that all has been decided and that there are no changes going to be made as a result of the community input.

Adjournment

Stefano closed the meeting by thanking Blanca, the Archives and Eduardo for hosting and attending the meeting.

Submitted by Hugo Stibbe
(Interim Secretary for Kent Haworth)