

**To:** RDA Steering Committee  
**From:** Thomas Brenndorfer, NARDAC Representative to the RSC  
**Subject:** Progress report on the use of RDA unconstrained element set for display labels

## Introduction

In July 2019, NARDAC was tasked with:

- Review the suitability of the RDA unconstrained element set to store user-friendly element labels.
  - Check that RDA elements have a corresponding unconstrained element.
  - Check that unconstrained element labels are consistent.
- Develop a method for easy determination and maintenance of general user-friendly labels.
- Develop a set of general labels.
- Identify relevant issues.

NARDAC members were helped in this task by the Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access 3R Task Force and a member of the Canadian Committee on Cataloguing.

On October 22, 2019, Thomas presented the results of NARDAC's work at RSC annual in-person meeting in Santiago, Chile. After the meeting, Thomas shared with NARDAC feedback from the RSC.

## Methodology

For each element:

- Review the preferred label for consistency with the Registry label of the constrained element(s).
- Propose an amendment to the preferred label if required for consistency, parsimony, and distinctiveness. The utility of the preferred label in interoperability applications must not be impaired.
- Propose a user-friendly label based on a de-verbalization of the preferred label, or the preferred label(s) of the constrained element(s), or some other basis if justified.
- Report on any issues arising from this work.

## Work done since the RSC meeting in October 2019:

1. We reviewed the comments to our proposed amended registry labels, friendly labels, and changes to definitions that were added in the spreadsheet by Gordon Dunsire and Kathy Glennan.
2. We added column J “Revised Amended Registry Labels” to record unconstrained element labels that we believe still need to be modified. They are:

| Unconstrained label             | Proposed unconstrained label | Reason                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| has founding agent of resource  | has founder of resource      | The word “founder” is used in the constrained element label. In addition, the proposed element follows the pattern of removing the word “agent” from other elements such as in “is author of” when it is not necessary.                                                                                                             |
| is founder agent of resource of | is founder of resource of    | The proposed element follows the pattern of removing the word “agent” from other elements such as in “is author of” when it is not necessary.                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| has member of                   | Is member of                 | We suggested this change has been rejected but we don’t understand why. The constrained element label is “corporate body member of collective agent of “ which has the alternate label “is corporate body member of collective agent.” Therefore, it seems that the correct verbalized unconstrained label should be “is member of” |
| is text for work                | is text for resource         | The word “work” in constrained labels should be replaced by the word “resource” in unconstrained labels.                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

|               |                  |                                                                                                          |
|---------------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| has text work | is text resource | The word “work” in constrained labels should be replaced by the word “resource” in unconstrained labels. |
|---------------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

3. We added column O “Revised Toolkit Friendly Label” with our latest proposed display labels based on comments received. We did not add user-friendly labels for the following elements because they have been deprecated:
  - has biographical information (deprecated; merged with has agent history)
  - has referential resource relationship
4. We added column R “Revised Possible Definition Changes” to address other problems we found in definitions. They include:
  - Replacing the expression “source resource” in definitions;
  - Replacing the expression “an agent that” to “an agent who” when appropriate;
  - Making modifications to unconstrained definitions based on constrained element definitions;
  - Making minor corrections (typos, etc.)
5. In column S “Comments,” we added explanations to some of our suggested modifications to definitions.
6. We generated spreadsheet to view our proposed friendly labels in different groupings (see various tabs in spreadsheet):
  - List of friendly labels that are the same as those of the unconstrained elements;
  - List of friendly labels that are different from those of the unconstrained elements;
  - List of friendly labels that still contain the name of high-level entities (tab labeled);
  - List of repeated labels;
  - List of friendly labels that are used for more than one element;
  - List of appellation elements.

Note that the third tab in the spreadsheet is the Clean copy that contains the complete list of our latest proposed Registry label proposed changes, proposed user-friendly labels, and proposed definition changes. Older proposed labels have been removed from this list.

## Using unconstrained element labels as the basis of user-friendly element labels

- On the whole, many unconstrained element labels can be used as display labels without modifications. Approximately, 71% of our proposed friendly labels are identical to those of unconstrained elements. See tabs labeled Identical labels and Different labels in spreadsheet.
- We created some friendly labels by simply removing high-level entity words (entity, resource, agent, nomen, place, timespan) from unconstrained element labels
- We created others by slightly modifying the unconstrained labels such as by changing the order of words.
- However, there are labels for which we could not find friendly labels, for instance those that include the term “nomen.”

