

Executive Director's Report

Report to members – London Book Fair 2016

1 Overview and highlights

The second half of my second year as Executive director has been marred by some delays in implementing the new ISBN management agreement, but other aspects of the work have proceeded reasonably smoothly. Over the period since the Frankfurt Book Fair:

- We have welcomed a number of key new EDItEUR members (in particular Firebrand and Schilling, and Bonnier Group has joined Hachette Livre as our first two International members). Prospects for further new members over the next six months are good, but as expected, merger and acquisition activity has slightly reduced the pool of potential members;
- I am pleased to say that we recruited Suzanne Rozario as the new administrator for EDItEUR in February, and she will also work with the ISNI and ISTC Agencies. Unfortunately, Alex Ingram has resigned as Standards Editor and will leave EDItEUR in mid-June;
- The new International ISBN Agency management agreement has been put in place, though with some delays. These has been resolved, and the staff time spent on ISBN activities is increasing;
- Proposed revisions of both ONIX for Books and *Thema* – versions 3.0.3 and 1.2 respectively – have been prepared, and are expected to be ratified by the relevant International Steering Committees during the London Book Fair and released in late April or early May;
- The ONIX training programme has been extended to cover more cities in North America, with 7 successful training days delivered via BISG (and another due at the time of BEA in Chicago).
- Piloting of the revised ONIX-PC message is under way with four major serials stakeholders. The extensions to ONIX-PC allow it to cover open access journal information;
- Initial planning for the 38th International Supply Chain Seminar in Frankfurt 2016 has begun;
- The financial position of EDItEUR is stable.

2 Membership

Since the Frankfurt Book Fair, EDItEUR has recruited two new member IT vendors who provide support for ONIX within their publishing management systems: Denmark-based Schilling AS and Firebrand Technologies Inc. In addition, previous member Bonnier Group has become the second International Member (after Hachette Livre), and the Magyar Books in Print agency has agreed to become an associate member – it uses *Thema* in its new Hungarian books-in-print database.

At the time of the last meeting, 2015-year fees from a couple of members were still outstanding. In the event, the most significant of these was paid alongside that member's 2016 fees. From the 2015 membership year, the ISNI and ISTC International Agencies also became members, alongside their fellow ISO agencies for ISSN, DOI and ISBN.

Retention of members for 2016 has been acceptable, with just two members notifying us of resignation – sadly, these are long-standing members Copyright Clearance Centre and Kinokuniya. M&A activity has eliminated one membership prospect with which discussions were well-advanced (Perseus), though our

relationship with the merged Springer Nature and Macmillan companies will also have to be resolved for 2017.

Because of the resignation of Kinokuniya, we now have only a single member in Japan, despite the importance of ONIX in the book supply chain there, and this should be an area of focus for future member recruitment. The other geographical area for significant recruitment effort must be Iberia and South America, with interest in EDItEUR's standards picking up particularly in Portugal and Brazil. It is also my intention to promote the International tier of membership to further global organisations.

3 Board news

Tom West was elected treasurer of EDItEUR in April 2014. This means that at its forthcoming meeting, the Board must *either* confirm reappointment of the treasurer for a further two year term (as would normally be the case), *or* select a new treasurer.

The terms of the other members of the executive committee – chair Jesús Peraita and deputy chair Mark Kuyper – continue until April 2017.

The other upcoming change to the board will be the retirement in late 2016 of Olav Stokkmo of IFRRO: it is expected that Olav's replacement at IFRRO will join the Board at its Frankfurt meeting or soon thereafter.

I continue to seek Board-level representation from the Asia-Pacific region, but this has not so far been successful.

4 Standards development

4.1 ONIX for Books

Laurent Dervieu of Electre chaired the ONIX International Steering Committee at the Frankfurt Fair in October, and will again chair the Committee's meeting in London on the day following the meeting of the Board.

At the Frankfurt meeting, the Steering Committee was not able to discuss the main issue – a revision of ONIX 3.0 with some complex technical aspects – in suitable depth, and a Technical Working Group was convened to study the proposals for revision in detail and provide a recommendation for ONIX 3.0.3 to the Committee at its meeting in London. The Working Group, comprising representatives from seven countries who attended weekly conference calls from December into March, worked well, and the Working Group has provided a carefully considered report for the Steering Committee and the ONIX National Groups. It recommends a dozen fully backward-compatible additions to ONIX 3.0 aimed at improving discoverability and meeting a couple of new external requirements for German tax laws and tracking of research funding. Draft documentation and XML files for the revision have been completed at EDItEUR.

At its London meeting, the Steering Committee will be asked to ratify the proposals of the Working Group. With that ratification, the revised ONIX 3.0.3 should be published by mid-May. At the same time, an online multilingual codelist browser will be released, modelled on the heavily-used *Thema* browser. This generation of browser is intended to give every codelist and code a persistent URI, so that ONIX codelist values can be used in linked data applications.

