

To: RDA Steering Committee

From: ORDAC

Subject: Response to the summary of formal responses to RSC/ORDAC/2024/1 - [Proposal on] Dual-language naming of Corporate Body and Place

Introduction

This document addresses questions raised in formal responses by RSC members and references these according to the summary produced by the RSC Secretary ([RSC ORDAC 2024 1 summary.pdf \(rda-rsc.org\)](#)). ORDAC felt it was important that the members and their represented communities had the opportunity to read our comments ahead of the RSC meeting where this proposal will be discussed.

Note 1 and Note 9

Several of the RSC responses to the proposal raised questions about an option already available on the element pages for *Place: name of place* and *Corporate Body: name of corporate body*. ORDAC feels that it is important to lay out our reasoning for why this option is not sufficient to resolve the issue in question.

Many RDA elements exist in a hierarchy that allows for varying levels of granularity, depending on the context of a community's need.

All *<entity>: preferred name of <entity>* elements are refinements of the broader element *<entity>: name of <entity>*.

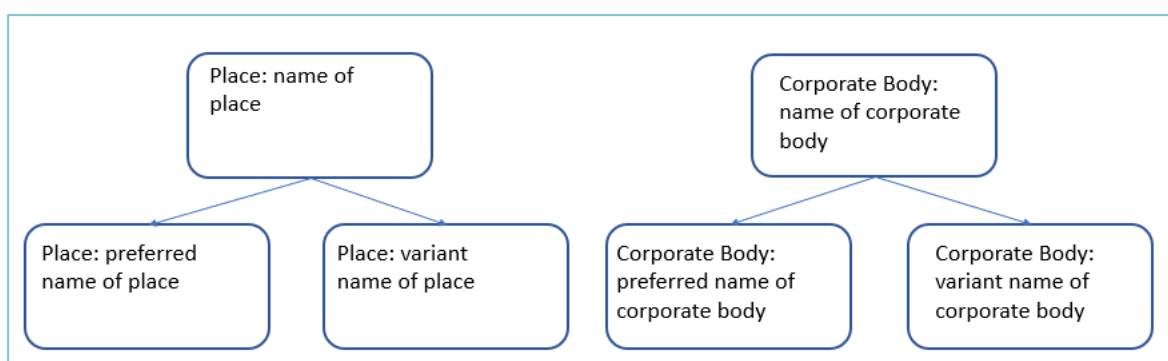


fig. 1 *<entity>: name of <entity>* examples and their more granular preferred and variant elements

In this way, all values of the element *<entity>: preferred name of <entity>* are also valid as values of the relevant element *<entity>: name of <entity>*, however not all values of *<entity>: name of <entity>* are necessarily valid as values of *<entity>: preferred name of <entity>*.


When working with the RDA Toolkit, a cataloguer selects an element relevant to their context. This proposal relates to the situation where the cataloguer's context is that they wish to record a value for either the element *Place: preferred name of place* or *Corporate Body: preferred name of corporate body*.

Having selected the element and confirmed that it is relevant to the resource being described, the cataloguer then selects the appropriate recording method. In the case of both of these elements, the recording method "structured description" is not applicable, so the choice is between unstructured description, identifier or IRI. For this explanation we will select the method "unstructured description". This recording method allows many institutions to continue with what they would currently record, and is also where all of the options and conditions being discussed occur within these element pages.

The path that follows is the same for both elements under discussion; for simplicity the following explanation will focus on the element *Corporate Body: preferred name of corporate body*.

The first option under the heading *Recording an unstructured description* is to Record a value of Corporate Body: name of corporate body.

OPTION

Record a value of Corporate Body: [name of corporate body](#) .

[01.07.16.45](#)

Assuming that the cataloguer applies this option, they will then go to the element page *Corporate Body: name of corporate body* in order to determine this value.

On the page for *Corporate Body: name of corporate body*, the first option under the heading *Recording an unstructured description* is to Use any source of information. Record the form found in the source of information.

OPTION

Use any source of information.

Record the form found in the *source of information*.

[90.94.94.48](#)

This is the option mentioned in several RSC responses to this proposal. It allows for any string interpreted by the cataloguer as a value for the element to be recorded just as it appears. However, we are not yet done.

