

To: Gordon Dunsire, Chair, RDA Steering Committee

From: Damian Iseminger, Chair, RSC Music Working Group

Subject: Additions and revisions to *RDA* 2.15.3, Plate Number for Music

Abstract

The proposal revises the scope of *RDA* 2.15.3, Plate Number for Music, so that numbers indicating total number of plates or pages or a number indicating an individual plate or page are considered part of the plate number. Alternatives are added at *RDA* 2.15.3.3 to omit such numbers when recording a plate number.

Justification

The task of revising *RDA* 2.15.3 was assigned by the RSC to the Music Working Group for completion in 2016.

Issues requiring resolution

The last sentence of *RDA* 2.15.3.1 ("It is sometimes followed by a number corresponding to the number of pages or plates.") is considered by some to be ambiguous as it is not clear whether the number mentioned in it should be considered as part of the plate number or not. Historical Anglo-American cataloging practice suggests that such a number is not considered as being a part of the plate number. From Working Group member Daniel Paradis:

The practice of omitting a number corresponding to the total number of pages or plates following a plate number can be traced back at least to the *Rules for Descriptive Cataloging in the Library of Congress* (1949). Rule 9:4 D (p. 89) included the following: "If an additional number, corresponding to the total number of pages or plates, follows the plate number (often after a dash) it is omitted in recording the plate number." The exact same sentence was included in *AACR*, rule 244 D (p. 315). For some reason, the sentence disappeared in *AACR2* but LC included it in a music cataloging decision for 5.7B19 first published in the March 1981 issue of the *Music Cataloging Bulletin* (12:3, pages 1-2) and later revised in the January 1982 issue (13:1, page 4) (the revised version was reproduced in the 1983 and 1986 editions of Smiraglia's *Cataloging Music*). When a definition of "plate number" was included in the glossary of *AACR2* in the 1988 revision, the phrase "and is sometimes followed by a number corresponding to the number of pages or plates" was added, seemingly to indicate that such a number was not part of

the plate number and should not be transcribed. This is where the sentence now in *RDA* comes from.

It has also been observed that many music reference resources also follow this practice when listing plate numbers identifying published scores. This practice, however, runs up against the principle of representation in *RDA* 0.4.3.4: “The data describing a resource should reflect the resource’s representation of itself.”

In their deliberations, many members of the Music Working Group came to the conclusion that the scope of the instruction should be aligned with *RDA* 0.4.3.4, and that numbers representing the total number of plates or individual plates should be considered a part of the plate number, even though past practice suggests otherwise. There are several arguments that justify this position. One argument is that it is unreasonable to assume that catalogers will necessarily have the expertise to recognize when a number is or is not a part of the plate number. If the scope is revised so that numbers corresponding to the number of plates or pages are not considered a part of the plate number, a cataloger may have to scrutinize each plate number to determine if it includes such a number prior to recording it. For non-music catalogers, this could lead to confusion as to what exactly should be recorded. Recording the number at the bottom of the page, as it appears, bypasses this potential problem.

Another argument in favor of aligning the scope of *RDA* 2.15.3 with *RDA* 0.4.3.4 is that one cannot assume that humans will always be recording data taken from a physical resource. It may well be that machines will be doing this type of labor. From that perspective, using the number as it appears on the resource is certainly the more straightforward way of recording this information.

However the Music Working Group also recognizes that there will also be those who wish to omit numbers that they do not consider to be a part of the plate number. To accommodate this position, the Working Group has added two alternatives to *RDA* 2.15.3.3.

The Music Working Group noticed while working on this proposal that the Examples at *RDA* 2.15.3.3 and 2.15.2.3 reflect the Alternative practice for recording multiple identifiers at *RDA* 2.15.1.5. The working group suggests that these should be changed to reflect the standard practice in *RDA* of providing each identifier individually.

Impact of the revisions

The changes proposed could have an impact on Anglo-American cataloging, where the number of plates or pages has generally been omitted, by many, but not all music catalogers. However, the alternatives that are proposed would give catalogers the opportunity to continue former practices.

Changes

Marked-up version

2.15.3 Plate Number for Music

2.15.3.1 Scope

A **plate number for music**▼ is a numbering designation assigned to a resource by a music publisher. The number is usually printed at the bottom of each page, and sometimes also appears on the title page.

A plate number sometimes includes initials, abbreviations, or words identifying a publisher. It is sometimes followed by also includes a number corresponding to the total number of pages or plates or pages or a number corresponding to an individual plate or page.

2.15.3.2 Sources of Information

Take plate numbers for music from any source.

2.15.3.3 Recording Plate Numbers for Music

Record plate numbers for music. If a plate number is preceded by an abbreviation, word, or phrase identifying a publisher, include that abbreviation, word, or phrase as part of the number.

EXAMPLE

S. & B. 4081
UE 19541-UE 19543
9674 H.L.-9676 H.L.
R.10150E.-R.10155E.

Alternatives

When recording a plate number, omit a number corresponding to the total number of plates or pages from the plate number. Apply this instruction instead of or in addition to recording a plate number that includes the total number of plates or pages.

EXAMPLE

TBD

When recording a plate number, omit a number corresponding to an individual plate or page from the plate number. Apply this instruction instead of or in addition to recording a plate number that includes a number for an individual plate or page.

EXAMPLE

TBD

Clean version

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EXAMPLE

TBD

Other changes in RDA

No changes beyond those proposed would be needed.

Changes to the RDA Element Set

No changes would be required to the RDA Element Set.