

To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA
From: Kathy Glennan, ALA Representative
Subject: Removing lists of terms from the Medium of Performance (6.15) instructions

ALA thanks the JSC Music Working Group for this proposal to remove the closed lists of medium of performance terms from RDA 6.15. We note the close relationship of this proposal to 6JSC/MusicWG/Discussion/2 and wonder if it is advisable to make the changes suggested in this proposal while much more significant changes to the same instructions are possible within the next year.

Our response below assumes that the JSC prefers to proceed with this proposal. We have a number of rewording suggestions, largely focused on further removal of controlled language terms in 6.15. In the recommendations below, the marked-up text is based on the current RDA instructions.

In relation to moving more content to the Tools Tab, ALA recommends that ALA Publishing investigate how this information can be made available to RDA users who do not have regular Internet access, such as including these tools as part of the print version of RDA.

Changes to 6.15.1.3 – Recording Medium of Performance

ALA generally agrees with the proposed changes but recommends further revisions to 6.15.1.3, which include:

- Moving the paragraph referring to the Tools tab content first.
- Rewording the “Tools tab” paragraph to reflect the phrasing used in RDA 0.12 to reference external vocabularies.
- Adding more than one source of external medium of performance terms to the “e.g.” list.
- Removing the controlled language term “percussion” from the Exception.

We could support the removal of the revised paragraph relating to “continuo”, since this would likely be governed by the external vocabulary; however, we have no particular objection to retaining it. In addition, although ALA wonders if some of the examples here could be pared down, we have not proposed such a change below.

PROPOSED REVISION

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6.15.1.3 Recording Medium of Performance

Record the medium of performance using a suitable vocabulary encoding scheme (e.g., the listing of terms on the Tools tab of Toolkit: **Medium of Performance**, Library of Congress Medium of Performance Thesaurus for Music, the codes and lists of terms for UNIMARC field 146). Record a term in a language preferred by the agency creating the data.

Record the medium of performance by applying Apply the following these instructions, as applicable:

instrumental music intended for one performer to a part (see 6.15.1.4)

instruments (see 6.15.1.5)

accompanying ensembles with one performer to a part (see 6.15.1.6)

instrumental music for more than one performer to a part orchestra, string orchestra, or band (see 6.15.1.7)

one or more solo instruments and accompanying ensemble (see 6.15.1.8)

solo voices (see 6.15.1.9)

choruses (see 6.15.1.10)

indeterminate medium of performance (see 6.15.1.11).

Record medium of performance as a separate element, as part of an access point, or as both. For instructions on recording medium of performance as part of the authorized access point, see 6.28.1.9–6.28.1.11.

EXAMPLE

horn

voices

piano

piano

clarinet

violoncello

violin

piano

violin

viola

cello

flute

bassoon

continuo

If there is more than one part for a particular instrument or voice, record the number of parts.

EXAMPLE

flutes (2)

clarinets (2)

viols (5)

violins (2)

viola

cello

Exception

When using a general term for percussion ~~If the term *percussion* is used~~ (see 6.15.1.4), record the number of players if there is more than one.

EXAMPLE

percussion (3 players)

Choose a term and use it consistently for a continuo part, whether the individual instrument or instruments of the continuo are specified or not.

EXAMPLE

continuo

Use *continuo* for a thorough bass part whether it is named as *basso*, *basso continuo*, *figured bass*, *thorough bass*, or *continuo*, and whether the individual instrument or instruments of the continuo are specified or not.

For guidelines on recording details about the medium of performance, apply the instructions for medium of performance of musical content at [7.21](#).

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6.15.1.3 Recording Medium of Performance

Record the medium of performance using a suitable vocabulary encoding scheme (e.g., the listing of terms on the Tools tab of Toolkit: **Medium of Performance**, Library of Congress Medium of Performance Thesaurus for Music, the codes and lists of terms for UNIMARC field 146). Record a term in a language preferred by the agency creating the data.