Laurent's 3-year term as Chair of the Steering Committee is coming to an end, and a new chair will be elected at the Steering Committee's Frankfurt 2016 meeting.

A significant effort has been put into working with BIC and BISG committees on revision of their respective metadata certification schemes, which will most likely introduce future accreditation requirements for the use of ONIX 3.0. This is intended to provide a further spur to ONIX 3.0 adoption in those countries.

The ONIX training programme has been extended this year – particularly with the expansion from 3 days to 7 days of face-to-face training with BISG across three cities. There is one more 2016 date in Chicago in May, and Mark Kuyper and I have already explored further expansion in early 2017. Regular training has also continued in association with BIC.

At the time of the last meeting of the Board, EDItEUR had licensed a series of online training modules developed by Alex Ingram to IPG (UK). Ongoing feedback from this has been good, and IPG reported that usage has exceeded their expectations, with over 1000 module downloads in the period October to January from more than 100 different IPG member publishers. EDItEUR was awarded the IPG's [Services to Independent Publishers Award](#) in March, for this and our other standards support work.

The same training modules have now also been licensed to the Australian Publishers Association, and are available for licensing by other EDItEUR members.

A BISG working group led by EDItEUR has completed its initial work on mapping between ONIX and schema.org metadata. The publication of this work will (mostly) take the form of a joint BISG/EDItEUR tutorial on how to embed schema.org metadata within web pages that describe books, and it is due for publication within the next couple of months. It is likely that a second phase to this work will begin in the latter half of 2016.

4.2 Thema

Howard Willows of Nielsen chaired the *Thema* International Steering Committee meeting in Frankfurt in October, and he will chair the London meeting on the day following the meeting of the Board.

The Frankfurt meeting decided that a back-compatible version 1.2 revision should be planned for spring 2016, and a Technical Working Group was convened to consider a large number of proposals for new subject categories. The Working Group, led by Alex Ingram and with representatives from six countries, delivered its recommendations as planned, and also raised a number of proposals that should be revisited when a future *Thema* version 2.0 is considered (without the need for back-compatibility). Following a technical review by EDItEUR and Nielsen, the draft version 1.2, which includes around 150 new subject categories and qualifiers, can be viewed online at <http://editeur.dyndns.org/thema19>, and if ratified, the new version should be published by mid-May.

Version 1.2 will also include some new national extensions, in particular from the US and Chinese *Thema* National Groups.

No new translations of *Thema* have been made available in the past six months, but Hungarian, Chinese, Portuguese, Turkish and Greek plus a completed Italian are all awaiting release by their translators. The Spanish translation has been greatly improved and made available on the *Thema* online browser and via FGEE. A partial Czech translation is underway. Server work for enabling localised translations (eg Mexican Spanish, Canadian French) has also been completed.

There was some significant publicity for *Thema* in December, with an article in the Bookseller Magazine's *FutureBook Conference* Supplement which was sponsored by BIC (see http://www.bic.org.uk/files/GB%27s_Bookseller_Thema_article.pdf). And an extension of the face-to-face training options to cover *Thema* is planned so that this can be offered at the same time as ONIX training.

4.3 ICEDIS and ONIX for subscription products

The ICEDIS committee – EDItEUR's special interest group for the serials supply chain – will hold its meeting in Bournemouth, England during the Book Fair (there is an unfortunate clash of dates that means the UKSG Conference and London Book Fair take place at the same time this year).

Enhancements to the ONIX-PC format have been the top priority for the ICEDIS community and for EDItEUR. The first part of that is the conduct of pilot exchanges of the new ONIX-PC version 1.2 which provides a range of 'open access' features, and the second is encouragement of wider implementation and take-up in time for subscription year 2017 product and price exchanges this summer. Harrassowitz, John Wiley, Springer Nature and LM Info are all piloting 1.2, and Ingenta (formerly Publishing Technology) has committed to support ONIX-PC in its widely-used subscription support system (Elsevier and CUP will benefit directly from this).

The Frankfurt meeting of ICEDIS was the last co-chaired by Dan Heffernan of Advantage, and the Committee elected Laurie Kaplan of Proquest as its new co-Chair. The upcoming meeting will seek a replacement for the other co-chair, Shilo de Vries of Taylor and Francis.

4.4 ONIX-PL

There has been a limited amount of work on ONIX-PL, EDItEUR's specialised XML licence expression format. Consultant David Martin has worked on revision of an existing ONIX-PL expression of a Creative Commons CC-By licence and extension of the library of expressions to other CC licenses. Consultant Francis Cave has also worked on a minor update to the OPLE ONIX-PL expression editing application. This work is almost complete and ready for publication, along with a very minor update of the ONIX-PL controlled vocabulary. However, concerted work with this standard is dependent on project funding, and a project mooted last year by JISC has not materialised.

