

## Minutes of the ONIX for Books: International Steering Committee

1400-1530 Wednesday 6 October 2010 Frankfurt Book Fair, Room Concord, Hall 4

### Present

Luc Audrain, Hachette Livre

Véronique Backert, Dilicom

Graham Bell, EDItEUR

Mark Bide, EDItEUR

Angela Bole, BISG

Francis Cave, EDItEUR

Laurent Dervieu, Electre

Tim Devenport, EDItEUR

Fride Fosseng, Norwegian Book Database

Noah Genner, BookNet Canada

Brian Green, International ISBN Agency

Stella Griffiths, EDItEUR

Seiichi Higuchi, Japan Book Publishers Assn

Uwe Janssen, German ONIX Group (KNV)

Peter Kilborn, BIC

Claudia Kong, China Nat'l Publ'ns Import & Export  
(Grp) Corp

Scott Lubeck, BISG

Giulia Marangoni, AIE

Paola Mazzucchi, AIE

Pipa Neumann, De Gruyter

Tuula Pelkonen-Tiri, Kirjavalitys

Jesús Peraita, DILVE

Simonetta Pillon, Informazioni Editoriali

Bruce Powell, Australian Publishers Association

Kengo Sakamoto, Maruzen

Patrick Steenvoorden, Centraal Boekhuis

Aija Vahtola, National Library of Finland

Nicole van Vijhe, Centraal Boekhuis

Anita Wilson, De Gruyter

Wu Xin, China Nat'l Publ'ns Import & Export (Grp) Corp

Zhao Dali, China Nat'l Publ'ns Import & Export (Grp) Corp

(Claudia Kong, Wu Xin and Zhao Dhali attended as observers)

### 1. Adoption of revised Terms of Reference for ONIX for Books International Steering Committee

The revised Terms of Reference for the ONIX for Books International Steering Committee were **adopted unanimously by those present**.

### 2. Appointment of new chair for ONIX for Books International Steering Committee

Noah Genner (BookNet Canada; Canadian National ONIX Group) had been nominated as Chair and had agreed to act as Chairman if elected. Noah was **appointed unanimously by those present**.

### 3. Approval of new National Group(s)

Japan (represented by the Japanese Publishers Organisation) was approved as a National Group of the International Steering Committee.

Three representatives from China were welcomed to the meeting as observers, in the expectation that China may soon form a National Group.

### 4. Minutes of telephone conference held on 11 June 2010 and matters arising

The minutes were accepted by the Steering Committee as an accurate record of the meeting. The Committee was updated on progress against the agreed actions from the meeting as follows:

- **National Groups were reminded to provide copies of their national guidelines to EDItEUR** in order that EDItEUR could use them to initiate work on a set of International Best Practice Guidelines.
- Although up to now other priorities had prevented work on simplifying ONIX for smaller participants, it was expected that work on this strand of work would start in the course of the next three months.
- Francis Cave reminded the Committee members that more samples of ONIX 3.0 messages were needed urgently to support the testing programme for the enhanced schema development of ONIX. **National Groups were reminded to ask implementers in their territories to submit files urgently.**
- Jesús Peraita had circulated his paper on standard file naming for supporting resources, but no comments had been received. It was **agreed** that EDItEUR would circulate the proposals formally to the National Groups and ask specifically for comments. Following a review of any comments received and necessary amendments or follow up actions, **it was agreed that the approved document would be published on the EDItEUR website.**
- Both the International ISBN Agency and BISG had commissioned separate research projects into the assignment of appropriate identifiers to digital publications. The initial feedback based on information

from the International ISBN Agency survey is that more detailed guidelines including use cases and to assist in the definition of different products would be welcomed by all supply chain participants. It was hoped that this would enable a more consistent approach to be taken than had perhaps been the US experience up to now.

- **National Groups were requested to provide EDItEUR with information about cases of “non-compliant” ONIX messages** (e.g. messages that had been devised to “work around” any ONIX requirement, such as the requirement for unique identification of products, messages that misuse particular data elements, or messages that have been extended with non-standard data elements)
- Although the original expectation was that changes would be made in ONIX 3.0 to support names and titles in multiple scripts in 2011, it was reported that amendments in ONIX 2.1 were already in progress to support requirements arising in Japan. Graham Bell stated that it was indeed heartening that so few changes were needed to ONIX in order to support the requirements of the Japanese market. This was a testament to the original flexibility and robustness of the message definition.
- Graham Bell reported that the target was now the delivery of three code list revisions per year (if needed) as the new fast track process meant that face to face ratification was no longer required.