Apply the following instructions, as applicable:

- instrumental music intended for one performer to a part (see [6.15.1.4](#))
- instruments (see [6.15.1.5](#))
- accompanying ensembles with one performer to a part (see [6.15.1.6](#))
- instrumental music for more than one performer to a part (see [6.15.1.7](#))
- one or more solo instruments and accompanying ensemble (see [6.15.1.8](#))
- solo voices (see [6.15.1.9](#))
- choruses (see [6.15.1.10](#))
- indeterminate medium of performance (see [6.15.1.11](#)).

Record medium of performance as a separate element, as part of an access point, or as both. For instructions on recording medium of performance as part of the authorized access point, see [6.28.1.9–6.28.1.11](#).

EXAMPLE

horn

voices
piano

piano
clarinet
violoncello

violin
piano

violin
viola
cello

flute
bassoon
continuo

If there is more than one part for a particular instrument or voice, record the number of parts.

EXAMPLE

flutes (2)
clarinets (2)

viols (5)

violins (2)
viola
cello

Exception

When using a general term for percussion (see [6.15.1.4](#)), record the number of players if there is more than one.

EXAMPLE

percussion (3 players)

Choose a term and use it consistently for a continuo part, whether the individual instrument or instruments of the continuo are specified or not.

EXAMPLE

continuo

For guidelines on recording details about the medium of performance, apply the instructions for medium of performance of musical content at [7.21](#).

Changes to 6.15.1.4 – Instrumental Music Intended for One Performer to a Part

ALA recommends separating the first paragraph into two paragraphs: one that indicates the scope of the instruction; and one that gives specific guidance about recording, to better match the phrasing that we recommend throughout 6.15. Also, in the first exception, ALA recommends making a general reference to the term for percussion, rather than providing “percussion” in italics.

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6.15.1.4 Instrumental Music Intended for One Performer to a Part

Apply this instruction to instrumental music intended for one performer to a part.

~~For instrumental music intended for one performer to a part, r~~Record each instrument by applying the instructions at [6.15.1.5](#) and [6.15.1.11](#).

Exceptions

If there is more than one percussion instrument, and the names of the individual instruments are not specified by the composer in the original title, use ~~percussion~~ a general term for percussion.

If the medium includes a continuo part, record the name of the part (see [6.15.1.3](#)).

If the medium includes instruments acting as an accompanying ensemble, record a term for the accompanying ensemble (see [6.15.1.6](#)).

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6.15.1.4 Instrumental Music Intended for One Performer to a Part

Apply this instruction to instrumental music intended for one performer to a part.

Record each instrument by applying the instructions at [6.15.1.5](#) and [6.15.1.11](#).

Exceptions

If there is more than one percussion instrument, and the names of the individual instruments are not specified by the composer in the original title, use a general term for percussion.

If the medium includes a continuo part, record the name of the part (see [6.15.1.3](#)).

If the medium includes instruments acting as an accompanying ensemble, record a term for the accompanying ensemble (see [6.15.1.6](#)).

Changes to 6.15.1.5 – Instruments

In this and subsequent instructions that provide guidance for naming medium of performance, ALA recommends a reference back to 6.15.1.3. For examples, we have suggested one term from the current instruction and one from the *Library of Congress Medium of Performance Thesaurus*.

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6.15.1.5 Instruments

Record an appropriate term for an instrument (see [6.15.1.3](#)).

EXAMPLE

double bass

zither

~~When recording names of instruments, use a term in a language preferred by the agency creating the data whenever possible. Use the following list of terms as a guide:~~

~~cello or violoncello~~

~~cor anglais or English horn~~

~~double bass (not bass viol or contrabass)~~

~~double bassoon or contrabassoon~~

~~harpichord (not cembalo or virginal)
horn (not French horn)
kettle drums or timpani
piano (not fortepiano or pianoforte)
viola da gamba (not bass viol or gamba)~~

~~When alternatives are given, choose a term and use it consistently.~~

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6.15.1.5 Instruments

Record an appropriate term for an instrument (see [6.15.1.3](#)).

EXAMPLE

double bass
zither

Change to 6.15.1.5.2 – Pitch and Range of Instruments

In Optional Omission b), the terms “alto, tenor, bass” should no longer be italicized. (*No markup provided*). We assume this change from italics to plain text for these same terms would also be required in 6.28.1.9.d.

