Music Library Association
Cataloging and Metadata Committee
Encoding Standards Subcommittee Business Meeting
Tuesday, March 7, 2023, 2:30-3:50 CST (via Zoom)
Agenda

Members in attendance: Karen Peters (Chair), Jim Alberts, Janice Bunker, Ethan D'Ver, Anna Alfeld LoPrete, Jeff Lyon, Laura Thompson, Damian Iseminger (LC representative), Jay Weitz (OCLC representative)
Excused: Rahni Kennedy
Absent: Jessica Grimmer

(The Chair would like to express her gratitude to Janice Bunker for taking notes during the meeting, and to Anna LoPrete for monitoring the Chat)

1) Welcome and introductions; adjustments to agenda
The Chair welcomed meeting attendees and asked the subcommittee members to introduce themselves. After the introductions, the 2022 ESS Business Meeting minutes were approved, and recent adjustments to the agenda were noted.

2) ESS Chair's report (Karen Peters)
The Chair briefly pointed out the links in the agenda to her reports on the June 2022 and January 2023 MARC Advisory Committee (MAC) Meetings; acknowledged outgoing Subcommittee members Jim Alberts, Ethan D'Ver, Rahni Kennedy, and OCLC representative Jay Weitz (who will be retiring in June); welcomed new (since the last meeting) members Janice Bunker and Jessica Grimmer; and issued a call for applications from persons interested in joining the subcommittee. Noting that she herself is currently finishing her term as ESS Chair, she introduced her successor, Ethan D'Ver, who then briefly addressed the Subcommittee.

3) LC Liaison report (Damian Iseminger)
Damian gave a brief summary regarding the state of BIBFRAME and MARC at the Library of Congress. Regarding the MARC Advisory Committee meetings last January, he noted that portions of it "did not go over well at LC" [more about that under 4.ii. below]. He also noted that people are still submitting proposals for changes to MARC, a clear indication that MARC will not be going away time soon. As for BIBFRAME, LC appears to be in a holding pattern at the moment: LC has decided to hold off training monograph catalogers in BIBFRAME for now, and is planning this as part of a "package" with the new RDA Toolkit training later in the year. Damian also noted that this situation is about to get even more complicated, as LC has now selected a new vendor, EBSCO, for what it is calling the (new) Library Collections Access Platform (LCAP): BIBFRAME will need to be integrated with LCAP, LC is currently working on specifications for that. Damian thinks that the choice of FOLIO for LCAP is a good development, one that indicates that LC is looking forward, and he hopes that this will influence MARC and BIBFRAME development in the future.

4) Updates on MARC development this year (Karen Peters)

a. The Chair reminded attendees that if there are changes to MARC that they would like to see, they should let ESS know as soon as possible, as the process of making changes to MARC, which she outlined, is not a quick one.

b. MARC/RDA Working Group Final Report

Over the last few years, a number of the changes to MARC have been driven by the MARC/RDA Working Group (MRWG), which authored a number of MARC proposals and discussion papers intended to accommodate Official RDA during this period. MRWG, however, has not submitted anything new in the past year: it now considers its work finished and has released a final report. This should not be taken to imply that further accommodating changes are not needed, simply that it will be up to others to bring forward any further changes deemed necessary.

c. Editorial Changes to Field 384 1st indicator (Key type) definition

At last year's meeting, it was noted that problems had been discovered in the MARC field 384 (Key type) documentation: specifically, there was no definition for the 1st indicator (Key type); instead, 1st indicator value blank (Relationship to original unknown), which requires no definition, had one. These problems have been part of the documentation since the field was first defined, but the background documentation from that time no longer exists. As a result, ESS held a discussion to determine the probable intention of this language. Presented with the results of this discussion, NDMSO agreed that editorial changes to the field could be made to correct the situation, and that a formal proposal would not be necessary. The changes were instituted last month in both Bibliographic and Authority formats.

d. Details on some proposals and discussion papers of special interest; new directions in MARC/BIBFRAME conversion

i. Proposal No. 2023-02: Adding Subfield $3 (Materials specified) to Field 041 (Language code) in the MARC 21 Bibliographic Format (authored by MLA and OLAC)

