

EACWG 2009 Charge

CHARGE, for approval by SAA Council, January 2009 Society of American Archivists Standards Committee: Technical Subcommittee on Descriptive Standards Working Group on Encoded Archival Context

Purpose

The Working Group on Encoded Archival Context (EACWG) has long-term responsibility for the oversight of the continued intellectual and technical development of Encoded Archival Context (EAC). EAC is an umbrella term for a group of standards based on Extensible Markup Language (XML) for the description of various contexts relevant to archival description. The EAC standards are intended as a complementary standard to Encoded Archival Description (EAD). They will allow for a more effective and discrete method to record, exchange, and aggregate information relating to the contextual components that affect archival records and manuscript collections. These standard currently include EAC-CPF (Encoded Archival Context – Corporate bodies, Persons, and Families) and a proposed next standard EAC-F (Encoded Archival Context – Functions)

The EAC standards are based on international standards as produced by the International Council on Archives. EAC-CPF is based on International Standard for Archival Authority Record for Corporate Bodies, Persons, and Families (ISAAR (CPF)), Second edition (International Council of Archives, 2004). The prototype standard includes a schema expressed in Relax NG (RNG), and XML Schema Definition Language (XSD) and a Tag Library. The current Beta version of EAC-CPF was developed from a review of the original beta DTD (Document Type Definition) standard created in 2004. The international working group, with funding from the Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation as well as institutional support from the National Library of Australia and OCLC/RLG Programs, is currently conducting this work. EAC is intended to facilitate the digital representation and communication of archival contextual information in a platform-independent form. The immediate responsibility of the EACWG is the release of the schema EAC-CPF for review by the international archival community. Following that work, the EACWG will begin its review of the International Standard for Describing Functions (ISDF) (International Council of

Archives, 2004), to develop a Beta version and publish a “full” version. Other contextual components will be explored for potential schemas in the future. The Working Group will report to the chair of the Technical Subcommittee on Descriptive Standards of the Standards Committee, and will submit any draft EAC standards for endorsement as SAA-sanctioned standards using the processes outlined in SAA’s Council Handbook

To fulfill its mission as described above, the Working Group is specifically charged with:

- developing and reviewing the data model based on the ICA descriptive standards ISAAR (CPF) and ISDF
- evaluating and selecting the appropriate XML schema representation or representations
- testing and evaluating the schema in consultation with the international archival community
- developing Tag Libraries and related documentation
- developing funding proposals to provide support for design and development meetings

Membership

The Working Group members will include SAA members and representatives from other archival organization and institutions. The members will be internationally representative. The Working Group chair will recommend members for approval by the TSDS chair.

Length of Charge

The Working Group will serve three years, but may be renewed. If renewed, a new chair will be appointed from the current membership of the Working Group.

Communication

The Working Group will carry out its charge primarily via electronic mail, regular mail, and conference calls. It will meet at the Annual Conference, and, with extramural funding, will meet as necessary.