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Date:

27 August 2004

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**NCLIS, 28-29 October 2004**

**Agenda point: ISBN-13 in SA**

The 10-digit ISBN, i.e. the International Standard Book Number and unique identifier for monographic works is going to change to a 13-digit number over the next few years, to be implemented on 1 January 2007.

The main reason for changing the ISBN was to increase the numbering capacity of the ISBN system. As a result of electronic publishing and other changes in the publishing industry, the numbering capacity of the ISBN system is being consumed at a much faster rate than was originally anticipated when the ISBN system was designed for printed books in the late 1960's. Capacity will be built by prefixing existing 10-digit ISBNs by the EAN (European Article Number) for books: 978. When these are exhausted, the 978 code will be replaced by 979 and in such a way doubling the amount of numbers available to identify monographic publications.

The backbone by which the ISBN is administered internationally, is *ISO 2108 – Information and Documentation – International Standard Book Number*. The revision process started in 2002, went through all the voting stages and at this stage the DIS (draft international standard) 2108, as revised by the comments during the last voting stage, will be submitted directly for publication as ISO 2108, 4th edition, January 2005. After revising the following should have been accomplished:

- To increase the numbering capacity of the ISBN system;
- To specify the metadata to be associated with ISBN assignments and the method of its association;
- To decide whether and how the ISBN is assigned to certain types of monographic publications (e.g. digital files; print-on-demand materials; discrete parts of monographic publications);
- To specify the authority to assign ISBN and the administration of the ISBN system.

Other supporting material during and after the change-over process such as the *Guidelines for Implementation* and the *User Manual* have been published and updated to assist users in the application of ISBN-13.

Each system using ISBNs will be affected by the ISBN-13 change-over, including those in the publishing, printing, distribution, retail, and library sectors. Any organization that records and exchanges ISBN in automated systems needs to ensure that its system/-s can accommodate the new 13-digit ISBN format. **Libraries** need to check and review ISBN-13 impact in the following areas:

- Acquisitions systems including transaction messages with trading partners
- Cataloguing and other bibliographic data entry systems
- Interlibrary loan systems
- Bibliographic record importing routines
- Barcode scanners
- Local catalogues
- Information portal / metasearch systems
- Interoperability with remote information sources and clients
- System links to and from remote content and services
- Other ISBN-related functions and systems.

**Libraries and library system vendors** will need to support both existing 10-digit ISBNs and new 13-digit ISBNs as much in advance of 1 January 2007 as possible and continue to do so well into the future.

- It is not necessary to retrospectively convert the ISBNs held in bibliographic records, but record formats must be able to hold 13-digit as well as 10-digit ISBNs as soon as possible. Libraries may want to record both forms of the same ISBN when publishers print both in publications, which they are likely to start doing well ahead of 1 January 2007. When a purchase order is based on a bibliographic record containing only a 10-digit ISBN, the ISBN must be converted to 13-digits in the purchase transaction records.

- Existing references to books citing 10-digit ISBNs will continue to be used by library patrons indefinitely. Patrons must be able to find bibliographic information in library catalogues by searching with either ISBN format for all 10-digit ISBNs and those 13-digit ISBNs in the 978 range, regardless of the form of the ISBN in the bibliographic record. This will require changes to indexes and search interface software, which will need to be done as much in advance of 1 January 2007 as possible.

- Libraries that provide for patrons and staff to search other library catalogues and other information sources through a single user interface will need to consider the impact of changes to accommodate 13-digit ISBNs at either end. Systems that merge and de-duplicate search results from multiple sources using ISBNs will need to allow for different records carrying different forms of the same ISBN. Conversely, libraries whose catalogues are accessible for search via remote client systems will also need to consider the impact of changes to those catalogues.

- Libraries will need to consider the effect of changes in both their systems and in remote systems in respect of links to and from a variety of content and services based on ISBNs. These may include catalogue enrichments such as jacket images, tables of contents, summaries and reviews, as well as webbased book retailers, reading list systems, link servers, the corporate portal, the Virtual Learning Environment and access to the full text of e-books.

- Within the administration modules of library systems there may need to be changes such as form field lengths, validation routines and screen and print layouts. Interlibrary loan systems may depend on ISBNs for matching. There may be software that uses ISBNs for matching and de-duplicating bibliographic records when they are imported either online or in batches.

- Libraries' systems will need to work with 13-digit ISBNs for all aspects of book purchasing, including all transactions with booksellers, by 1 January 2007 at the latest. Librarians and their system suppliers should be co-ordinating with book suppliers and appropriate trade organisations to establish transitional arrangements as soon as possible. Standard EDI formats such as EDIFACT 4 provide for both ISBN (i.e. 10-digit) and EAN, so both elements could be exchanged for a transitional period. It should be noted that these considerations apply not only to printed books but also e-books and all other materials identified by ISBN.

- Although proprietary barcoding of accession numbers (i.e. individual copies) of books will not change, barcode scanners that are used for data entry or search input of ISBNs from the EAN barcode, which currently output 10-digit ISBNs, will need to be re-programmed.

The ISN Agency, situated at the National Library of South Africa, is the national ISBN agency of the country and responsible for the change-over process in SA. Since April 2004 representatives of all role players gathered in *ISBN-13 in SA* meetings every second month. Role players / industries represented in the meeting are: libraries and related bodies (i.e. consortia, LIASA, various National Library representatives), publishers and related institutions (i.e. PASA, Bookdata/SAPNet, SABA, PIFSA, EAN:SA, Government Printing Works, Centre for the Book, Univ. of Pretoria – Dept. of Information Science) and systems (i.e. Millennium, Aleph, LibWin, PALS, UKS, WizCat, SABINET Online). On an official level, the Dept of Arts and Culture and such other bodies will be involved in this matter via NCLIS. ISBN and ISBN-13 web pages are available from the National Library's website to guide and inform users on this important matter. Of the scheduled 5 meetings, 3 have been held with the last one due 1 Dec. 2004. Activities include discussing and bringing out a South African "yes" vote for the DIS 2108, distribution of relevant change-over information, evaluating and discussing the areas of change and the impact in each industry. During the Oct. 2004 meeting, the *ISBN-13 in SA* meeting received Mr Michael Healy, international coordinator of the ISBN Working Group, as guest at the meeting. An important aspect of this meeting was the opportunity to raise and discuss with him questions / problems where answers / solutions were not clear / straightforward. His response to the ISBN-13 status in SA was as follows: "*...I was very impressed with your preparations for the changes ahead. The South African book trade is in very good hands!*"

The final step in the ISBN-13 awareness process is to publish a press release about this change later this year. In support of the ISO 2108 standard's 4<sup>th</sup> edition due for publication early 2005, the *ISBN-13 in SA* meeting will consider the implementation steps and schedule at its Dec. 2004 meeting.

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26/27 Aug. 2004