## Recommendations

1. Add the following missing unconstrained elements (in addition to the access point elements mentioned in our October report):
  - has category of timespan
  - has category of place
  - has category of nomen
  - has appellation of agent
  - is appellation of agent of
  - has appellation of place
  - is appellation of place of
  - has appellation of resource
  - is appellation of resource of
  - has appellation of timespan
  - is appellation of timespan of
  - has identifier for place
  - is identifier for place of
  - has identifier for timespan
  - is identifier for timespan of
  - is parallel name of distributor of
  - is parallel name of manufacturer of
  - is parallel name of producer of
  - is parallel name of publisher of

- is parallel place of distributor of
- is parallel place of manufacturer of
- is parallel place of producer of
- is parallel place of publisher of
- is contained in (for the constrained element “contained in item”)
- container of (for the constrained element “container of item”)

Note: The current RDA elements “container of (work)” and “contained in (work)” have become “part work” and “part of work” in the beta Toolkit. The unconstrained labels for these elements are “has part resource” and “is part of resource.” Alternate labels for these elements are “is container of” and “is contained in,” which could explain why the “container” elements at the item level have been missed.

2. Add constrained label lookup to the following elements:

- has affiliation
- has associated institution
- has contributor
- has name of entity
- has preferred name of entity
- has related agent of entity
- has entity of entity
- has related nomen of entity
- has related place of entity
- has resource of entity
- has teacher
- has variant name of entity
- is contributor of
- is editor of
- is name of place of
- is name of timespan of

3. Delete the following unconstrained elements:

- has date associated with agent
- is date associated with agent of

The constrained element “date associated with person” has become “related timespan of person,” which should be mapped to the unconstrained element “has related timespan of agent.” The constrained element “date associated with person of” is now “related timespan of person” which should be mapped to the unconstrained element

“has related timespan of agent.” There is therefore no need to keep the unconstrained elements “has date associated with agent” and “has date associated with person of” among the list of unconstrained elements.

4. Review definitions of constrained elements for work and expression elements for consistency. The phrases “source work” and “source expression” are still found in many definitions. Here are two examples:
  - derivative work: A work that is a modification of another work.
  - derivative expression: An expression that is a modification of a “source expression.”

Other phrases that are not used consistently in definitions are “related work,” “related expression,” “another work,” and “another expression.” For instance, definitions to narrower elements of “derivative work,” sometimes use the phrase “source work,” “related work”, “another work,” such as:

- abstracted as work: A work that abbreviates another work in a brief, objective manner.
- adapted as choreography work: A choreographic work based on a related work.
- adapted as work: A work that modifies a source work for a purpose, use, or medium other than that for which it was originally intended.

The lack of consistency in definitions of constrained elements has an impact on the definitions of unconstrained elements.

5. Review constrained element labels that still contain the name of high-level entities for consistency.

One of the instructions we were given was to "Remove the word ‘agent’ from unconstrained labels when possible." However, several suggestions we made to remove high-entity level words from unconstrained labels were rejected. It is not clear why the unconstrained label “has author” is acceptable, while the word “agent” must remain in labels, such as “has contributor agent of cartography.” As a result, there are still inconsistencies in the list of unconstrained labels: some words representing high-level entities still appear in some labels, while they have been removed from others.

6. Consider removing the following elements from the unconstrained and constrained elements:
  - “has country associated with agent”: Is this legacy element necessary? Country is not an entity. “Associated” elements have become “related” elements in the

Toolkit. Should “related” elements such as this one be restricted to entities?

There are no constrained elements for country associated/related with an entity, a work, etc. Instead this is covered by the element related place of entity, work, etc. This is similar to the constrained element “date of person” which has become “related timespan of person.”

- “has category of government”. Should the “category” elements be restricted to RDA entities?

## Questions for discussion:

1. Should there be two sets of unconstrained elements: one verbalized and one not?

The verbalized element labels may not work with all systems. For instance, using an unconstrained element label in a MARC 1XX field would look strange):

100 1- \$a Austen, Jane, \$d 1775-1817, \$e has author.

It is easy to generate a list of non-verbalized labels from the verbalized labels. However, would it be useful to users of RDA to have two lists of element labels already mapped to unconstrained elements, instead of just one?

2. Where should the user-friendly labels live?

For users of the RDA Toolkit, it would be useful to have friendly labels live somewhere in the beta Toolkit. Would it be feasible to add these labels to the element reference box, clearly indicated as such?