However, we are uncertain if 6.15.1.5.2 should be retained, since the external medium of performance vocabulary could address this situation.

Change to 6.15.1.5.3 – Alternative Instruments

ALA recommends a reference back to 6.15.1.3 and changing the terminology from recording “a name” of an alternative instrument to recording “an appropriate term”. This wording change requires making “instrument” singular.

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6.15.1.5.3 Alternative Instruments

Record an appropriate term for an ~~the names of~~ alternative instruments (see [6.15.1.3](#)).

EXAMPLE

viola

Resource described: Sonata for clarinet (or viola) and piano, E flat major, op. 120, no. 2 / Johannes Brahms. **Medium of performance recorded as:** clarinet, viola, piano

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6.15.1.5.3 Alternative Instruments

Record an appropriate term for an alternative instrument (see [6.15.1.3](#)).

EXAMPLE

viola

Resource described: Sonata for clarinet (or viola) and piano, E flat major, op. 120, no. 2 / Johannes Brahms. **Medium of performance recorded as:** clarinet, viola, piano

Change to 6.15.1.5.4 – Doubling Instruments

ALA recommends a reference back to 6.15.1.3 and changing the terminology from recording “a name” of an alternative instrument to recording “an appropriate term”. This wording change requires making “instrument” singular.

PROPOSED REVISION

*Marked-up copy***6.15.1.5.4 Doubling Instruments**

Record an appropriate term for a ~~the names of~~ doubling instruments (see 6.15.1.3).

EXAMPLE

piccolo

Resource described: Nataraja : for flute (doubling piccolo) and piano / Jonathan Harvey. **Medium of performance recorded as:** flute, piccolo, piano

Optional Omission

Omit doubling instruments.

*Clean copy***6.15.1.5.4 Doubling Instruments**

Record an appropriate term for a doubling instrument (see **6.15.1.3**).

EXAMPLE

piccolo

Resource described: Nataraja : for flute (doubling piccolo) and piano / Jonathan Harvey. **Medium of performance recorded as:** flute, piccolo, piano

Optional Omission

Omit doubling instruments.

Changes to 6.15.1.6 – Accompanying Ensembles with One Performer to a Part

ALA recommends the following:

- Replacing the 1st paragraph with one that refers to 6.15.1.3, does not refer to naming a “family of instruments”, and does not specify the use of the term “ensemble”. The latter situations should both be addressed by the external vocabulary.
- Replacing the 2nd paragraph with one that mentions a “general term” for instrumental ensemble. The reference to “family of instruments” is acceptable here because it explaining a condition rather than suggesting a particular vocabulary term.
- Adding a new example box to illustrate the 2nd paragraph.

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6.15.1.6 Accompanying Ensembles with One Performer to a Part

Record an appropriate term for an accompanying ensemble with one performer to a part (see 6.15.1.3).

EXAMPLE

guitar ensemble
string ensemble
percussion ensemble

Record a general term for an instrumental ensemble if an accompanying ensemble with one performer to a part consists of instruments from two or more families of instruments and a more specific term is not available.

For an accompanying ensemble with one performer to a part, record the appropriate term for the instrument or family of instruments followed by the word *ensemble*.

EXAMPLE

instrumental ensemble

Record *instrumental ensemble* for an accompanying ensemble with one performer to a part consisting of instruments from two or more families of instruments when a more specific term is not available.

Alternative

For an accompanying ensemble with one performer to a part, record the appropriate term for each instrument of the accompanying ensemble instead of the name of the ensemble.

EXAMPLE

violins (2)
viola
cello

Resource described: Concerto for flute with string quartet / Jerome Moross

trumpets (2)
horn
trombone
tuba

Resource described: Piano concerto no. 2 In F major for piano and brass quintet / Peter Schickele

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6.15.1.6 Accompanying Ensembles with One Performer to a Part

Record an appropriate term for an accompanying ensemble with one performer to a part (see 6.15.1.3).

EXAMPLE

guitar ensemble
string ensemble
percussion ensemble

Record a general term for an instrumental ensemble if an accompanying ensemble with one performer to a part consists of instruments from two or more families of instruments and a more specific term is not available.

