Metadata Guidance Documentation (MGDs) Introduction

Overview

The architectural layout of Official RDA and its supporting documentation is much different from Original RDA.

In Original RDA, LC-PCC policy statements (LC-PCC PSs) are linked from RDA instructions but are housed in a location separate from the Original RDA Toolkit. Because the LC-PCC PSs are not constrained by the architecture of Original RDA, they could be maintained and updated as separate "stand-alone" documents. Over time, many of the LC-PCC PSs have become very long and are filled with many examples.

In Official RDA, the LC-PCC PSs appear "in-line" in the Official RDA Toolkit with the relevant Option or element subsection. The LC-PCC PSs are still maintained and updated as separate "stand-alone" documents, but the "in-line" aspect of their appearance in the Official RDA Toolkit drastically limits the amount of information that they can include. The LC-PCC PSs in the Official RDA Toolkit simply give the application decision for an Option, or further information on an element subsection.

When the LC-PCC PSs for the Original RDA Toolkit were evaluated and mapped to the Official RDA Toolkit, lengthier parts of the statements, as well as the examples, were marked for a separate set of Official RDA Toolkit documentation, the Metadata Guidance Documentation (MGDs).

A group of PCC members from Brigham Young University, British Library, University of California–Berkeley, University of Florida, University of Oregon, University of Washington, along with staff members at the Library of Congress, created the Official RDA Toolkit MGDs between June and October 2021.

PCC members		LC staff members
Brigham Young University	Robert Maxwell	Jacque Brellenthin Sarah Byun Steve Folsom Paul Frank Damian Iseminger Dorie Kurtz Clara Liao Melanie Polutta Elsie Ramirez Veronica Ranieri Trina Soderquist Manon Théroux Jessica Zieman
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Core Elements

In Original RDA, certain elements were labeled as core, with accompanying statements to indicate under what conditions and for what kinds of resources the element was core. This labeling is no longer a part of Official RDA. Instead, decisions about "coreness" are left for communities of practice to record in their policies and documentation.

The PCC follows Original RDA 0.6.4 in its approach to the concept of core: "As a minimum, a resource description for [an agent,] work, expression, manifestation, or item should include all the core elements that are applicable and readily ascertainable." The "PCC Recommended" elements are not core; their inclusion is encouraged but discretionary.

For institutions following LC-PCC practice, elements are labeled "Core," "Core if," or "Core for" in the LC-PCC policy statements located at the Prerecording level on the element page in the Toolkit. Statements regarding an element's coreness may also be found throughout the MGDs, but the policy statements provide more authoritative information.

Vocabulary and Terminology used in the MGDs

The MGDs have links to element headers and subheaders in the Official RDA Toolkit. For example, Entities > Place > related corporate body of place, or Entities > Work > Authorized access point for work: Compilation of works by two or more agents.

In addition, the terms below are used in the MGDs to reference non-RDA vocabulary and terminology, as well as widely-used PCC terms such as words, initialisms, abbreviations, and phrases:

Term	Definition
1:1 MGD 1:1 MGDs	An MGD that complements a single LC-PCC PS in the Official RDA Toolkit
NAF LC/NAF	LC/NACO Authority File NACO Authority File National Authority FIle
CIP CIPs ECIP ECIPs	Cataloging in Publication Cataloging in Publication Program Electronic Cataloging in Publication Program
DCM Z1	Descriptive Cataloging Manual Z1
LC Guidelines LC Guidelines Supplement	Library of Congress Guidelines for MARC 21 authority records
LC-PCC PS LC-PCC PSs Original RDA LC-PCC PSs	Library of Congress-Program for Cooperative Cataloging Policy Statement(s)
MGD MGDs Metadata Guidance Documents	Metadata Guidance Metadata Guidance Documentation
NAR NARs	Name Authority Record (includes all entities that reside in the NAF, including series authority records (see SAR))
Narrative MGD Narrative MGDs	An MGD that covers a complete RDA entity or a PCC topic that is not addressed explicitly in the Official RDA Toolkit