3. Should labels be used more than once?
  - a. To make display labels more user-friendly, we removed high-level entities from many labels. The result is that one label can apply to many elements as can be seen in the table below. We believe that this is not a problem. Do you agree with us?

| Unconstrained label        | Proposed friendly label |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| has variant name of agent  | has variant name        |
| has variant name of entity | has variant name        |
| has variant name of place  | has variant name        |

|                              |                  |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| has variant name of timespan | has variant name |
|------------------------------|------------------|

- b. If so, could we extend this principle to other elements that still contain the name of high-level entities (see the tab labeled High-level entities in spreadsheet)? For instance, could the labels for the following elements be the same? Would users understand the meaning of the relationships if the names of high-level entities are removed from labels in the table below? How far should we continue this type of merging of labels?

| Unconstrained label      | Proposed friendly label  | Other possible friendly label |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| has language of agent    | has language of agent    | has language                  |
| has language of resource | has language of resource | has language                  |
| has part nomen           | has nomen part           | has part                      |
| has part place           | has place part           | has part                      |
| has part resource        | has resource part        | has part                      |
| has part timespan        | has timespan part        | has part                      |

- c. Can labels of “resource ... statement” be the same as the label of a super-element?

| Unconstrained label                 | friendly label proposed    |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| has manufacture statement           | has manufacture statement  |
| has resource manufacture statement  | has manufacture statement  |
| has distribution statement          | has distribution statement |
| has resource distribution statement | has distribution statement |
| has publication statement           | has publication statement  |
| has resource publication statement  | has publication statement  |

- d. Should the user-friendly labels for elements that have been soft deprecated be the same as the labels by which they are being replaced? For example, should the friendly labels for the elements “has details of ...” be the same as those of the elements by which they are being replaced? (The following list is not exhaustive)

| <b>Unconstrained label</b>    | <b>Proposed friendly label</b> | <b>Other possible friendly label</b> |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| has details of base material  | has details of base material   | has base material                    |
| has details of colour content | has details of colour content  | has colour content                   |
| has details of duration       | has details of duration        | has duration                         |
| has details of file type      | has details of file type       | has file type                        |
| has details of polarity       | has details of polarity        | has polarity                         |

4. Do you agree that our proposed display labels that are different from those of unconstrained elements are friendlier? For example, are the following labels friendlier? (see tab labeled Different labels in spreadsheet for the complete list of labels that are different)

| <b>Unconstrained label</b>            | <b>Proposed friendly label</b> |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| is category of agent                  | is type of agent               |
| is category of resource               | is type of resource            |
| is category of entity                 | is type of agent               |
| has contributor agent of cartography  | has cartography contributor    |
| has contributor agent of choreography | has choreography contributor   |
| has contributor agent of music        | has music contributor          |
| has contributor agent of object       | has object contributor         |
| has name of publisher                 | has publisher name             |
| is name of publisher of               | is publisher name of           |
| has parallel name of publisher        | has parallel publisher name    |
| has note on capture                   | has capture note               |
| has note on copyright statement       | has copyright statement note   |
| has note on edition statement         | has edition statement note     |
| has note on title                     | has title note                 |

5. We reversed the order of words in some element labels. Some examples appear in the table above. We consider reversing other words in element labels, such as the word “date”. Do you think that is a good idea?

| <b>Unconstrained and proposed friendly label</b> | <b>Possible friendly label</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| has date of birth                                | has birth date                 |
| is date of birth of                              | is birth date of               |
| has date of establishment                        | has establishment date         |
| is date of establishment of                      | is establishment date of       |
| has date of production                           | has production date            |
| is date of production of                         | Is production date of          |

6. Are there proposed friendly labels that are the same as those of unconstrained elements for which friendlier labels could be proposed (see tab labeled Identical labels in the spreadsheet)?
7. If the proposed labels are translated into other languages, would they remain user-friendly for non-English speakers?
8. What should we do with element labels that are still not friendly, such as elements that include the word “nomen?”
9. Should we make a proposal to change the following constrained labels (and their corresponding unconstrained labels)?

| <b>Constrained element label</b> | <b>Possible label change proposal</b> | <b>Reason</b> |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| arranger agent of music          | arranger agent                        | Simpler       |
| arranger agent of music of       | arranger agent of                     | Simpler       |

|                             |                             |                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| commissioning body agent    | commissioner agent          | Commissioner is the word used in OED; commissioners are not only corporate bodies; the label commissioning body person is strange |
| commissioning body agent of | commissioning body agent of | ibid                                                                                                                              |
| recording medium            | audio recording medium      | Clearer                                                                                                                           |
| recording source            | transcription source        | Clearer                                                                                                                           |

## Next step

NARDAC's next step is to test the friendly labels using RIMMF4. We encourage other communities to test our list of user-friendly labels and give us feedback.