Next, as relevant to the language and script of the cataloguer's community, the cataloguer needs to consider if the form found complies with the relevant transcription guidelines they wish to use:

OPTION

Record an unstructured description by transcribing text and spoken word content from a manifestation using Guidance: Transcription guidelines.

[Guidelines on basic transcription](#) →.

OPTION

Record a name by transcribing text and spoken word content from a manifestation using Guidance: Transcription guidelines. [Guidelines on](#)

[normalized transcription](#) →.

OPTION

Record a name by transcribing text and spoken word content from a manifestation using any transcription guidelines.

[71.00.67.94](#)

This may or may not result in an adjustment of a value.

As an example, in my English-speaking community if my resource had the string:

AWA PRESS

I would have taken that as presented to me when I followed the first option to record the form found in my source of information, but then applied the Guidelines on normalized transcription to convert this to:

Awa Press

Not all communities would choose to do this, but this is relevant to my community.

The next set of options on the *Corporate Body: name of corporate body* page are to do with data provenance when recording a value for that element. Since we are seeking a value for the element *Corporate Body: preferred name of corporate body* these data provenance options are irrelevant to us at this time.

At this point the cataloguer has reached the bottom of the section for *Recording an unstructured description*. Structured description is not a valid recording method, and since they require an unstructured description value for their element, there is no point in locating an identifier or IRI value here.

They now return to the element page *Corporate Body: preferred name of corporate body*.

On this page, they are back to the first option:

OPTION

Record a value of Corporate Body: [name of corporate body](#) →.

01.07.16.45

At this point, the cataloguer has one or more values from following this option, but there is more content in the *Recording an unstructured description* section, so unless their community has written a policy statement or guidance telling them to go no further, they read on down the page.

It is important to check every Option and every Condition against the resource being described, because these may result in adjustments to make it appropriate as a value of *Corporate Body: preferred name of corporate body*. There are many possible adjustments here depending on the entity being described, the community the description is being created for, and the policy statements and/or guidance being used by the cataloguer.

In relation to the proposal we are particularly interested in the section *Names of corporate body in two or more languages*.

There are currently four conditions under this heading, each with a number of condition options.

CONDITION

A value of a name appears in two or more languages in manifestations.

A corporate body has only one value of Corporate Body: [language of corporate body →](#).

47.85.61.57**CONDITION**

A value of a name appears in two or more languages in manifestations.

A corporate body has two or more values of Corporate Body: [language of corporate body →](#).

A value of Corporate Body: [language of corporate body →](#) is a language preferred by an agent who creates the metadata.

68.74.93.52**CONDITION**

A value of a name appears in two or more languages in manifestations.

A corporate body has two or more values of Corporate Body: [language of corporate body →](#).

A value of Corporate Body: [language of corporate body →](#) is not a language preferred by an agent who creates the metadata.

26.11.64.69**CONDITION**

A value of a name appears in two or more languages in manifestations.

A corporate body has two or more values of Corporate Body: [language of corporate body →](#).

A value of Corporate Body: [language of corporate body →](#) is not known.

01.37.80.12

In a situation where a cataloguer recognises that a value contains words from more than one language *and* does not believe it to be a parallel language situation, there is currently uncertainty as to what to do next.

To return to the main point of this explanation, the question was whether the option to *use any source and record that form* was sufficient to provide a solution for the issue raised in this proposal. ORDAC does not believe it is so because it is relevant to an entirely different element. The element pages for *Place: name of place* and *Corporate Body: name of corporate body* do contain that option, and do provide values for the elements *Place: preferred name of place* and *Corporate Body: preferred name of corporate body* but they are only a starting point, they are not necessarily the completed value of the preferred name element itself.

While it is certainly valid for a descriptive community to write guidance to stop at that option in a given situation, or to say "do not apply" to all of the language options on the preferred name element pages, that will not be true for every language community.

ORDAC sees a gap here where some communities want to recognise some values as containing words from more than one language but in fact representing only a single value rather than some form of parallel language representation for the same entity.

For communities who do not have this need, it would be easy to disregard this option entirely, and write guidance or policy statements telling cataloguers to do so, just as is done now with the existing options. For communities who do wish to apply this, it makes explicit that they are not forced to make irrelevant choices simply because of the use of multiple languages within the value they are recording.

