



FAQs about system changes

What changes do I need to make to my local library system ahead of RDA implementation?

All library systems will need to support the creation and exchange of RDA data from the agreed Australian implementation date.

Changes will be made to the MARC21 encoding standard to accommodate some new RDA fields, and these changes will need to be incorporated into the cataloguing input/verification modules of local library systems to enable the import and/or export of new catalogue records from Libraries Australia and other databases. Changes will also be required to the indexes in local library systems to allow them to search and display the new data elements.

The required MARC21 changes are expected to be finalised in late January 2009. The proposed changes include:

- defining a new field in the bibliographic and authority formats to identify that the record is for a work or an expression
- establishing new content designations for Carrier type and Media type in the bibliographic format, and for Content type in both the authority and bibliographic formats
- defining subfields in field 502 (Dissertation note) for the academic degree for which a work was presented, the granting institution or faculty, the year a degree was granted, dissertation number and miscellaneous information
- adding terms from the RDA relator list that specifies relationships between names and resources (Appendix I) to the MARC Relator term/code list
- defining new data elements in the authority format to support RDA detail with respect to dates, places and several other elements associated with names

For more information on MARC21 developments see

<http://www.loc.gov/marc/development.html>. Libraries should consult with their local library system vendor to find out how these changes will be implemented.

Will I need to convert our existing records?

Conversion of existing records will generally not be necessary as records created using RDA are intended to integrate with AACR2 records in existing databases. However, some global updating of headings may be required, for example the headings for "Bible" will change in RDA and also headings for corporate names that include the abbreviation "Dept." Libraries will be able to obtain updated headings from Libraries Australia or do global changes in their own library systems.

In addition, existing AACR2 records will not allow libraries to take full advantage of both the new MARC data elements and the FRBR grouping and display advantages of RDA.

What relationship will there be between the RDA online product and my library system?

The RDA online product has been developed to allow integration with library systems, with the aim of enabling a cataloguer to click through directly from their cataloguing screen to the relevant RDA instruction for the data being input.

However, initially it is unlikely that most library systems will be able to support this seamless integration with RDA. Rather, it is expected that the RDA online product will run in the 'background' and that the cataloguer will 'toggle' back and forth from their library management system.

Will changes to catalogue displays be required?

It is hoped that eventually library systems and OPACs will evolve to take full advantage of the data created using RDA, with its underlying FRBR structure of work, expression, manifestation and item. These changes will improve the ease and effectiveness with which users are able to find, identify and obtain the resources they require. For example, resources in a variety of formats such as print, online, microform, sound recording might be grouped for display purposes to show they belong to a particular work or expression, allowing users to view and navigate between related works much more easily.

However, realistically, given the time required for system developments, these changes might not be a reality for several years.

What about Libraries Australia?

Libraries Australia is committed to supporting the creation and exchange of RDA data from the agreed Australian implementation date.

In addition, just as records created according to older cataloguing rules (for example AACR1 or the ALA Cataloguing rules) continue to be used and exchanged some 30 years after the implementation of AACR2, we should expect that these, and AACR2 records, will continue to be used for years to come and will co-exist in our library systems with records created according to RDA. Libraries Australia will continue to support the exchange of records created according to AACR2 or other standards as long as they are supported in MARC21. Libraries Australia will also publish a policy guideline as to when AACR2 records can and should be upgraded to reflect RDA.

Libraries Australia will investigate whether it is feasible and/or desirable to use global change programs to create any new RDA data elements using data that is already present in the record, or to massage existing data elements so that they comply with RDA. Investigation will be undertaken once the MARC21 changes have been finalised. The timing of any such changes will be carefully considered so that they meet the needs of the greatest number of Australian libraries. They are likely to occur some time after the initial RDA implementation.

Libraries Australia will provide users with as much notice as possible of any changes to the data format and cataloguing policy. RDA related changes will be reflected in LA training courses and system documentation. Libraries Australia will aim to provide a training system that supports RDA well in advance of the agreed Australian RDA implementation date.

How do I keep informed?

Information about Australian implementation will be made available on the ACOC website and on the rdaust email discussion list. The RDA page on the ACOC website is:

<http://www.nla.gov.au/lis/stndrds/grps/acoc/rda.html>

Information about RDA development is available on the JSC website. JSC's URL is:

<http://www.collectionscanada.ca/jsc/rda.html>