Approval of this proposal brings the 041 field in line with the 546 (Language note) field, for which subfield $3 is already defined. While having the two fields paired in this way is arguably helpful, encoding a series of 041 fields in this manner could in some cases result in confusion and be quite burdensome for resources such as sound recordings that include performances in more than two or three languages. Determination of appropriate best practices will likely be necessary, perhaps something along the line of "encode if feasible." Mark Scharff suggested that perhaps analytic records for such circumstances might be a better way to go. Damian noted that deciding to create analytic records (in MARC) would be a policy issue, and that there is currently nothing stopping anybody from adopting such a practice; and he believes that there is a provision for analytic records in the Metadata Guidance Documents (MGDs). His personal feeling, however, is that we are cataloging objects, not their component contents. The Chair wondered who would be authorized to make policy decisions, as such are beyond the scope of ESS's work. Damian reminded us that while analytic cataloging was once the norm, LC instituted a policy of "whole item" cataloging in the 1980s, and so there is now a long legacy of that practice. But AACR2 and now RDA do permit the making of analytic records, so this is a question

of what a particular institution wants to do. The Chair pointed out that there remains the question of how to link up the various subfield $3s. While there is the option of using subfield $8 (Field link and sequence number) as an arguably better alternative to subfield $3, Kathy Glennan has experimented with doing this and reports that it is very time consuming: she created a spreadsheet in order to do this; were use of field $8 to be adopted, an input form would necessary, but nobody has ever wanted to design one. Keith Knop noted that German catalogers somehow make use of subfield $8. Damian explained that German catalogers do not catalog directly in MARC; they have their own system/database, PICA, which can output records in MARC that incorporate the linkages that are present in PICA.

ii. NDMSO Discussion Papers (2022-DP10, 2022-DP11, 2023-DP01) seeking to add unsubfielded statements to Fields 264 and 490 in the Bibliographic Format

Over the past year, NDMSO put out 3 discussion paper seeking to add a new subfield to fields 260/264 (Publication, etc. statement) and 490 (Series statement) intended to hold an unsubfielded statement that would contain the same contents as the subfielded data currently encoded in subfields $a, $b, and $c. However, when 2022-DP10 (for field 264) and 2022-DP11 (for field 490) were put forward at the June 2022 Annual MARC Advisory Committee meetings, MAC members were generally opposed and indicated that they would not entertain future proposals based on the two papers. The membership nevertheless indicated a willingness to consider new discussion papers as long as they provided a clearer explanation of the motivation for these statements.

At the January 2023 Midwinter MAC meetings, a new discussion paper dealing with field 260/264 (2023-DP01) was presented. The discussion paper and related discussion clarified that NDMSO's desire for this change has to do with the ISBD punctuation: it is removed from the 260/264 fields during conversion from MARC to BIBFRAME, but putting it back into MARC when converting from BIBFRAME is proving very difficult. Furthermore, the BIBFRAME developers believe that the data in subfields $a and $b is bad data, as it is uncontrolled and not linkable. But while MAC members generally realize that this data is imperfect, the unparsed statement being offered by the BIBFRAME developers doesn't appear to improve the situation. During the discussion, certain MAC members made analogies between the field 260/264 situation and that of the MARC 245 field; in the latter case, 7XX fields with controlled (and linkable) access points can be added to the bibliographic record to mitigate the situation.

Something similar might well be possible in the case of fields 260/264 subfield $a, as there are already authorized access points established for most publication places. The problem for us would arise with attempts to control the information in subfield $b in this manner, as there are likely not many existing authority records for music publishers' and label names. After seeing the Wikidata presentations at the recent MOUG meeting, the Chair wondered if a Wikidata project to establish sound recording and score publishers' names might be feasible. Admittedly, a project of this sort would be extremely complicated; it would be beyond the scope of ESS and also beyond the abilities of a single individual. But if this is the direction that we will ultimately need to take in BIBFRAME, perhaps CMC needs to start thinking about becoming involved in such a project. Damian offered the opinion that there is muddied thinking on both sides of the

issue: before proceeding with anything of the sort, we need to ask what the purpose of an imprint statement is. Originally, the sequence of place, publisher, date was used in cataloging cards; essentially, this is a string encoding scheme. Are we saying that this represents how a manifestation identifies itself, or are we simply saying that we want the presentation of this information to be uniform? This question has never been resolved. Furthermore, this sort of imprint statement is very book-centric; it's not conducive to imprints that are found on sound recordings, for example.

