

**To:** Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA  
**From:** Kathy Glennan, ALA Representative to the JSC  
**Subject:** Revision of RDA 3.5.3 (Dimensions of still images)

ALA thanks CCC for developing this proposal to provide better guidance on recording dimensions of still images. While we agree that these instructions need clarification and can benefit from additions based on the instructions for cartographic materials, we believe that more work is needed to bring the instructions in line with RDA principles and to provide greater clarity and specificity. Therefore, we do not support the proposal in its current form.

ALA, in consultation with the U.S. art and rare book cataloguing communities, would be willing to prepare a complete rewriting of this instruction for the JSC to consider, following a somewhat different path than the current CCC proposal. Given the scope and complexity of the changes we envision, it was not possible to provide a complete counter-proposal as part of this response.

### *Summary of concerns*

- Recording dimensions: It is more consistent with RDA principles to record the dimensions of the carrier, rather than the content. This is how dimensions of still images were recorded in AACR2; we are unsure why RDA has taken a different approach. ALA recommends recording the dimensions of the sheet in all cases, and allowing for the recording of the dimensions of the content as an optional addition.
- Identifying what is being measured: Because there are a variety of possibilities for what is being measured, this should be identified in most cases.
- Defining what is measured for sheets: The parenthetical “exclusive of any frame or mounting” appears in CCC’s revised 3.5.3.5 (currently RDA 3.5.3.3). We believe this should be mentioned either as part of the definition of sheet at the beginning of 3.5.3, or it should be added to each instruction that includes measuring sheets.
- Missing instructions: ALA would like to see instructions for still images that have non-removable mats, frames or other obstructions. We also believe RDA would benefit from the addition of specific instructions for measuring non-circular non-rectangular shapes, based on *DCRM(G): Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Graphics)*, available through links at: [rbms.info/dcrm/dcrmg/index.html](http://rbms.info/dcrm/dcrmg/index.html)

### *Specific comments on the proposal*

- Identifying what is measured: If the JSC wishes to proceed with the CCC proposal as written, ALA recommends adding clear instructions about providing a term identifying what is being measured. This affects every instruction in 3.5.3, along with all of the examples.
- Proposed addition of the 2<sup>nd</sup> alternative in 3.5.3.2: This alternative covers the same

information as the proposed final paragraph, albeit in more detail. We believe this instruction should only appear once.

- Addition of exceptions to 3.5.3.2, where the container would be measured instead of the image: ALA believes that the following categories of still images should always have dimensions recorded for their carriers, and not the pictorial area: unique items (e.g., drawings, paintings, etc.); resources housed in a container (e.g., albums, sketchbooks, portfolios, etc.); and photographic resources whose size is standardized in the trade (e.g., 8 × 10 in. prints). In these cases, it would not be necessary to give explicit identification of what is being measured.
- Measuring the folded sheet (proposed 3.5.3.6): ALA does not agree with the CCC proposal, which states that the dimensions of the image and the folded sheet should be recorded. Instead, we believe that either the dimensions of the folded and unfolded sheet should be provided, or that all three separate dimensions should be recorded: the pictorial area, the full sheet, and the sheet when folded.

#### *Area for future consideration*

- Evaluate individual instructions to see if they should be considered options (such as the paragraph in 3.5.3.2 that begins “If appropriate”) or exceptions (such as the paragraph in 3.5.3.4 that begins “In some cases”). Because these instructions in 3.5.3 are modeled on instructions elsewhere in Chapter 3, this requires a comprehensive review.