pccrda	A MARC [Descriptive Convention Source Code](#) used in the 040 field of NARs to indicate that the authority record is valid for PCC implementation of Official RDA, even though the record may not be compliant with the Official RDA Toolkit.
SAR SARs	Series Authority Record (a subset of Name Authority Records (see NAR))
WE lock	A cardinality restriction that a static work that is an aggregating work must be realized by one and only one expression.
WEM lock	A cardinality restriction that a diachronic work must be realized by one and only one expression and must be embodied by one and only one manifestation
WEMI	Work-Expression-Manifestation-Item

Narrative MGDs and 1:1 MGDs

Narrative MGDs

In the process of scoping the MGD drafting project, it became very clear that existing LC-PCC PSs and their examples could not be mapped uniformly to a specific Option in the Official RDA Toolkit. The Official RDA Toolkit's structure is very concise and granular, and a single existing LC-PCC PS for the Original RDA Toolkit may cover multiple elements, and even multiple entities, in the Official RDA Toolkit. In addition, the vocabulary, terminology, and syntax used in the Official RDA Toolkit are new and may not be familiar or comprehensible to all users at first. Because of this, in scoping the MGD drafting project, it also became clear that users of the Official RDA Toolkit would benefit from "bridge" documentation to facilitate the understanding of the new vocabulary, terminology, and syntax in the Official RDA Toolkit, and to assist in the understanding of the overall architectural and paradigm shifts in the presentation of metadata description instructions in the Official RDA Toolkit.

The need for "bridge" documentation resulted in the Narrative MGDs.

Narrative MGDs provide:
- Instructions on describing a specific RDA entity, referencing the Official RDA Toolkit elements that are appropriate to the entity, while allowing current Original RDA Toolkit policies and practices to continue. For example, see MG: Works and MG: Places
- Instructions for new entities and concepts in the Official RDA Toolkit that need to be understood to allow current policies and practices to continue. For example, see MG: Aggregates and MG: Timespan
- Instructions for policies, concepts, and practices used in PCC work, but not addressed in the Official RDA Toolkit. For example, see MG: Access Point Syntax, MG: Basic Cataloging Decisions, and MG: Series-Subseries

Narrative MGDs will be linked from the LC-PCC PSs in the Official RDA Toolkit and should be used in conjunction with the Official RDA Toolkit. Narrative MGDs have many reciprocal links to the Official RDA Toolkit. Narrative MGDs are not intended to be a substitute for using the Official RDA Toolkit.

1:1 MGDs

1:1 MGDs can be mapped to a specific LC-PCC PS in the Official RDA Toolkit and are generally tied to a specific Option or element subsection in the Official RDA Toolkit.

Examples of 1:1 MGDs:
- MG: Work: Analysis of work
- MG: Manifestation: Date of publication: Date of publication not identified
- MG: Family: Language of family
- MG: Place: Access point for place: Choice of larger place

1:1 MGDs will be linked from the LC-PCC PSs in the Official RDA Toolkit.

Using the MGDs

The MGDs are not intended to be stand-alone documents. The MGDs must be used in conjunction with the Official RDA Toolkit and the LC-PCC PSs.

- Start with the Official RDA Toolkit element
- Read the Conditions for each element or each element subsection
- Read the Option(s) for each Condition
- There is an LC-PCC PS attached to most Options
  - The LC-PCC PS is labeled with the name "LC-PCC"

- An LC-PCC PS might say:
    - **LC/PCC practice: Apply the option**
    - **LC/PCC practice: Cataloger's judgment**
    - **LC/PCC practice: In most cases, apply the option**
    - **LC/PCC practice: Do not apply the option**
- An LC-PCC PS might also link to an MGD
    - If there is an MGD, click on the link to consult further guidance and examples in the MGD
- Repeat this process with the next applicable Official RDA Toolkit element or element subsection

Structure of the MGDs

Narrative MGDs

Narrative MGDs can be categorized by RDA Entity, RDA Guidance, RDA Relationships, RDA Resources, or Specific cataloging topics.