In any event, the Chair reported that MAC members still did not like the idea of the unparsed publication statement, and it is unclear to her whether the discussion paper will return as a proposal at the June 2023 MAC meetings, or as yet another discussion paper. Either way, MAC members do not want to see an unparsed statement of this sort not appear in field 264. Furthermore, it appears that there are people who search for publisher location and publisher using the 260/264 subfields; having this information available only in unsubfielded statement would be problematic because there are publisher names that are the same as location names, for example "London." Felicia Piscitelli noted that according to DCRM for rare materials, the publication statement is presented as it appears, and then for the controlled aspect, a 7XX field for the publisher or printer is provided. The Chair reiterated that to do so for non-rare music materials would require a huge amount of (complicated) authority work, and did not know if the music community had the stomach for this. Wikidata and Discogs as possibilities for providing the necessary control for this work were both suggested; but these reflect the work of volunteers so may be of uneven quality. Nevertheless, this matter bears more discussion outside of ESS.

iii. Noted: Final Report of the PCC Task Group on MARC Simplification for BIBFRAME Conversion
Perhaps related to the subject of MARC/BIBFRAME conversion difficulties, the Chair noted this report, pointing out that MARC and BIBFRAME records for a particular resource will not necessarily be equivalent ("conversion is necessarily a lossy process"), and that continued conversion back and forth between MARC and BIBFRAME records should not be expected. Instead, it is more likely that MARC and BIBFRAME records for a particular resource will be quite independent of each other.

5) Report of the Metadata for Music Resources Task Group (Ethan D'Ver, TG Leader)
Ethan reminded us that at this time last year, the newly-revised MMR page had just been released, and so the TG was ready to begin making minor tweaks and looking at submissions for new content. Some of the resources already included were missing descriptions, however, and this year the Task Group wrote 21 descriptions for these resources; going forward, all resources should be provided with descriptions. This year, 3 new resources were added to the Standards/Controlled Vocabulary Section as the result of suggestions, and one was added to the Tools/Content Management Section; and various other minor edits were made to the site. Work for the next year will include continued review of content suggestions and routine maintenance. Ethan thanked Webmaster Kristi Bergland for making changes to the site so quickly and accurately, and thanked Task Group members Anna LoPrete, Jeff Lyons, and Laura Thompson for

their work. Finally, Ethan announced that Jeff Lyon has agreed to take over the role of Task Group leader for the coming year.

(6) New work for the coming year (Karen Peters)

a. The Chair once again reminded ESS members of their responsibility to participate in pre-MAC meeting commentary on MARC proposals and discussion papers, which is (at least currently) the primary focus of the group. We have no control over the timing of MAC meetings, or over the release of these papers and the deadline for comment, which is the responsibility of the Chair to provide on behalf of MLA. She asks that if there is ever a reason that a member cannot participate during a particular cycle, to please let the Chair know; and also, to let the Chair know that requests for comment have been received by either commenting promptly on the wiki, or indicating by email that comments are being worked on and will be shared in the near future.

b. <u>Can/Should ESS be involved with Linked Data/BIBFRAME, and if so, how?</u>

The Chair inherited from her predecessor an annual goal for ESS that it assist the Linked Data Working Group (LDWG) in its work when the need to do so is determined; and every year since then, she has reported to the MLA Board that this goal continues to be on hold. LDWG Chair Kevin Kishimoto reported that when he took over as Chair back in 2018/19, there had been plans to test BIBFRAME and the PMO; but since then, a lot has changed in that landscape. BIBFRAME continues to be developed, while the PMO is undergoing revision (to a PMO "version 2"?), involving simplification that will make it easier to use. But after that revision is completed, it would be good to have some people test it. There also remains the question of who is going to host the PMO and who is going to be responsible for its maintenance; but regardless, some MLA members will need to be involved in its maintenance and further development.

