REPORT OF THE MARBI/MARC ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Philadelphia, PA

January 30-February 1, 1999

MARBI and the MARC Advisory Committee met concurrently in three sessions during the ALA midwinter meeting in Philadelphia. Chair Bruce Chr. Johnson (Library of Congress) led the sessions.

Announcements:

USMARC has been renamed MARC 21 to reflect its harmonization with CANMARC. The new Bibliographic format should be published this spring, with the Authorities format scheduled for the fall. The other formats will be published in 2000. The USMARC Advisory Group has been renamed to the MARC Advisory Committee, and the USMARC listserv will soon be renamed to reflect this nomenclature change as well.

Several MARC 21 tools are available at the LC website http://lcweb.loc.gov/marc/, including: the language and geographic area code lists, a list of definite and indefinite articles, and Understanding MARC Bibliographic. LC has moved all of the historic MARBI documentation off of their gopher server and has restyled the MARC homepage and the documentation for a cleaner look.

The MARBI website http://www.ala.org/alcts/organization/div/marbi/marbi.html has been developed as part of the overall ALCTS website; it will parallel, but not replace, LC’s MARC website. MARBI’s Chair welcomes suggestions for improvement and asked for volunteers to maintain this website.

Through an e-mail discussion this past fall, MARBI voted to support the renewal of Z39.47, the extended Latin character set; comments from the USMARC list were forwarded along with the reaffirmation.

Highlights:

Several of the papers discussed at these meetings are of interest to the music library community. Proposal 99-04 included codes for coding Braille music in field 007. Proposal 98-15 R recommended making some pre-AACR2 fields and subfields obsolete, including those for recording music publisher numbers (e.g., 260 $d). Proposal 98-16 R regarding a new way for marking non-filing indicators met with initial acceptance. Proposal 99-02 recommended making the MARC holdings 004 field repeatable in order to create linkages to multiple bibliographic records. Discussions about these issues are summarized below.

Proposals

98-15 R: Obsolete Fields in the MARC Bibliographic Format (Not approved)

This proposal arose from a concern regarding unfinished format harmonization with CAN/MARC. If these fields and subfields (261, 262, 400, 410, 411, X11 $q, 260 $d) are not made obsolete in MARC 21, the Canadians will have to define these previously obsolete fields anew. The proposal was revised from the version rejected at the 1998 Annual meeting to give examples of successful data conversion. Much discussion ensued about this paper, beginning with what making a field "obsolete" really means. Concerns were raised about whether or not the utilities would perform data conversion, and if so, how accurate that conversion would be. For the most part, MARBI members believed that there were still legitimate reasons to permit the use of these pre-AACR2 fields for retrospective conversion and rejected the proposal on those...
grounds. Suggestions were made to modify the documentation to include terminology about using these fields for pre-AACR2 cataloging only.

98-16 R: Nonfiling Characters in All Formats (Approved in part)

This revised proposal presented the concept of using encircling control characters to identify nonsorting characters throughout the various MARC formats. This is a more flexible and extensible technique than the current practice of dealing only with non-filing characters that appear at the beginning of cataloging data in certain fields. Issues discussed included whether or not this feature should be limited to a specific set of fields and subfields, and if it could be applied anywhere in a subfield, or just at the beginning. Distinctions were made between non-filing and non-indexing strings; this proposal addresses only the former.

MARBI accepted the first part of this proposal, authorizing the use of control characters for this purpose. Other issues still need to be resolved and a revised proposal will be discussed at the annual meeting, after other appropriate ALA groups have been consulted. It was noted that this proposal has a significant impact on utilities and systems, so it should be done right the first time. There will be a long timeline for implementation, and even once implemented, our databases will reflect the different practices for filing indicators for many years to come.


This paper proposed expanding the computer file 007 to better indicate aspects of digital preservation and reformatting. Encoding these bytes is optional. Discussion centered around whether or not it was appropriate to code field 007 for the intention which led to making the digital copy. The proposal was amended to remove this aspect, since field 583 may be a better place for that type of information. Minor modifications were also recommended to improve clarity.