It is ORDAC's belief that there is an implicit understanding that the existing options apply where the cataloguer understands there is a parallel language situation occurring, and so from that perspective these conditions are already irrelevant to a string recognised as a single value regardless of the linguistic heritage of the words contained within that string. However, this is entirely implicit and interpretive. For clarity, ORDAC would like to see some more explicit options or condition-option sets present on the element pages to reassure communities for whom this is currently a concern.

Note 2

ORDAC is not opposed to EURIG providing use cases for options relating to script, however this proposal is purely about language content. ORDAC has no current use cases to support script-related issues so encourages EURIG to make a proposal to resolve the issues raised by them in relation to script and singular/plural language usage.

As to the question of "*when foreign loan words or names are considered a different language and when they have been sufficiently incorporated to be considered the same language as the rest of the corporate/place name*", ORDAC sees this as a policy or guidance issue for a given descriptive community. The same question would apply to determining whether a string of characters appearing on a resource represented one element or more than one element, or whether it represented multiple parallel values of the same element. The decision about when a word becomes an accepted part of a given language - if that ever occurs at all - is tied to cultural context and is therefore a community issue. Official RDA does not tell us how to recognise content as being parallel, only how to handle it once that situation has been recognised. See further explanation of ORDAC's position under Note 3 and 7 below.

Note 3 and Note 7

NARDAC raised the concern that cataloguers may not be able to determine when a name is intended to be considered as a single string as opposed to when it is appropriately treated as multiple parallel values for the entity.

ORDAC sees this as a descriptive community issue.

It is entirely valid to opt to never apply the new options if they do not have value for a given descriptive community. For some communities, they may never handle materials where names of this type are an issue, and it is perfectly valid to have guidance that reassures cataloguers in their context that this is irrelevant to them and that they are dealing only with parallel language situations.

There are, however, descriptive communities who do encounter situations where they know the string is not intended to be interpreted as parallel but for whom there seems to be no acknowledgement of this reality within RDA.

For the Aotearoa New Zealand context, and this is true of some other communities around the world, there is a majority language community who is currently actively supporting a minority language community to retain, revitalise and even promote the use of that minority language. This active participation in language maintenance means that both indigenous and non-indigenous organisations and community groups often make deliberate choices to incorporate terms from multiple languages in names in ways that may not be found in other places. Cataloguers in those communities, or working regularly with materials from those communities, are likely to recognise this and also want to support it, yet the assumption within many cataloguing standards is that language is a separation point between values when used as appellations.

Official RDA does not explicitly make the choice to treat a change in language as a change in value, but the form of the options around language imply that the normal situation is to recognise phrases as separate values when they come from different languages, and does not explicitly acknowledge the existence of these blended forms. The lack of explicit acknowledgement is sometimes understood by cataloguers to mean that parallel language values are the 'right' way to handle the situation regardless of how the community might understand the name. This has certainly happened in Aotearoa New Zealand in the past.

For RDA to be relevant to these communities, it would help to have an explicit option identifying that these blended language values do exist and that it is okay to choose to make use of them as they appear.

For other communities, who may only encounter these single value strings on rare occasions, one possibility is to interpret them as parallel language values. Another possibility would be to seek out how others in the relevant descriptive community have handled the name. I personally would not hesitate to look at the catalogue of a relevant national library or large tertiary library for a language community I was unfamiliar with, when I had questions as to how to treat a corporate body name, nor to check out the relevant gazetteer or other official guide to placenames if I was uncertain how to proceed.

There is also often evidence within the resources being described. If the corporate body in question is only the publisher and has only provided a logo to represent themselves it can be difficult to be sure, but if they mention their name in the content then the way they talk about themselves can be indicative of how they use their own name. I could also seek out their official website, and see there how they talk about themselves. This is part of usual cataloguing practice when attempting to determine how to record a value within my description; it is an unnecessary process for the majority of my work, but entirely valid for edge cases or unfamiliar situations.

NARDAC's comment, shared by EEO, that "*Such confusion may rely on extra policy statements to solve*" does not seem relevant to the proposal. It is entirely normal for descriptive communities to write policies and guidance around RDA Toolkit content. It is true that a new option may require additional policy statement or guidance to be written and this is an impact for the writers of such documentation, but that is true of any new option and not specific to this proposal.