As for LDWG, Kevin considers it at present to be a group involved in study of/experimentation with Linked Data, and not a group that sets policy; but its members should be able to participate in the future maintenance and development of the PMO. Kevin suggests that it would be good to have an ESS member as a liaison to LDWG who would be able to report back to both groups. Jim Alberts has been on both ESS and LDWG, but wasn't officially a liaison [and is now rotating off ESS in any case]. As has been mentioned, BIBFRAME is in a holding pattern at the moment. Hermine Vermeij suggested that, since LDWG is involving itself more with the PMO and Linked Data, perhaps it should be ESS's place to be more involved with BIBFRAME, doing whatever needs to be done to make it more useful for music materials; on the other hand, she doesn't see any clear way to do this, as there is no way to formally liaise with BIBFRAME like there is with MARC. She's had conversations about this with Damian and has the impression that there's some opacity on the subject even within the Library of Congress [an opacity that this writer can verify as well]. While this is a topic that will be discussed at the upcoming CMC meeting on Thursday, Hermine suggests that perhaps this may be a project that Ethan, as the new ESS Chair, can undertake with the subcommittee. Ethan responded that trying to find a way in would be a good place to start, so that we're not suddenly confronted with a need to be involved in BIBFRAME without any prior communication on the subject—which is where we seem to be at the moment.

c. One more time: ESS and Non-MARC metadata (including Wikidata?)
The Chair observed that, although ESS is the result of a merger between the former MARC Metadata subcommittees, it has very little to do with non-MARC metadata aside from maintaining the Music for Metadata Resources site. Yet, for example, at last year's meeting, Kevin Kishimoto commented that it would be useful to have MODS best practices for music. So, when the new MODS 3.8 draft was up for review during the past year, Ethan D'Ver and Janice Bunker volunteered to have a look at it, but lacking practical experience with it, found it difficult to comment substantively on the draft. A similar situation occurred with one or two other schema during the course of the year. The Chair admitted that she does not have a good sense of what the music community needs in terms of non-MARC metadata, and does not know how to get people who do to join ESS.

Damian offered the opinion that there has to be a place in CMC where somebody can go to request comment on a particular exchange or metadata format; and that place is ESS, regardless of the expertise of its members. ESS is also a policy body that can influence MARC, and hopefully BIBFRAME ("yet to be seen"). It is not, however, the job of ESS or MLA to try to influence other ontologies, although ESS can provide comments if asked. So, the question is, what do we mean by non-MARC metadata? The Chair answered that what Damian is talking about is not what she had in mind. What she is thinking about is something along the lines of a Chat comment from Allison McClanahan, which is similar to an earlier suggestion made to her by ESS member Jess Grimmer: perhaps we need to get some archivists interested in joining ESS, or need to reach out to the Archives Committee to ask if there is anything we can do to help them in their work. Damian suggested that in determining what we want to be involved with beyond MARC and BIBFRAME, we need to focus on what (music) libraries are using; he also noted that there can be a split between digital projects and the collecting of physical materials, but that this split is becoming increasingly blurred. As for the two subcommittees that merged to form ESS, Damian notes that the non-MARC metadata situation at the time was much different than it is at present. Casey Mullin suggested that MLA might want to appoint a liaison to the MODS Editorial Committee. As for BIBFRAME, unlike MARC or MODS/MADS, it is not yet mature enough to have a formal input structure: so far it has largely been LC running the show, with some input from PCC and others, so involvement with that is probably premature—unless we are reacting to specific use cases/problems. Damian, responding to some of the Chat comments, suggested that it might be worthwhile for ESS to explore the structure of Linked Data, to get its members more comfortable with "thinking outside the MARC box." Noting that she had taken a Linked Data course about 5 years ago but had not had an opportunity to use it since then, the Chair asked if we truly are at the point where we need to pay attention to Linked Data, and if so, what do we do about it? Damian read a Chat comment from Thom Pease to the effect that we need visibility beyond the current MARC focus, to which the Chair agreed but responded that this still begged the question of how to go about achieving that. She noted that Casey has put a couple of ideas into the Chat; and that Kathy Glennan observed in Chat that our (organizational/structural) involvement is no longer with ALA, but with CORE, and we are still trying to figure out where we belong within that. [Specific comments that Janice included in her meeting notes that are presumably from Chat include Kathy's comment that we may have a chicken/egg problem, in that it's difficult to attract ESS members who are knowledgeable about

non-MARC metadata when the subcommittee is primarily focused on MARC; other ideas for possible ESS involvement from Casey include the Wikidata Affinity Group, participation in ISNI, the PCC Identity Management Advisory Committee, and SNAC].

d. MARC development

i. Should ESS investigate the possibility of adding subfield $3 (Materials specified) to field 024 (Other Standard Identifier), and possibly other Identifiers fields in the Bibliographic format?