#### 5. **Proposals for ONIX for Books 3.0 Rev. 01**

A paper on this had already been circulated. It was **noted** that the proposed changes to the existing schema would impact any existing ONIX 3.0 implementations. One of the core proposals concerned sales rights and would introduce a more precise definition of ROW sales rights by facilitating a more well-structured sales right type thus making it easier to interpret (and less likely to be misunderstood) by the recipient. The current arrangements meant that recipients could only interpret “missing data” by making assumptions about what the sender intended. The new proposals would eradicate this option and would ensure predictability. **The change was approved.**

It was proposed that supply detail be repeatable and supplier be non-repeatable. This change was intended to correct an inconsistency between the schema and the documentation, but in Norway it had been reported that there was a use case that would conflict with this amendment. As no other national group had raised this, **it was agreed that the change be accepted in principle but that the Norwegian use case be further investigated urgently with a view to resolving the requirement.**

The proposal concerning the handling of related product composite provoked a lot of discussion. Graham explained that essentially the issue was whether it was appropriate for the approach taken to be purist (i.e. incorporating only identifiers into the Related Product elements) or to be pragmatic (additionally allow inclusion of some minimum attributes about related products). The latter would have the advantage that some global e-book distributors might be dissuaded from seeking solutions that would be outside ONIX. Francis Cave suggested that (as an alternative) it would be possible to provide for a minimal “related product record” to be sent within a message “package” but not embedded into the product record; this would have some advantages but would also involve greater complexity for sender and receiver. There was considerable, inconclusive, discussion on this proposal and ultimately a vote was called. On show of hands, the vote was tied and the chairman voted to support the pragmatic approach. It was noted that national groups could choose to implement the recommendation or not and also could cover treatment of this in their own national guidelines. **It was agreed to move ahead with exploring the pragmatic solution but that Francis’s proposal as a mechanism for dealing with some of the misgivings should be investigated further.**

**The other proposed changes and code list additions, being less controversial, were accepted without discussion.**

#### 6. **Proposals for ONIX for Books 2.1 Rev. 04 for Japan**

The proposals were acceptable to the key user group for which they were intended – Japan - and so the **proposals were endorsed by the International Steering Committee.** It was hoped that these changes might be a useful starting point for similar requirements that might emerge for China.

#### 7. **Guidelines on specification of markets and suppliers in ONIX 3.0**

A paper on this had already been circulated. The guidelines were **approved for publication** by the Committee.

## 8. Report on current ONIX for Books development work and future plans

### a) Significant developments from National Groups

It was reported that there had been small but significant steps taken in the implementation of ONIX 3.0. For example, Nielsen in the UK had reported that they had received the first live ONIX 3.0 feed from a publisher.

### b) International coherence

The need for international coherence was reiterated. It was estimated that perhaps 90% of national guidelines are identical but that nevertheless there was a keen awareness of the need to support local individuality where appropriate. Essentially, **the aim would be to avoid different interpretations** where this was unnecessary and to replace these with an agreed, consistent approach. This is increasingly important as the book trade (and thus the book metadata trade) becomes more and more international.

It was also **proposed and agreed** that EDItEUR would produce individual papers outlining normative guidelines to particular aspects of ONIX, in preference to hugely expanding the core documentation. The paper on markets and suppliers in ONIX 3 should be taken as a model of such an implementation guideline. National Groups should suggest topics for such guidelines to Graham Bell, indicating those parts of the ONIX 3 message that implementers find most problematic.

### c) Project in Japan, interest from China, ePub

Progress on these had been reported elsewhere.

## 9. Any other business

There was no other business.

## 10. Next meeting

The next face-to-face meeting would be on Tuesday 12 April 2011, 14:00 to 15:30, London Book Fair, room location to be confirmed. However, **it was agreed that an interim telephone conference would be arranged before the end of the year.**