Narrative MGDs for RDA Entity

- MG: Works
- MG: Expressions
- MG: Attributes: Agent
- MG: Persons
- MG: Corporate Bodies
- MG: Families
- MG: Places
- MG: Timespan

Narrative MGDs for RDA Entity are organized by RDA element, in most cases. MGDs in this category are subarranged by:

- Overview
- Changes from Original RDA
- Implementation with Metadata Examples
    - RDA element
    - Guidance
    - MARC Examples
    - BIBFRAME Examples
- Cataloger Judgment Areas

Narrative MGDs for RDA Guidance:

- [MG: Aggregates](#)
- [MG: Fictitious and Non-Human Entities](#)
- [MG: Transcription-Punctuation](#)

Narrative MGDs for RDA Guidance are organized by the topic being discussed. MGDs in this category are subarranged by:

- Overview
- Changes from Original RDA
- Implementation with Metadata Examples
  - Guidance
  - MARC Examples
  - BIBFRAME Examples
- Cataloger Judgment Areas

Narrative MGDs for RDA Relationships:

- [MG: Relationships: Agent-Agent](#)
- [MG: Relationships: Agent-WEMI](#)
- [MG: Relationships: WEMI-WEMI](#)

Narrative MGDs for RDA Relationships are organized by the entity being described and the entity being related. MGDs in this category are subarranged by:

- Overview
- Changes from Original RDA
- Implementation with Metadata Examples
  - Guidance
  - MARC Examples
  - BIBFRAME Examples

[MG: Relationships: Agent-Agent](#) is an Official RDA Toolkit update of [PCC Guidelines for the Application of Relationship Designators in NACO Authority Records](#).

Narrative MGD for RDA Resources:

MG: Vocabulary Encoding Schemes

MG: Vocabulary Encoding Schemes is organized by possible approaches to using vocabulary encoding schemes in bibliographic description. This MGD is subarranged by:

- Overview
- Changes from Original RDA
- Implementation with Metadata Examples
  - Topic 1: Using the RDA Vocabulary Encoding Schemes
    - Guidance
    - Marc Examples
    - BIBFRAME Examples
  - Topic 2: Using Other Vocabulary Encoding Schemes
    - Guidance
    - Marc Examples
    - BIBFRAME Examples
  - Topic 3: Not Using a Vocabulary Encoding Scheme
    - Guidance
    - Marc Examples
    - BIBFRAME Examples
  - Topic 4: Mixed Approaches
    - Guidance
    - Marc Examples
    - BIBFRAME Examples
- Cataloger Judgment Areas

Narrative MGD for Specific cataloging topics:

- MG: Access Point Syntax
- MG: Basic Cataloging Decisions
- MG: Reproductions-Photocopies
- MG: Serial Work and Integrating Work Decisions
- MG: Series-Subseries

Narrative MGDs for Specific cataloging topics are organized by the topic being presented. IN general, these MGDs follow this subarrangement:

- Overview
- Changes from Original RDA

- Implementation with Metadata Examples
    - RDA element
    - Guidance
    - MARC Examples
    - BIBFRAME Examples
- Cataloger Judgment Areas

1:1 MGDs

1:1 MGDs are mapped to a specific LC-PCC PS in the Official RDA Toolkit and are generally tied to a specific Option or element subsection in the Official RDA Toolkit.

1:1 MGD Structure

- Header at top of each page with link to RDA element or subelement
- Guidance
- MARC Examples
- BIBFRAME Examples
- References and Notes
    - References to Original RDA Toolkit instructions, LC-PCC PSs, or PCC documentation. References and Notes were used in mapping existing RDA instructions and PCC policies and guidance to the Official RDA Toolkit. This information serves as provenance for the MGD but may be helpful to all users
- Update History
    - Document tracking. All MGDs have 2022-01-31 as the initial release date. When an update is made, the day of the update will be added in addition to any previous dates

Some 1:1 MGDs have multiple sections for Guidance, MARC Examples, and BIBFRAME Examples, when there are multiple topics to be covered in the MGD. In most of these MGDs, there will be a Table of Contents at the beginning of the MGD for internal navigation.

