

Comments by Brazilian Rio de Janeiro Group and Câmara Técnica de Documentos Eletrônicos of Conselho Nacional de Arquivos (Technical Chamber on Electronic Records of National Council on Archives – Brazil) Dec. 2016

RECORDS IN CONTEXTS – PUBLIC CONSULTATION

On September 30, 2016, Vitor Fonseca presented in *Arquivo Nacional*, for more than one hundred people, the power points translated into Portuguese that EGAD had used at the International Congress of Archives in Seoul to release RiC. The people present were invited to read the text in public consultation and to participate in meetings organized by the *Conselho Nacional de Arquivos* to prepare comments.

After that, in seven meetings, some interested people discussed the text. Among them, there are professors from the Archival Science courses of two universities (*Universidade Federal Fluminense* - UFF and *Universidade Federal do Estado Rio de Janeiro* - UNIRIO) and archivists of *Arquivo Nacional* and *Biblioteca Nacional*. We also received comments made by the *Câmara Técnica de Documentos Eletrônicos* (Technical Chamber on Electronic Records) of the *Conselho Nacional de Arquivos* [National Council on Archives].

The group congratulates and thanks EGAD for the valuable work done, and clarifies that the comments are intended to clarify some points and suggest changes in order to get a better understanding and wider use of this model by the archival community and other professionals also interested in the issue.

The comments, after some general remarks, will follow the structure of the RiC. Because of the short time we had, it was not possible to analyze the relations, that are in an excessive number. Maybe some could remain as examples.

General comments

a - Definitions

The definitions need more control; we recommend to avoid, as much as possible, natural language, and to prefer the use of the vocabulary present and defined in RIC. Although the cardinalities of Ric-CM relationships are not yet defined, it is a good practice to define entities by reference to other entities, properties and relationships, as, for example, in this suggested definition of Record (E1): "Discrete and complete unite of information having one definite documentary form, recognized and agreed in a specific user context, represented in any persistent form, on any durable carrier, by any method, by an Agent in the course of life or work events and Activities".

- "Discrete in science is the opposite of continuous: something that is separate; distinct; individual", <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discrete>;

- "separate and different from each other", "constituting a separate entity : individually distinct <several discrete sections>", <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/discrete>;

- "Individually separate and distinct", <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/discrete>.

The examples must always be consistent with the definition.

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b- Scope note

Sometimes, elements that should be in the definition are in the Scope note. It would be interesting to standardize Scope note and Definition. Generally, Scope note is used for stating the context of use and the Definition states what is the entity, which are its components and for what it serves.

c- Mandatorial subset

The implementation of the conceptual model as a whole is very complex. Would be possible to modulate it ? It would be interesting to state what is a minimal and mandatorial.

The complexity level of the system needs to be analyzed taking into account the feasibility of many aspects, such as: use, input, interoperability, maintenance etc.

d- Relationships

The big amount of relationships makes the model very complex.

For not having relations in past, it would be possible to have all the relations in the present tense and to relate them to a date.

e- Technological context

The proposed model gives a heavy weight to the context, especially through the entities FUNCTION, FUNCTION (abstract), ACTIVITY, MANDATE and OCCUPATION. However, it is not considered the technological context (or some of the technological context information are in document properties as free text - eg checksum in RiC-P5), which is extremely important for digital documents in order to support the activities of digital preservation and the presumption of authenticity. This information could be Record / Record Component properties. Examples of technological context information: file format, file name, hardware and software dependency.

f- Organization of the properties of entities

It is not helpful to divide the properties in accordance to the entities. The properties could be listed and it could be recorded to which entity (or entities) it can be used. In that way, repetition could be avoided.

COMMENTS TO THE ITEMS OF THE DOCUMENT

1. Introduction

1.5 Provenance

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Recognizing that the concept of provenance, even for its central role in archival theory, is much discussed, we draw attention to the fact that some of the arguments raised would not be valid. This is the case of the phrase "Records by one individual or group are often found in the records of another individual or group", in which it seems to be confusing production (base of provenance) with authorship. Another case would be "A single record, or a single fonds or other accumulation of records, may be jointly created by more than one individual or group", in which, apart from the confusion of authorship with production, it is not considered who will accumulate this set.

In the same way, the issue of remote storage implies a number of concerns, for example, in the question of authenticity, but it has no direct implication in the provenance of the records.

1.7 Record description in transition

It is unclear what is meant by the phrase "... to recognize a more expansive and dynamic understanding or provenance" because the existence of these new approaches to provenance has not been demonstrated. Perhaps one could call attention to allowing a better representation of different contexts of the records, which is a fact.

1.8.2 From Multilevel description to Multidimensional Description

It is not very clear what "the more expansive understanding of provenance described above" would be.

Another difficult expression to understand is "[...] other types of Record Sets with complex origination". The use of the word "origination", hitherto unused, is the problem. There is no point in admitting that a series, in the Australian model, can be a Record Set with different creators.

