Overview of the Feedback Received from the Archival Community

Kat Timms, Corresponding EGAD Member
Library and Archives Canada

Rome, Italy
26 October 2017
Presentation Overview

1. Community consultation
2. Organizing and analyzing the results
3. Themes, topics, and issues raised:
   a) General feedback
   b) Feedback on RiC-CM entities
   c) Feedback on RiC-CM properties
   d) Feedback on RiC-CM relations

Conclusions and next steps
Community Consultation on RiC-CM

- September 2016 – January 2017
- 62 individuals, groups or institutions responded
- Representing 19 countries and 2 international organizations
- Totalling hundreds of pages of comments on many aspects of the model
“The good news is we’re getting a lot of feedback.
The bad news is we’re getting a lot of feedback.”
Geographic Origin of Commenters

- Australia
- Austria
- Belgium
- Brazil
- Canada
- Croatia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- International Organizations
- Italy
- Japan
- The Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Poland
- Spain
- Switzerland
- United Kingdom
Organizing and Analyzing the Feedback: Phase 1

- Comments first grouped by submitter (individual, organization)
- Comments were then broken down and organized by theme/subject

**Result:**
- six tables (260+ pages) of 1000+ distinctly numbered comments (verbatim)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1 Broad comments by subject</th>
<th>Table 4 RiC-CM’s Properties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 2 RiC-CM’s Introduction</td>
<td>Table 5 RiC-CM’s Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 3 RiC-CM’s Entities</td>
<td>Table 6 RiC-CM’s Appendices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For Example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment #</th>
<th>Commenter</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Comments Submitted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-152</td>
<td>35- Fictitious Organization</td>
<td>Recommend re-using existing ontologies wherever appropriate</td>
<td>The basis of RiC-O and its relation to RiC-CM is unclear. Will RiC-O be based on existing standards and ontologies (e.g. ISO, CIDOC-CRM, PROV-O, PREMIS)? While in some cases it might be appropriate to create new ontologies for a domain, linked data best practices support reusing existing vocabularies wherever possible. What will EGAD’s approach be?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table #1, Comment #152

Fictitious Organization’s original (fictitious) comment
Organizing and Analyzing the Feedback: Phase 2

- To support further development work and the proposed 'Digest' strategy (to respond to the community's feedback publicly on the ICA-EGAD-RiC listserv)

- Consolidation of comments by summarizing them

Result:

- 55-page thematically-organized summary of the comments (paraphrased and reduced, according to my own assessment of the original comments)
Section 1, General Issues; 1.2 Modelling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[Table row]</th>
<th>[Summary of issue]</th>
<th>Comment #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.2.6</td>
<td>RiC does not explicitly mention other semantic models (e.g. PROV-O). Re-using portions of existing ontologies is encouraged, wherever possible, for reasons of economy (not re-inventing the wheel) as well as fostering interoperability with the rest of the semantic web community. It is unclear if RiC took existing ontologies or models into account. What RiC-O will comprise is unclear, as is its relation to RiC-CM. Lacking information on RiC-O restricts the ability to comment meaningfully on RiC-CM.</td>
<td>1-150, 1-151, 1-152, 1-153, 1-154, 1-155, 1-156, 1-157, 1-158, 1-159, 1-160, 1-161, 1-162, 1-261</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
General Feedback on RiC-CM

Click to edit Master subtitle style
General Feedback on RiC-CM

- **Foundation**: e.g. a metadata schema, conceptual model, or both?

- **Scope & audience**: e.g. includes custodial management? Includes active records / records managers? Applicable to private papers?

- **Underlying principles**: Full range of relevant principles not identified? Principles that were identified were not fully explained?
More General Feedback...

- **Modelling**: e.g. re-use of existing ontologies? Relation to other standards? Modelling archival description itself? Rationale for design decisions like entity vs. property?

- **Users & their needs**: e.g. participatory description? Does RiC improve service to users?

- **Digital records**: Too little or too much?

- **Interoperability**: Stronger connection to records management?
Even More General Feedback...