EEO's further suggestion of modification to the Prerecording section for the element Corporate Body: name of corporate body may be a partial solution, but still only addresses issues with values for that element and not the element under discussion. As it stands, the existing option on that page to '*Record the form found on the source of information*' seems sufficient to cover the situation where a string is recognised as a single value of Corporate Body: name of corporate body, but does not resolve the question of whether that value later needs to be treated differently if working on a value of Corporate Body: preferred name of corporate body. We support a review of the wording of the Prerecording section to better match the layout found on the element pages Person: name of person and Family: name of family, but believe this is a separate issue.

NARDAC's final comment under Note 7 about placement on the page "*since the more usual case is that the corporate body appears in two or more languages in manifestation but its preferred name is in a single language*" is again true for some language communities but not others. If RDA is intended to be internationally relevant, ORDAC feels that this reasoning should not be part of the consideration. ORDAC has no particular preference in terms of placement on the page for the proposed additional options because we do not see that placement would unduly impact on the purpose of the proposal, but we do feel that it is important to recognise that not all descriptive communities have the same experience in what is "usual" to encounter.

Note 4

ORDAC would be happy to discuss the Translation Team Liaison Officer's suggestion of a new heading. ORDAC did feel originally that the existing heading could be interpreted to favour a parallel language understanding, but decided upon minimal change. If the RSC wish to discuss and vote on splitting off this type of corporate body name from the parallel language section, ORDAC would be in favour of this.

In relation to the comments by NARDAC and EEO, ORDAC is happy to remove the phrase '*single string*' from the condition and option wording but does not agree with NARDAC's proposed rewording of the option at Corporate Body: preferred name of corporate body as this narrows the scope of the option to only include situations involving translations and suggests that the situation is in fact parallel but is treated as being a single value. This is not the intention of this proposal. While the examples given do give this impression, it is not always the case that names appear in this form.

The language content is frequently not a translation as suggested by the wording "*a name repeated in two languages*", more than two languages may be involved, and it is not always possible to cleanly separate the language content into equivalent parts. Corporate Body names such as the following appear on the New Zealand Companies Register and are indicative of the kinds of language use seen regularly:

- Mount Zion Whanau Limited
- Te Ukaipo Mercy Initiatives For Rangatahi Limited
- Kai with Aroha Limited
- Family, Aiga, Whānau Aotearoa Tapui Limited
*Three languages involved here: English, Samoan and Māori*¹

This kind of blending of languages occurs frequently in corporate body names and are familiar to the descriptive community from the wider context, but are often not producers of resources collected by our institutions. The examples previously provided are very commonly found in publications, and the usage in the content of such publications makes it clear that the organisation sees their name as being the whole string, hence why they were selected for inclusion in the proposal.

Similarly, an example such as *Whanau Ora Commissioning Body* is a corporate body for the commissioning of the corporate body named "*Whanau Ora*", the latter of which does not have any English terms in its name therefore its English name is the same as the Māori one.

Note 5

As mentioned above, ORDAC is happy to find wording that does not include the phrase '*single string*'. We agree that it could be redundant and is not ideal to introduce new language in Toolkit instructions.

The Examples Editor's suggestion given in Note 4 is a possibility, but it depends on whether the new section heading suggested in Note 4 takes us away from the wording "*appears in two or more languages in manifestations*". ORDAC is willing to continue with this wording, though as mentioned above this phrase can be interpreted to mean there is more than one potential value involved rather than a single value.

¹ In this example there are three languages used: Aiga is the Samoan word for family or families, Whānau is the Māori word families, Aotearoa is a Māori word for New Zealand. Tapui is a word used in various Polynesian languages often meaning 'restricted' or 'bounded'; it is not clear which language specifically is intended here, but a very rough translation into English would be something like 'the New Zealand-based organisation/company focused on providing something for families of varying cultural backgrounds'

Note 6

The omission of the phrase '*source of information*' as suggested by the Examples Editor and NARDAC is acknowledged. This phrasing is commonly used in conditions and options in the Toolkit so this is a different issue to that of the phrase '*single string*'. ORDAC is open to having this removed from the wording on the basis that sources of information are more relevant to the broader element Place: name of place or Corporate Body: name of corporate body and that the decision there has already been made prior to reaching the proposed option.