The paragraph "In the modeling ... Record Set" needs to be further explained. A fund, for example, may have several creators (each relating to a part of the fund), but, at least in Brazil, the provenance of the fonds would be that agent who accumulated the whole set. A collection, on the other hand, would be a type of Record Set with different creators and different provenances. The difference is that, being a collection, the gathering of these records would not constitute a fonds, and the set would not have a creator, but a collector.

2. Entities

RIC-E-1-Record

- It seems that the definition doesn't include sound records. Is it true?;

RIC-E-2-Record component-

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- The use of the terms part and completeness creates a certain ambiguity. The term completeness is not defined in the document;

- Could the concept of DIGITAL COMPONENT be equivalent to RECORD COMPONENT?

Concept: "A digital object that is part of one or more digital documents, and the metadata necessary to order, structure or manifest its content and form, which requires certain preservation actions" (source: CTDE Glossary)

The digital component is a discrete piece of information that composes the document, which can have content, form, and structure information (such as .xml and .xsl files; a form template and data in a database). In this sense, it differs from record component, because this other only refers to content information.

- Note: Some technological context information may appear as digital component properties. The technological context information should be based on the OAIS standard and the PREMIS metadata.

- Excluding the case of the digital records, it is not common to use the expression "component" for indicating pictures, seals or appended records like components. Normally, we consider them as special thing (pictures, seals etc.) or another record, that is the case of attachments. In many situations, the attachments are more important than the record that brings them

RIC-E-3-Record set

- A record set as product of an agent be formed of different manners, intellectually or physically, brought together or not. ,it would be good that definition could give the idea that a record set can be a fonds, a series, a file etc. A record set can also be the result of a dynamic retrieval, when someone asks something to a database too, but in this case they had been brought together intellectually, and not physically – maybe this difference should be explained.

- Maybe it is important to stress that some record sets have the same provenance and others not..

- In the definition of Record set as entity, one of the main problems is the use of the term Agent because the Agent can have different roles (creator, author, collector etc.);

- In Scope Notes, we suggest eliminate the Miscellaneous example. Archives have bad experiences with miscellaneous, sometimes originated by lack of time or ignorance ;

- In Scope Notes, the last paragraph is a little vague and doesn't give important information to establish the difference between a compound record and a record set. Think if the concept of maybe make reference on the idea of compound record. Maybe this was caused by the entity record component. Maybe the concept of digital component could help (see RIC- E2).

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* compound record : “n. Computing · A digital document that includes a variety of formats, each of which is processed differently.” (SAA. Glossary)

RIC-E4-Agent

- The definition should explore the different roles of the agent, since the figure of the creator (and not the author, for example) remains the foundation of the approach. The way it presents itself is very generic. For those who do not know the discipline, the tendency is to ignore the principle of provenance;
- The indistinct use of the term agent for so many roles (responsibilities) will compromise the perception of the principle of provenance. No properties have been identified that apply a controlled term to indicate different responsibilities. This will only be showed by relationships.
- the 4th paragraph should be the 3rd, and the 3rd would become the 4th.

RIC-E5-Occupation

- Remove the brackets of “(a competency)”.
- An occupation, when identified as a profession, not always is performed by someone who has the formal right to perform that occupation.

All the examples are of formal occupations, regulated by academic grades.

RIC-E6-Position

- Occupation and position are also very close concepts.
- What to do with honorary titles?

RIC-E7-Function

- The definition of Function E7 and Function E8 is not enough to distinguish one from another, although the big distinction is the association with Agent and the instance where he acts.
- Sometime, just reading the records, it is difficult to distinguish Occupation (E5) from Function (E7) .

RIC-E9-Activity

- Activity, as a concept, seems closer to Function E7, and can also be confused as occupation.

RIC-E10-Mandate

- In Scope notes, 3rd paragraph, remove the brackets inside brackets.

RIC-E11-Documentary form

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- The concept of Documentary form is very linked with diplomatic approach and not all kinds of records can attend the diplomatic criteria. There are several records that aren't identified as diplomatic records (poems, musical scores, diaries etc.)

3 Properties

3.1 Shared properties of all entities

3.2 Properties of record

3.2.1-Content information

- The title is not very appropriate. In general, we don't evaluate the content information, but the document/record as a whole. For instance, the authenticity is not related to the content, it is related to the record.

RIC-P5-Authenticity and Integrity

Question: Why not separate these properties? Suggestion: RIC-P5a-Authenticity; RIC-P5b-Integrity .

RIC-P6 -Content type

In Brazil, we use Genre for something that is very close to that idea.

Another possibility would be to use Communication form (Transmission form?)

RIC-P7-Content Extent

- See RIC-P15: It is not practical nor easy to distinguish RIC-P7 AND RIC P15. Maybe it would be more practical to use extent and medium, like ISAD (G). In Brazil, NOBRADE combines genre and the extent.