4.5 ONIX for RROs

While this remains in limited specialised use, there have been no requests for updates to the controlled vocabulary in the last few months.

4.6 EDItX

A small update to the EDItX Sales Reporting message planned for January, plus an equivalent minor change in the EDItX Inventory Reporting message, was put on hold since it was in part linked to the ONIX 3.0.3 updates. Work on this, and an update of the EDItX documentation for sales and inventory reporting messages will be resumed over the next period.

5 Identifier Agencies and other standards activity

5.1 International ISBN Agency

This has been the second six months of the new ISBN Agency management agreement. Although there have been some delays in implementing the new arrangements, with the recruitment of Suzanne Rozario,

this is now satisfactory, and IIA-dedicated staff has are now able to concentrate fully on the identifier agency management.

Stella Griffiths' work on revision of the ISO standard and the associated user manual has continued, and the Draft International Standard is currently subject to an ISO ballot. This is one of the final stages prior to publication of the revised standard. Stella is the current chair of ISO TC46/SC9 (the subcommittee that covers ISBN, ISSN, ISTC, ISMN, ISRC, DOI), and has been busy preparing for the ISO TC46 Plenary meetings in Wellington, New Zealand and advance planning for the ISBN AGM in Vienna, Austria in September.

5.2 ISNI International Agency

EDItEUR provides a limited secretariat service to the International ISNI Agency. The service agreement is due for renewal in July, for a further 12 months.

There have been significant changes to the ISNI-IA over the past period, with a new membership and Registration Agency contract coming into force, and the withdrawal of Bowker as a Registration Agency. EDItEUR has provided administrative support for the re-contracting of all Members and Registration Agencies, and for a rebudgeting exercise.

5.3 International ISTC Agency

EDItEUR provides a limited secretariat service to the International ISTC Agency. The future of the ISTC standard and of the Agency itself is at a critical point: EDItEUR will provide continued support while there remains a realistic prospect of continuity, but will not agree a renewal unless it can expect to receive payment for its services. The internal review of the future of the standard reported last period was – at the request of ISO – turned into a proposal for a revision of the standard, and the Agency submitted this to the ISO TC46/SC9 Secretariat in January.

5.4 Linked Content Coalition

EDItEUR provides a limited secretariat service to the Linked Content Coalition (currently on a *pro bono* basis, as it is intended to be only a handful of hours per year). Following the sad and unexpected death of Norman Paskin, Graham Bell has been appointed 'convener' of the LCC Board, an informal post, and the intention is to maintain and develop the LCC principles and standards. The final report of the EU-funded RDI project was highly supportive of the LCC-derived technical framework within that project. However, the major user of the LCC standards (the UK Copyright Hub, which uses the Common Rights Format) is seeking a renewed role, and the IP status of some of the LCC standards needs clarification.

5.5 International Digital Publishers Forum

Graham Bell has continued to serve on the Board of the IDPF. This has taken up significant amounts of time since December, but the major IDPF activity over the last few months cannot be reported on for confidentiality reasons. It should become clear within a month. [UPDATE: the IDPF has announced that it is in discussion with the World Wide Web Consortium about a combination of their interests. This is aimed at reducing the duplication of work between the two groups, and at giving the publishing industry a stronger voice in the development of key web standards. It will be put to the IDPF and W3C membership later in 2016.)

6 Other project activity

6.1 FORWARD

At the time of the last meeting of the Board, the FORWARD project – an EU-funded ARROW-like project dealing with identification of rightsholders and orphan works in the film sector – was progressing with little input necessary from EDItEUR. In March, Cineca (to which EDItEUR is a subcontractor) requested further technical work within the project, and this has begun.

6.2 International Supply Chain Seminar

The 37th International Supply Chain Seminar held in Frankfurt immediately before the last meeting of the Board was widely recognised as a successful independent relaunch of the event. Informal feedback from attendees after the event showed a high level of enthusiasm for the event and format. As a result, I have begun initial planning for an event at Frankfurt 2016, using last year's event as a 'template'. Use of the same venue on the same day has already been agreed with the Book Fair, and once again, the Buchmesse has been highly supportive.

The challenge in 2016 is to extend the appeal beyond the core of people already strongly engaged with EDItEUR, and to use the event as a way of attracting new members and as a forum for discussion of new subjects, yet without losing the small, almost 'intimate' scale of the event and without compromising relevance of the subject matter.

7 Personnel and management issues

This has been the most significant challenge of the past year, and will likely remain so over the next three months. Suzanne Rozario was appointed in early January, and took up her position at the end of February. Suzanne is becoming more familiar with EDItEUR's business and her duties, and I look forward to confirming her position at the end of her probationary period in early May.

But after two years at EDItEUR, Alex Ingram tendered his resignation as Standards Editor in mid-March, in order to pursue interests in political advocacy and transport planning. I announced that EDItEUR is recruiting a replacement in our most recent Newsletter.

Graham Bell
7 April 2016