BCC01/SMF/2

Subcommittee on MARC Formats

Report on the 2001 New York City Open Meeting

The Subcommittee on MARC Formats held a joint open meeting with the Subcommittee on Descriptive Cataloging during the New York City conference. This report addresses the MARC-related aspects of that joint meeting.

Kathy Glennan summarized the past two MARBI meetings held during the ALA conferences and highlighted two discussion papers of interest to music catalogers. The first of these, Discussion Paper 2001-DP01, addressed whether or not narrators should continue to be encoded in two separate fields (511 vs. 508) depending on the narrator’s presence “on screen.” MARBI decided to consolidate all narrators into field 511 and the MARC 21 documentation will be adjusted accordingly. The second, Discussion Paper 2001-DP02, will come back as a proposal during the ALA Annual meeting in San Francisco. The revised proposal is likely to include the suggestion that all 041 subfields become repeatable and that each three-letter language code be explicitly subfielded (e.g., $e eng $e fre $e ger). A straw poll at the open meeting indicated that about half of those voting would reconsider their decision to encode field 041 if this change took place; the others would keep using this field.

During the open question and answer forum, various cataloging issues were raised including:

- What is the utility of the 007 field? (Jay Weitz indicated that OCLC uses various values there for processing purposes, and the Library of Congress representatives noted that this field is very important to the preservation community.)

- Is the 2nd indicator in field 028 a not-so-useful holdover from the card environment?

- Why are some multiple-surname headings in local catalogs still tagged with a 1st indicator value of “2”? (While OCLC has run a program to convert all of those values to “1”, local systems may still have unconverted legacy data.)

- Is there a better way to have all local systems link the 1XX and 240 fields? Should we revisit a MARBI discussion paper to eliminate field 240 in favor of 1XX $t?

For more information about the Subcommittee, its activities and the semi-annual MARBI reports, please visit our website available at http://bcc.musiclibraryassoc.org/MARC/MARC.html We welcome comments on MARC format-related issues at any time.

Kathy Glennan
Chair, Subcommittee on MARC Formats

Last updated March 14, 2001