- **Presentation**: e.g. incompleteness, terminology problems, lacking element obligations
- **Transitioning to RiC**: e.g. feasibility, tools, training, crosswalks
- **Development process**: e.g. transparency, membership, inadequate communication, timelines, translation
General Issues of Highest Concern

- **Modelling** (e.g. re-use of existing ontologies and relation to other standards? Rationale for design decisions? Modelling descriptions themselves?) (77)

- **Presentation** (Ineffective; incomplete; unclear) (56)
Feedback on RiC-CM Entities

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General Feedback on RiC Entities

- **Choice of Entities**: suggestions for changing some entities to properties, or vice versa
  - To entities: e.g. Event/Relation, Name, Classification, Access Conditions
  - To properties: e.g. Occupation, Position, Documentary Form
Suggestions for New RiC Entities

- Relations and Events
- Name
- Rights, Conditions of Access, Conditions of Use
- Differentiating Content from Carrier and Physical Storage/Containers (Record-entities)
- Others: Performance Role, Act, Authority Records, Scope and Content, Accessions
Classifying or Organizing RiC Entities

- Top entity “Thing”
- Primary and secondary entities:
  - Primary:
    - Record entities (Record, Record Set, Record Component)
    - Business/Functional entities (Function, Activity, Mandate)
    - Agent
    - Place
  - Secondary:
    - Concept/Thing
Record-related Entities

• **Record**: a single item

• **Record Component**: the parts that make up a Record

• **Record Set**: the groups or aggregations of which a Record may be a member

• **Documentary Form**: a particular format of a Record
Feedback on Record-related Entities

- Distinctions between Record, Record Component, Record Set not always clear:
  - Compound Record vs. Record Set
  - Complex layers in the digital context: e.g. is a geo-dataset a Record, a Record Component (part of a map view), or a Record Set?
  - Alternative modelling proposed by some: have a single ‘Record’ entity, whether an aggregation or not

- Documentary Form: suggestion to model as a property instead
Record Entities: Main Issues Raised

- Boundaries between Record, Record Component and Record Set are unclear
- Boundaries between Record and Record Component are unclear
- Boundaries between Record Set and compound Record are unclear
- Have a single Record entity, whether aggregate or item
- Model Documentary Form as a property instead

Issues with definition of Record
- Issues with definition of Record Component
- Issues with definition of Record Set
- Issues with definition of Documentary Form
Agent-related Entities

**Agent:**
- includes these types:
  - Persons
  - Groups: corporate bodies, families
  - Delegate-Agents: software, robots, probes
- allows definition of identity types:
  - Given
  - Assumed
- has two related entities:
  - **Occupation**: profession or trade
  - **Position**: role within a corporate body
Feedback on Agent-related Entities

- **Agent:**
  - Model sub-entities for types of agents (person, group, corporate body) for appropriate application of properties

- **Occupation/Position:**
  - Some overlap with other business entities: distinctions not entirely clear
  - Too much focus on a business context
  - Be properties of Agent instead of entities
Agent-related Entities: Main Issues Raised

- Agent modelling issues, including need for sub-classes
- Distinction between Agent, Occupation, Position and various business entities unclear
- Distinction between Occupation and Position unclear
- Occupation and Position should be properties of Agent
- Position could be a property of Occupation
- Position and Occupation: disproportionate focus on business context
- Issues with definition of Agent
- Issues with definition of Occupation
- Issues with definition of Position
Business Entities

**Function**: an Agent’s broad goals or purposes

**Activity**: actions performed by an Agent in fulfilment of functions

**Function (Abstract)**: generic functions

**Mandate**: authority or rules that define the Functions and Activities of Agents
Feedback on Business Entities

- **Modelling**: overlap/redundancy
- **Application concerns**: practical and consistent way to distinguish between these entities?
- **Functional provenance**: in or out of scope?
- **Mandate**: practical to use?
Business Entities: Main Issues Raised

- Modelling issues: overlap across business entities, distinctions between them unclear
- What about functional provenance like in ISDF?
- Utility of including Function (Abstract)?
- Is Activity modelled as abstract or concrete?
- Should Mandate be modelled as subordiane to Agent?
Entities Shared with Others: Date, Place, Concept/Thing

**Date:**
- chronological information
- describing temporal contexts of other entities

**Place:**
- geographic or administrative points or areas
- describing spatial contexts of other entities

**Concept/Thing:**
- topics that may be the subject of other entities
- e.g., abstract ideas, material things, events
Feedback on Date, Place, Concept/Thing

• Date
  • Modelling: property versus entity, or both?
  • Why is date currently only a property of relations?

• Place
  • Jurisdiction and geographic place are dissimilar
  • What about when a Place could also be an Agent (e.g. an archival repository)?