This possibility suggested itself to Ethan recently when he was cataloging a recording that had ISRC identifiers assigned to each individual track, and realized that the 024 and other identifier fields did not have subfield $3 available. He wondered if this omission were intentional: was there any reason that subfield $3 couldn't be added to field 024? He noted that 1st indicator 0 has been defined to hold ISRCs. Damian expressed the opinion that subfield $3 could be defined for field 024. Mark Scharff asked if subfield $3 was envisioned as something that will actually link to something else, or simply points at something else. Damian indicated that it is not intended as a link, but is simply a free-text field. As such, Mark wondered whether subfield $q (Qualifying information) could be used instead of subfield $3. Damian said no, as subfield $q is for recording qualifying information found on the item itself [which the IRSC is not]. Mark then wondered if subfield $3 could be used for matrix numbers; there is already, however, an indicator [in field 028] defined for those. Janice Bunker, and Thom Pease in chat, asked what the functionality for the user would be of all the specificity encoded in subfield $3s? How often, for example, do we have a user who focuses in on an ISRC? Thom indicated that having these numbers recorded in the bibliographic record was more often useful for library staff identifying an item, but could at times be useful for a patron, and suggested that we needed to think about use cases and how much these numbers are being used. The Chair asked Ethan if he had enough information to start a discussion of the issue on the wiki to determine whether the issue warrants a discussion paper, and he indicated that he did.

ii. Should ESS investigate the possibility of modifying a 2XX field in the Bibliographic format to permit encoding of a variant title that can be suppressed from display but available for searching?

This possibility was suggested by Allison McClanahan's presentation, "Improving Representation and Access through Ethical Description" at MLA 2023 last week, during which she described the need to suppress the display of the (historically supplied) titles of certain archival collections that in the present day are considered offensive but are nevertheless sufficiently well-known to be targets of searches. She has found a way to use field 247 to permit the searching of a title while suppressing its display; but this method is not strictly "legal" and she wondered if something could be done to make this coding permissible. The problem is that OCLC's Bibliographic Formats and Standards limits use of field 247 to continuing resources.

In the Content Standards Subcommittee business meeting earlier today, Jay Weitz indicated that after Allison's presentation, he took a look at OCLC's Bibliographic Formats and Standards and agreed this issue needs to be looked at, since the BFAS instructions are more restrictive than the MARC documentation. Would bringing the BFAS instructions into line with the MARC documentation be sufficient, or does something further need to be done? Or is it possible that

field 246 could be modified for this purpose instead? Kathy Glennan suggested defining a new subfield in field 247 for “Former devised title.” Ethan clarified that Allison’s concern is a policy that does not allow indexing of titles that are not viewable; and he wondered if there might be situations not involving a former title, where it might be desirable to suppress the title. Damian emphasized that however distressing these supplied titles might be, they are known in the literature and so do need to findable.

Allison asked that, at the very least, the definition and scope of field 247 be looked at to see if changes need to be made to both MARC and BFAS, or if BFAS simply needs to be brought into line with the MARC documentation. Currently, having the 247 1st indicator 1 (Added entry) and 2nd indicator 1 (Do not display note) available allows her to do what is needed: permit patrons to discover the collection while suppressing the title from public view. She asks if the definition needs to be changed to make what she is doing “legal”; and also, if we can find situations other than devised titles for archival collections where the ability to search for a title but suppress it from public view would be desirable, adding these as examples to the MARC documentation as well?

[The remainder of the agenda could not be addressed, as the scheduled meeting time was up. Matters not addressed due to lack of time will be investigated by the new ESS Chair and pursued as appropriate.]

7) **Adjournment and Transfer of the Chairship (Karen Peters, Ethan D’Ver)**
At this point, Karen transferred the ESS Chairship to Ethan, who adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Peters