The data type could be controlled format.

RIC-P8-Quality of information

- The definition includes sound?

- The definition includes the ideas of legibility and completeness of the information. Why not to separate these properties? Suggestion: RIC-P8a-Legibility; RIC-P8b-Completeness; RIC-P8c-Accuracy; RIC-P8d-Fidelity

3.2.2-Information about representation

3.2.3---Information about carrier

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RIC-P15 -Physical or Logical Extent

- It seems to be very similar to RIC P7

RIC-P16-Physical characteristics note

- Does it include preservation status ?
- It seems to be very similar to P8.

3.2.4---Information about management and use

RIC-P19 -Conditions of use

- The definition also could be used for P8. The definition should include property legislation, e.g., intellectual property.

RIC-P20-History

Why no to call archival history? Because the history, in the real meaning of the term, for a record (or for a record set) is the context it was created.

3.3---Properties of record component

3.4---Properties of Record Set

RIC-P22-Authenticity and Integrity note

- It would be good to have examples.

RIC-P-26-Arrangement

- Why physical arrangement is out of the scope ? The records arranged chronologically are no arranged physically in that way? Why not to stop the sentence in “arrangement information”?

RIC-P27-Classification

- In fact, some examples seem to be the name of the record set.

RIC-P-28-History

Why no to call archival history? Because the history, in the real meaning of the term, for a record (or for a record set) is the context it was created.

3.5---Properties summarizing the members of a record set

RIC-P-29-Content extent

- See P7

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RIC-P-30-Physical or logical extent

- See P15

RIC-P-31-Scope and content

- It would be good always to have examples

3.6---Properties shared by all member records of a record set:

- The sentence that members of a record set must share at least one common property (when we relate to the cited ones above) is contradictory with what had been stated before (that even a miscellaneous could be a record set)

3.7-Properties shared by all agents

RIC-P32-Type

- The examples show group and corporate body. In ISAAR, the notion of corporate body encompasses group.

RIC-P33-Identity type

It is not clear what is being considered identity type.

RIC-P34 Language information

Why would it be important have a specific property for recording language(s) used or known by an agent? if it is important, why not to include in the history of the agent. Is not enough to keep the information about language and script of the record(s)? It could be

RIC-P35-History

It says concise because it is presumed the information about functions, occupations, position and activities of the agent was already or will be described like entities?

3.8---Additional property specific to person and person assumed identity

RIC-P36-Gender

Discussions about gender are very political. Must we keep this kind of property? For instance, to use unknown can be seen as a prejudice. Probably important information about gender would be present at history.

3.9---Additional property specific to delegate-agent

RIC-P37-Technical characteristics

- What does that mean ? There is no scope nor examples

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3.10---Additional properties specific to corporate body and corporate body assumed identity

RIC-P-38-Services to the public

- Scope and examples?

RIC-P-39-Contact information

- Address and web site is not contact information

RIC-P-40-Operatins hours

- Scope?

RIC-P-41-Facilities

- Examples?

3.11---Properties of occupation-

RIC-P-42-Type

- Scope?

RIC-P-43-Description

- Scope and examples?

RIC-P-44-History

- How is important to provide the history of the occupation?

3.12---Properties of position

RIC-P-45-Type

- Scope?

RIC-P-46-Description

- Scope and examples?

RIC-P-47-History

- Scope and examples?

- How is important to provide the the history of the position?

3.13---Properties of function

RIC-P-48-Type

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- Scope?

RIC-P-49-Description

- Scope?

RIC-P-50-History

- Examples?

3.14---Property of function (abstract)

RIC-P-51-Description

- Scope?

3.15---Properties of activity

RIC-P-52-Type

- Scope?

RIC-P-54-History

- Examples?

3.16---Properties of mandate

RIC-P-55-Type

- Scope?

- Two examples (decree and letter of appointment) are also records.

RIC-P-56-Description

- Scope and examples?

RIC-P-57-History

- Examples?

- How is important to provide the the history of the mandate?

3.17-Properties of documentary form

RIC-P-58-Type

- Scope?

RIC-P-59-Description

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- Scope and examples?

RIC-P-60-History

- Scope and examples?
- How is important to provide the the history of the documentary form?

3.18-Properties of date-

RIC-P-61-Type

- Scope?

RIC-P-62-Calendar

- Scope?

3.19-Properties of place

RIC-P-63-Type-

- Scope?

But, is it possible to distinguish natural and human notions?

RIC-P-64-Geographic coordinates

- Scope and examples?

RIC-P-65-Address

- The place is already a physical location

3.20-Properties of concept/thing

RIC-P66-Type

- Scope and examples?

RIC-P67-Description-

- Scope and examples?

4 Relations

4.1 List of relations by domain entity

Editor's note

- See the last paragraph – there is no P68 – the last number is P67

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