1:1 MGDs by Entity

Works

MG: Work: Access point for work: Constructing access points
MG: Work: Access point for work: Additional elements and designations
MG: Work: Access point for work: Additional elements and designations: Distinguishing characteristics

MG: Work: Authorized access point: Additional elements and designations
MG: Work: Authorized access point: Additional elements for creator of work
MG: Work: Creator corporate body of work
MG: Work: Dissertation or thesis information
MG: Work: Frequency
MG: Work: Note on metadata work: Complex see-also references
MG: Work: Note on metadata work: Nonpublic general notes
MG: Work: Preferred title of work: Additional omissions and changes: Parts of works
MG: Work: Preferred title of work: Title not found in original language or is not applicable
MG: Work: Related manifestation of work: Description Convention Source Codes
MG: Work: Representative expression: [Element] of representative expression
MG: Work: Source consulted: Subfield $u and $v
MG: Work: Variant access point for work: Additional elements and designations
MG: Work: Variant access point for work: Constitutions, charters, and other fundamental laws
MG: Resources: Authorized access points for an administrative regulation, etc.

Expressions

MG: Expression: Authorized access point for expression: Additional elements and designations
MG: Expression: Language of expression
MG: Expression: Revision of expression
MG: Expression: Script
MG: Expression: Summarization of content

Manifestations

MG: Manifestation: Accessibility content
MG: Manifestation: Carrier type
MG: Manifestation: Contributor agent of still image
MG: Manifestation: Date of manufacture: GPO publications
MG: Manifestation: Date of production: Recording
MG: Manifestation: Date of publication: CIP cataloging
MG: Manifestation: Date of publication: Date of publication not identified
MG: Manifestation: Date of publication: date of publication not identified
MG: Manifestation: Distribution statement: CIP cataloging
MG: Manifestation: Extent of manifestation: CIP cataloging
MG: Manifestation: Extent of manifestation: Terms
MG: Manifestation: Extent of manifestation: Identifier for manifestation: Two or more identifiers
MG: Manifestation: Manufacture statement: CIP cataloging
MG: Manifestation: Mode of issuance
MG: Manifestation: Note on edition statement: Integrating resources
MG: Manifestation: Note on edition statement: Multipart resources
MG: Manifestation: Note on publication statement
MG: Manifestation: Numbering within sequence
MG: Manifestation: Other title information
MG: Manifestation: Place of publication
MG: Manifestation: Printer corporate body: Government printers
MG: Manifestation: Printer corporate body: Privately printed works
MG: Manifestation: Production statement

Items

Corporate Bodies

Families

Persons

Places

MG: Place: Subject place of
MG: Place: Variant access point for place
MG: Place: Variant name of place

Relationship Labels

https://www.loc.gov/aba/rda/mgd/relationshipLabels/index.html

Subject Relationships

MG: Work: Analysis of expression
MG: Work: Analysis of item
MG: Work: Analysis of manifestation
MG: Work: Analysis of work
MG: Work: Commentary on expression
MG: Work: Commentary on item
MG: Work: Commentary on manifestation
MG: Work: Commentary on work
MG: Work: Critique of expression
MG: Work: Critique of manifestation
MG: Work: Critique of work
MG: Work: Evaluation of expression
MG: Work: Evaluation of manifestation
MG: Work: Evaluation of work
MG: Work: Review of expression
MG: Work: Review of manifestation
MG: Work: Review of work
MG: Work: Subject
MG: Work: Subject corporate body
MG: Work: Subject expression
MG: Work: Subject family
MG: Work: Subject item
MG: Work: Subject manifestation
MG: Work: Subject person
MG: Work: Subject place
MG: Work: Subject work

