

BCC2005/SMF/2

Subcommittee on MARC Formats Report on the 2005 open meeting, Vancouver

Members: Mark Scharff, Lois Schultz, Jim Alberts, Bruce Evans, Kevin Medows, Grace Fitzgerald, Jay Wetiz (OCLC rep)
Absent: Sue Vita (LC rep)

The Subcommittee on MARC Formats held a joint open meeting with the Subcommittee on Authorities. This report addresses the MARC-related aspects of that joint meeting.

Paul Cauthen summarized the work of the Subcommittee for the past year.

The Subcommittee's proposal to MARBI for a new MARC21 field to accommodate music incipits was accepted with minor revisions at the ALA annual meeting in June. New field 031 was included in the 2004 updates to the bibliographic and authority formats, which were announced the previous week. An implementation timetable for the Library of Congress and the major utilities is not yet established.

Paul briefly outlined two other issues being considered by MARBI of possible interest to the music library community. The after lengthy discussion at MARBI, the Library of Congress is working to clarify the instructions on how to record an ISBN that appears on an item, but that does not apply to the item (field 020). The MLA representative requested that whatever instructions are developed for field 020 also be applied to field 024, which contains the ISMN. There was an extended discussion of how to make clearer the distinctions between "ofness" and "aboutness" in subject headings and other added entries. No change in current music cataloging practice is anticipated.

The Subcommittee also briefly revisited the coding of types of composition in field 047. Although no revision or expansion of MARC codes is planned, an extensive list of codes being developed by IAML for the Unimarc format may provide an alternative in the future.

The other major topic of discussion for the Subcommittee was the exploration of ways to make the MARC21 authority record a more effective tool for automated authority processing. In consort with the Subcommittee on Authorities, the MARC Subcommittee determined that the most effective approach would be to use a single code to an existing fixed field to flag records containing collective uniform titles. The Subcommittee may develop a discussion paper for presentation at the MARBI meeting in June.

Paul Cauthen
Chair, Subcommittee on MARC Formats

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