EXAMPLE

instrumental ensemble

Alternative

For an accompanying ensemble with one performer to a part, record the appropriate term for each instrument of the accompanying ensemble instead of the name of the ensemble.

EXAMPLE

violins (2)

viola

cello

Resource described: Concerto for flute with string quartet / Jerome Moross

trumpets (2)

horn

trombone

tuba

Resource described: Piano concerto no. 2 In F major for piano and brass quintet / Peter Schickele

Changes to 6.15.1.7 – Instrumental Music Intended for Orchestra, String, Orchestra, or Band

ALA agrees that this instruction should be renamed and expanded. However, we have taken a different approach from that suggested by the Working Group. Our revision:

- Uses similar phrasing for the title and 1st paragraph as proposed above for 6.15.1.6, including the reference to 6.15.1.3.
- Removes the paragraph regarding continuo. If RDA is relying on external vocabularies for medium of performance terms, the treatment of “continuo” should be governed there instead of in the RDA instructions.
- Provides a couple of terms for the example box proposed by the Working Group: one term from the current instruction and one from the *Library of Congress Medium of Performance Thesaurus*.

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6.15.1.7 Instrumental Music Ensembles with More Than One Performer to a Part for Orchestra, String Orchestra, or Band

Record an appropriate term for an instrumental ensemble with more than one performer to a part (see 6.15.1.3).

EXAMPLE

band

chamber orchestra

~~For instrumental music intended for orchestra, string orchestra, or band, record an appropriate term from the following list:~~

~~orchestra
string orchestra
band~~

~~Record *orchestra* for full or reduced orchestra.~~

~~Disregard continuo when it is part of an orchestra or string orchestra.~~

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6.15.1.7 Instrumental Ensembles with More Than One Performer to a Part

Record an appropriate term for an instrumental ensemble with more than one performer to a part (see [6.15.1.3](#)).

EXAMPLE

band
chamber orchestra

Changes to 6.15.1.9 – Solo Voices

ALA recommends making the following changes to this instruction, beyond what was suggested by the Working Group:

- Including a reference to [6.15.1.3](#).
- Providing examples of names of solo voices by themselves in the first example box, since the full medium of performance examples are more appropriate elsewhere.
- In the second example box, we have suggested one term from the current instruction and one from the *Library of Congress Medium of Performance Thesaurus*.
- Removing the final paragraph, since solo voices are already recorded per the first paragraph. Any restrictions on recording solo voices should be governed by the external vocabulary, or perhaps by instructions regarding authorized access points.

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6.15.1.9 Solo Voices

Record an appropriate term for a type of solo voice (see [6.15.1.3](#)).

~~Record an appropriate term from the following list to identify a type of solo voice:~~

~~soprano
mezzo-soprano
alto
tenor
baritone
bass~~

EXAMPLE

alto

baritone

countertenor

~~sopranos (2)~~

~~alto~~

~~instrumental ensemble~~

~~Resource described: Stabat Mater : in G minor : for 2 sopranos, alto, 2 violins & basso continuo / Girolamo Abos ; edited by Alejandro Garri ; assisted by Kent Carlson~~

~~soprano~~

~~piano~~

~~Resource described: Dos canciones para soprano y piano / Federico Ibarra~~

~~soprano~~

~~accordion~~

~~Resource described: Drei Lieder für Sopran und Akkordeon / Horst Lohse ; nach Gedichten von Ingo Cesaro~~

~~Record other terms as appropriate.~~

EXAMPLE

~~bass baritone~~

~~countertenor~~

~~Record an appropriate term identifying solo voices as an ensemble if no specific voice types or ranges can be ascertained for two or more solo voices of different ranges, record an appropriate term from the following list:~~

~~mixed solo voices~~

~~men's solo voices~~

~~women's solo voices~~

~~Record other terms as appropriate.~~

EXAMPLE

women's solo voices

solo vocal ensemble

~~For compositions that include solo voices with chorus, record the solo voices, the appropriate terms for the chorus (see 6.15.1.10), and the accompaniment, if any.~~

EXAMPLE

~~soprano~~

~~tenor~~

~~mixed voices~~

~~orchestra~~

~~Resource described: Te Deum : for mixed voices (with soprano and tenor solo) and orchestra / Georges Bizet~~

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6.15.1.9 Solo Voices

Record an appropriate term for a type of solo voice (see 6.15.1.3).