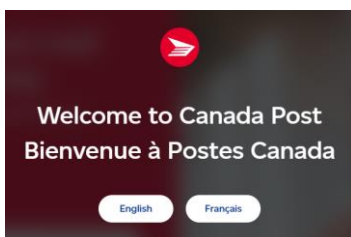
Note 7

See discussion above under Note 4.

Note 8

ORDAC supports the inclusion of examples both for the proposed new options and, if deemed useful, for options relating to parallel language choices to contrast with these.

NARDAC's example *Postes Canada Post* seems to be an example of when a word is intended to be read twice: *Postes Canada vs Canada Post*. A brief look at the [official website](#) suggests that this is in fact a situation of parallel language names as the names are clearly separated in statements about itself:



Welcome to the new Canada Post website. W --> from the English version

Bienvenue sur le nouveau site Web de Postes Canada. No --> from the French version

By contrast, the website for [Tātaki Auckland Unlimited](#) clearly indicates that the name is intended to be treated as a single string:



ORDAC would like to see examples included that are not ambiguous as this situation is already unfamiliar to some language communities and as acknowledged above in Note 3 may be difficult for practitioners from some descriptive communities to accurately identify.

Note 9

See discussion above under Note 1.

Note 10

ORDAC did not intend to debate the definition of the entity Place, however we would flag that in many cultures geographical features such as rivers and mountains would generally be considered to fit the definition of "a given extent of place". Place in an indigenous context is often closely related to other attributes more akin to Agent though these do not fit with the RDA definition of that entity. Many of these other attributes are not relevant to resource description, and ORDAC hopes to do further work in the future to determine what if any such relationships exist for RSC to consider for inclusion.

Further examples taken from the New Zealand Gazetteer which relate to inhabited places include:

- Riverton/Aparima - town <https://gazetteer.linz.govt.nz/place/7427>
- Aoraki/Mount Cook - town <https://gazetteer.linz.govt.nz/place/7298>

Note 11

See comments at Notes 3 and 4.

In terms of NARDAC and the Examples Editor's rewording ORDAC is open to this suggestion. Unlike with Corporate Body, in this case the name of Place will be a repetition in some form (see new examples at note 10) so the rewording of the condition is not problematic.

Note 12

ORDAC is happy to have other examples that are known to be in use as single values. The discussion of whether a lake constitutes an RDA Place still needs to be had; ORDAC feels that it should be but is open to broader discussion on this point. The decision needs to be made prior to such examples being included in the Toolkit; however it is otherwise a separate matter to whether the options can be added to the Toolkit.

Note 13

ORDAC acknowledges the CCC feedback included in the NARDAC response, but does not feel this is directly relevant to the proposal itself. When recording values of Corporate Body: preferred name of corporate body and Place: preferred name of place, the impact of adding these options is low and that was ORDAC's view on releasing the proposal.

The selection of access points to designate authorised or variant access point forms is dependent on policies and guidance relating to the relevant elements (e.g. Corporate Body: variant access point for corporate body) and likely also for the guidance around inclusion in the relevant vocabulary encoding scheme (e.g. Library of Congress Name Authority File) since the issue raised is in relation to providing a useful variant when describing the corporate body. These are certainly potential impacts of this proposal but these are not directly related to whether or not the options themselves are relevant to the RDA elements Corporate Body: preferred name of corporate body and Place: preferred name of place.

With respect to the hypothetical example given, this variation would not be useful in the Aotearoa New Zealand community, no-one would ever reverse the name in this way any more than we would consider "Steering Committee, RDA" a likely variant of "RDA Steering Committee". Of course, such a variant value could be included in a metadata description set if it was deemed useful to the specific descriptive community creating the description.

We do see that providing a different option set around selecting a preferred form of name could certainly have impacts on the base form of an access point, but the impacts are all dependent on choices made by descriptive communities. If these options are never applied by those contributing to a given vocabulary encoding scheme, there is no issue at all. If they are sometimes applied, there is the possibility of guidance for that community which explains when a value is not a valid choice as the base form of the authorised access point element.

While this may be a change in thinking for policy writers, ORDAC's view is that if a corporate body is known by a name which incorporates multiple languages, and is understood to use that form of name intentionally, then that is valid as a preferred form of name and that value is then equally valid for use as the base form of an authorised access point. This would be consistent with RDA's focus as an international applicable standard, allowing descriptive communities the flexibility to select the values which are most appropriate to their end-users and broader communities.