Series/Subseries

Work elements

MG: Series: Access point of work
MG: Series: Authorized access point for work
MG: Series: Category of work
MG: Series: Date of work
MG: Series: Entity boundary of work
MG: Series: History of work
MG: Series: Identifier for work
MG: Series: ISSN

MG: Series: Issue of work
MG: Series: Other distinguishing characteristic of work
MG: Series: Place of origin of work
MG: Series: Preferred title of work
MG: Series: Preferred title of work: Series-like phrases
MG: Series: Related corporate body of work
MG: Series: Related RDA Entity of work
MG: Series: Source consulted
MG: Series: Variant access point for work
MG: Series: Variant title of work

Manifestation elements

MG: Series: Other title information of series
MG: Series: Parallel other title information of series
MG: Series: Parallel statement of responsibility
MG: Series: Parallel title of series
MG: Series: Series statement
MG: Series: Series statement: Multiple series
MG: Series: Statement of responsibility
MG: Series: Title of series

Non-RDA elements

MG: Series: Non-RDA elements

MARC and BIBFRAME Examples

All of the MGDs have examples in MARC and in BIBFRAME.

- **Some examples are made up**
- **Some examples are taken verbatim from bibliographic or authority descriptions**
- **Some examples are taken from bibliographic or authority descriptions, but modified to suit the example**
- **Some examples are taken directly from LC-PCC PSs for the Original RDA Toolkit**

MARC Examples

- MARC examples are in `Courier New, font size 11`
- **`Bold`** formatting is used to highlight the relevant part of the examples

- MARC tagging is given
- The dollar sign ($) is used for delimiters
- Examples are numbered in the 1:1 MGDs
- Examples are numbered within each section of the Narrative MGDs

BIBFRAME Examples

- BIBFRAME examples are in `Courier New, font size 11`
- **Bold** formatting is used to highlight the relevant part of the examples
- RDF XML is used in the examples
- In most cases, a fuller RDF XML presentation of the data is given
- The RDF XML includes some bflc (BIBFRAME Library of Congress) properties and classes
- Examples follow the numbering used in the MARC examples
  - For example, the MARC example numbering will be the same numbering for the BIBFRAME examples
  - When there are multiple MARC examples for a specific topic, generally there will only be one BIBFRAME example
- There are many cases where BIBFRAME examples are not given, when current practices do not use BIBFRAME
  - For example, because authority work is not done in BIBFRAME, there will be no BIBFRAME examples for any of the Agent MGDs

Crowdsourcing Examples

When a suitable example could not be found to illustrate a specific cataloging situation, the text "Send examples to coop@loc.gov and include this document's URL" is added. Please help us find suitable examples! The document URL is the PDF link, for example:
https://www.loc.gov/aba/rda/mgd/manifestation/mg-m-productionStatement-01.pdf

Cataloger's Judgment Areas

Narrative MGDs have a section titled **Cataloger's Judgment Areas**. In some cases, this section is blank, and will be updated as the Official RDA Toolkit is implemented. In other cases, there already is text in the Cataloger's Judgment Areas. Please remember that this section of the Narrative MGDs will be updated as new data is received through the RDA Test, and RDA implementation.

Update History

Date	Action
2025-05-06	Added "MG: Work: Related manifestation of work: Description Convention Source Codes" and "MG: Work: Representative expression: [Element] of representative expression"
2025-05-06	Changed title and link of MGD Fictitious and Real Non-Human Entities to Fictitious and Non-Human Entities
2025-05-06	Deleted section "Descriptive Convention Source Code pccrda in Name Authority Records"
2024-05-07	Added "Core Elements" section
2023-02-14	Corrected a link
2022-10-06	Deprecated: Critique of item Evaluation of item Review of item
2022-03-28	Added section "Descriptive Convention Source Code pccrda in Name Authority Records"
2022-01-31	Initial release

Document URL: https://www.loc.gov/aba/rda/mgd/mg-introduction.pdf