EXAMPLE

alto
baritone
countertenor

Record an appropriate term identifying solo voices as an ensemble if no specific voice types or ranges can be ascertained for two or more solo voices of different ranges.

EXAMPLE

women's solo voices
solo vocal ensemble

Changes to 6.15.1.10 – Choruses

ALA agrees with the Working Group's rewording suggestions and recommends the addition of a reference back to 6.15.1.3 in the first paragraph. In relation to the examples, we have suggested one term from the current instruction and one from the *Library of Congress Medium of Performance Thesaurus*.

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6.15.1.10 Choruses

Record an appropriate term for a choral ensemble (see **6.15.1.3**).

~~For a choral ensemble, record an appropriate term from the following list:~~

~~mixed voices
men's voices
women's voices
unison voices~~

~~Record other terms as appropriate.~~

EXAMPLE

unison voices
men's chorus

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6.15.1.10 Choruses

Record an appropriate term for a choral ensemble (see **6.15.1.3**).

EXAMPLE

unison voices
men's chorus

Changes to 6.15.1.11 – Indeterminate Medium of Performance

ALA recommends adding a reference to 6.15.1.3.

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6.15.1.11 Indeterminate Medium of Performance

If the specific medium of performance, or any part of it, is not stated in the resource or other source, record that part of the medium of performance ([see 6.15.1.3](#)) as instructed at [6.15.1.11.1–6.15.1.11.4](#) (in that order).

Changes to 6.15.1.11.1 – One Family of Instruments, Collective Term, Etc.

ALA recommends removing the reference to 6.15.1.9 in the first sentence. It only refers to solo voices and thus is misleading.

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If only the family of instruments or voices ([see 6.15.1.9](#)), or a collective term for other media, is indicated by the composer, or is available from any other source, record the family, collective term, etc.

EXAMPLE

accordion
plucked instrument
violin

Resource described: Trio pour accordéon de concert, violon et instrument à cordes pincées / Alain Abbott

keyboard instrument

Resource described: Three inventions for keyboard / Howard Boatwright

Changes to 6.15.1.11.4 – Medium Unspecified

ALA recommends rewording this instruction to remove all indications of using controlled vocabulary terms.

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6.15.1.11.4 Medium Unspecified

If no medium of performance is specified by the composer, and none can be ascertained from any other source, record an appropriate term (see [6.15.1.3](#)) *unspecified*.

Exception

If there are two or more such works by the same composer, record the number of parts or voices.

Use a single term ~~voices~~ to indicate both vocal and instrumental parts.

EXAMPLE

voices (3)

Resource described: Canzonets, or, Little short songs to three voyces / published by Thomas Morley

voices (5–6)

Resource described: Canzonets, or, Little short aers to five and sixe voices / by Thomas Morley

voices (4)

Resource described: Fourteen canzonas for four instruments / Claudio Merulo

voices (5–6)

Resource described: Madrigals of 5 and 6 parts, apt for the viols and voices / made & published by Thomas Weelkes

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6.15.1.11.4 Medium Unspecified

If no medium of performance is specified by the composer, and none can be ascertained from any other source, record an appropriate term (see [6.15.1.3](#)).

Exception

If there are two or more such works by the same composer, record the number of parts or voices.

Use a single term to indicate both vocal and instrumental parts.

EXAMPLE

voices (3)

Resource described: Canzonets, or, Little short songs to three voyces / published by Thomas Morley

voices (5–6)

Resource described: Canzonets, or, Little short aers to five and sixe voices / by Thomas Morley

voices (4)

Resource described: Fourteen canzonas for four instruments / Claudio Merulo

voices (5–6)

Resource described: Madrigals of 5 and 6 parts, apt for the viols and voices / made & published by Thomas Weelkes