99-02: Making Field 004 (Control Number for Related Bibliographic Record) Repeatable in the MARC Holdings Format (Not approved)

MARBI had a lively discussion about this paper, which proposed making field 004 repeatable to assist in the linkage of bound with records in the MARC holdings format. Discussion focused on the problems encountered when a bibliographic item does not have a one-on-one correspondence with a physical item. The proposal will be reworked for discussion again at the annual meeting in New Orleans. Further input on this issue from the music community is welcomed.

99-03: Definition of Unspecified Values in Leader in the MARC Holdings Format (Approved)

This paper asked for additional definitions in the MARC holdings format leader to accommodate both unspecified holdings and unknown encoding level. It was approved with minimal discussion.

99-04: Definition of Field 007 (Physical Description Fixed Field) for Tactile Materials in the MARC Bibliographic and Holdings Formats (Approved as amended)

This paper proposed defining 007 values for tactile materials, in order to limit searches or otherwise use for retrieval. Recommended codes include those for Braille music. Minor modifications were suggested to bring coding into conformity with other 007s.

99-05: Definition of Field 040 in the MARC Holdings Format (Approved)

MARBI noted that this proposal, which would allow for including the MARC code for the organization that created the original MARC holdings record, would be most useful for consortia.

99-06: Repeatability of Subfield Su (URL) in field 856 of the MARC Formats (Approved)
This paper recommended making subfield $u in field 856 non-repeatable. Discussion centered on the possible problems of making a subfield non-repeatable after the fact. In this case, there should not be much historic data which needs conversion. Most catalogers already seem to be repeating the 856 tag when they have multiple URLs.

**99-07: Field 263 and Year 2000 Compatibility in the MARC Bibliographic Format (Approved)**

This proposal arose out of the issues related to making MARC Y2K compatible. It was approved with little discussion.

**Discussion Papers**

**DP 112: Defining URL/URN Subfields in Field Other Than Field 856 in the MARC Bibliographic/Holdings Formats**

This discussion paper presented the possibility of recording URL subfields in additional fields in the bibliographic and holdings formats. The paper mentioned tags 037 and 583 as likely candidates. Discussion centered on whether the URL should remain solely in field 856, with an indication of the particular relevance of the resource to the cataloging record, or whether this information should be stored in the field to which it relates. Consensus was reached about retaining the URLs in a separate subfield. This paper will likely return as a proposal.

**DP 113: Appropriate Use for Subfields in Field 852 in the MARC Holdings Format**

This discussion paper arose out of issues confronting the Library of Congress as they move to implement their ILS. This field is open to a variety of interpretations, to reflect local call number practices. MARBI found the status quo acceptable and did not support development of this paper into a proposal.

**Task Forces**

**Appointed:**

A task force will be constituted to look at the issues arising from **DP 108** (Recording language of heading in MARC Authority records), including: increased difficulty of sharing data; the usefulness for multi-language catalogs; and addressing the differences between language, romanization and script.

MARBI agreed to appoint a task force of the major stakeholders to look at the issues raised in **DP 111** (Alternate graphics without 880 in Bibliographic, Holdings, Authority, and Community Information records). Ceasing to use 880 fields for this data would require making all MARC tags repeatable. The task force will look at all of the related issues, some of which go beyond those mentioned in the discussion paper. Issues related to **DP 109** (Identifying transliteration schemes in MARC formats) could be folded into the charge for this task force.

**Reports:**

The Unicode Encoding Task Force is progressing and they expect to have a final report, and possibly a proposal by the annual meeting.

The East Asian Character Task Force has encountered some problems with "roundtrip" mapping; there are 157 instances where there is not a one-on-one correspondence between the character sets. The draft mapping will be reviewed by language specialists, with a proposal expected by the annual meeting.

The CC:DA Metadata Task Force has an interim report in hand; the final report should be completed by the annual meeting and will be finalized by mid-2000. Further information about the Task Force’s activities are available on the C C:DA website [http://www.a la.org/alcts/organization/ccs/ccda/tf-meta1.html](http://www.a la.org/alcts/organization/ccs/ccda/tf-meta1.html). The Task Force uses the metamarda-l list (subscribe at listproc@cornell.edu) for their discussions; view the
archive at: http://orc.dev.oclc.org:5103/metamarda-l

Respectfully submitted,

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