• Concept/Thing
  • Not clearly defined, potential overlap with other entities
  • Danger of being an over-used catch-all when implemented?
Date, Place, Concept/Thing: Main Issues Raised

- Question modelling Date as an entity vs. as a property
- Date should be modelled with more detail and precision
- Issues with definition of Date
- Requests for implementation guidance for Date
- Question modelling Place as an entity vs. as a property
- Issues with definition of Place
- Rationale for including Concept/Thing as an entity?
- Why not model Concept/Thing as a top-level entity?
- Implementation concern with Concept/Thing as "catch-all"
Other shared properties of relations might be needed, for example:

- who made the statement
- with what degree of certainty
- referring to which source(s)
- when
- at which place
- reflecting which order/sequence
- etc.
Feedback on RiC-CM Properties

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RiC-CM Properties: Overview

- Shared Properties for all Entities (4)
- Properties
  - of Record (17)
  - of Record Component (*same as for Record*) (17)
  - of Record Set (7)
  - Summarizing the Members of a Record Set (3)
  - Shared by all Member Records of a Record Set (9)
  - of Agent (10)
RiC-CM Properties: Overview Continued...

• Properties of
  • Occupation, Position, Function, Function (Abstract), Activity, Mandate, Documentary Form (3 each)
  • of Date (2)
  • of Place (3)
  • of Concept/Thing (2)

• Shared Properties of a Relation (2)
General Feedback on Properties

- **Indicating obligation** (mandatory, optional)
- **Indicating repeatability**
- **Grouping like properties that can apply to multiple entities** (e.g. type, description, history)
- **Data types** (‘text’, ‘controlled term’)
Sample of Suggestions for New Properties

· Record:
  · Life cycle / archival management (e.g. appraisal; disposal; registration)

· Agent:
  · other demographic characteristics (e.g. ethnicity; religious affiliation; race; cultural context; sexual orientation)

· Relation
  · Type (e.g. contextual; associative; structural; relation between Records; relation between Agents)
Sample Issue: Properties for Digital Records

• Incompleteness:
  • RiC is not sufficiently nuanced/detailed for digital records and recordkeeping

• Need:
  • To clarify some existing RiC properties for digital Records
  • More properties for describing digital Records and their components
  • Properties for describing systems contexts and dependencies
Sample Issue: Agent Identity and Gender

- Agent (Type=Person)
  - Identity Type
    - Archivist able to determine true vs. fictitious?
  - Gender
    - Complexity missing in RiC
    - Archivist has authority to ascertain gender?
    - Why only gender and not also other characteristics?
    - Repeatable, if it changes over time?
Feedback on RiC-CM Relations

Example:
Record was created by Agent / Agent created Record
Main Issues Raised (1)

- Past/present tense expression is problematic
- Grouping or classifying relations by types could help clarify and streamline them
- Current presentation obscures semantically distinct relations
- Inverse presentation: unclear and/or unnecessary?
- Presentation as a table is not dynamic enough
- Missing definitions and examples impedes understanding
- List is too comprehensive, yet still incomplete
- Must all relations be binary? E.g. tri-, quad-, n-ary
- Add relations for recordkeeping actions (events) to support interoperability
- Re-use of relations from existing ontologies?
- How will relations between entities be implemented?
- Ensuring persistence of relations over time?
Main Issues Raised (2)

- Past/present tense expression is problematic
- Grouping or classifying relations by types could help clarify and streamline them
- Current presentation obscures semantically distinct relations
- Inverse properties: unclear and/or unnecessary?
- Presentation as a table is not dynamic enough
- Missing definitions and examples impedes understanding
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- Must all relations be binary? E.g. tri-, quad-, n-ary
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- Re-use of relations from existing ontologies?
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- Ensuring persistence of relations over time?
Main Messages from Main Issues

• RIC should contain key relations presented in an efficient way

• Ways to group or cluster relations

• Strategy for managing the time-bound nature of relations
Sample of Specific Issues about RiC Relations

- Digital records:
  - Relating originals with copies (scans) and renditions (made for preservation or access purposes)

- Relation types – e.g. ‘isAssociatedWith’:
  - Too basic to be meaningful?
  - Model as ‘top’ relation, with all others being specializations (sub-relations)?
Conclusions and Next Steps
What Does all of this Feedback Indicate?

• The international archival community:
  • Is interested in RiC-CM’s development and generally supports it
  • Invested time and energy to provide detailed, insightful and useful feedback, which will help guide improvements for the next draft
  • Wants a high-quality, useful, implementable product
  • Wants to better understand the development process and have ongoing opportunities to contribute or provide comments
Next Steps

• Addressing the community’s feedback
  • Potential strategy: thematic digest of issues with updates to the ICA-EGAD-RiC list-serv
    • Opportunity for ongoing community feedback and dialog
  • Strategy update in late 2017 / early 2018
  • New version of RiC-CM perhaps by early 2018
Thank you!

Draft RiC-CM available at:
http://www.ica.org/egad-ric-conceptual-model

Comments welcome at:
egad@ica.org

Click to edit Master subtitle style
My contact information:
katherine.timms@canada.ca