

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
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**Action: Charges for Standards Committee’s
Technical Subcommittee for Encoded Archival Description
and Schema Development Team**

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BACKGROUND

The pending revision to the Standards Committee charge and procedures (Agenda Item III.J.) stipulates that there be a standing technical subcommittee for each SAA-approved and -maintained standard. This report includes a recommended charge for a new Technical Subcommittee for Encoded Archival Description (TS-EAD), which would succeed the EAD Working Group as the group responsible for maintenance and promotion of Encoded Archival Description.

This report also includes a recommended charge for a new Schema Development Team (SDT). The SDT would be a small group, reporting to both the TS-EAD and the Encoded Archival Context Working Group, that would be responsible for all technical schema development work. Establishing this group would ensure consistency among the Society's technical standards and develop a broader pool of schema expertise within SAA and in the profession.

DISCUSSION

The proposed revision to the Standards Committee charge and the related standards procedures are intended, in part, to clarify the Society's standards maintenance procedures and reporting lines. Previously, some working groups reported to the Standards Committee and some reported to the Technical Subcommittee for Descriptive Standards (TSDS). If adopted, the new charge eliminates TSDS and stipulates that there will be a technical subcommittee – reporting to the Standards Committee – responsible for each SAA-approved and -maintained standard.

The proposed charge for a new Technical Subcommittee for Encoded Archival Description (TS-EAD) (Recommendation 1) follows the guidelines set out by the revised “Procedures for Review and Approval of an SAA-Developed Standard,” and is intended to serve as a model for future technical subcommittee charges. TS-EAD will succeed the EAD Working Group and report directly to the Standards Committee. It will be charged

for a renewable five-year term. In lieu of a standard five-year review cycle and because TSDS formally requested an EAD revision in February 2009, the TS-EAD charge explicitly tasks the subcommittee with completing a revision of EAD 2002 within that five-year term.

In addition to establishing the now mandatory technical subcommittee and initiating a revision of EAD, the proposed TS-EAD charge provides clear guidance regarding membership. The charge specifies five SAA members and several *ex officio* members. In order to ensure the development of new expertise over time, the charge stipulates that there must be at least one new member per review cycle.

Because EAD is an international standard, the charge allows for as many international members as are necessary to ensure the proper representation of EAD's many user communities. Furthermore, the charge encourages TS-EAD to have co-chairs from both the SAA and the international members of the committee. In practice the EAD Working Group had long been a highly international committee, so these portions of the charge will codify and enhance that practice moving forward. The proposed roster for TS-EAD (Recommendation 2) was developed to ensure that appropriate expertise is brought to the work of the group.

The pending Standards Committee procedures also include provisions for establishing development and review teams. Discussion among the EAD and EAC working groups at the 2009 SAA Annual Meeting raised the idea of a small group that reports to both subcommittees and is responsible for all schema development. The proposed Schema Development Team charge (Recommendation 3) outlines that group's responsibilities and membership. A Schema Development Team will ensure consistency among the Society's technical standards and develop a broader pool of schema expertise within SAA and in the profession. If SAA is to continue to maintain XML standards such as EAD and EAC-CPF, it must either develop a pool of professionals with the knowledge and experience to do that work or assume the costs of hiring consultants. The proposed roster for SDT (Recommendation 4) was developed to ensure that appropriate expertise is brought to the work of the group.

Michael Rush, past chair of TSDS, wrote the drafts of the TS-EAD and SDT charges with feedback from the Standards Committee and members of the EAD and EAC working groups. Cory Nimer, Standards Committee member, compiled lists of recommended members for the two committees.

RECOMMENDATION 1

THAT the SAA Council adopt the following charge and description for the Standards Committee's Technical Subcommittee for Encoded Archival Description:

Technical Subcommittee for Encoded Archival Description

Purpose

The Technical Subcommittee for Encoded Archival Description (TS-EAD) of the SAA Standards Committee is responsible for overseeing the timely and ongoing intellectual and technical maintenance and development of Encoded Archival Description (EAD). EAD is the internationally accepted XML (Extensible Markup Language) standard for the transmission of finding aids. EAD is compatible with *ISAD(G): General International Standard Archival Description*, 2nd ed. (International Congress on Archives, 1999). EAD is an SAA-approved standard; documentation is hosted by the Library of Congress at <http://www.loc.gov/ead/>.

To fulfill this mission internationally, the TS-EAD is specifically charged to:

- Carry out a review of EAD at least every five years and revise as needed.*
- Revise the EAD tag library and other official documentation as necessary.
- Promote the understanding and use of EAD internationally.
- Support educational efforts related to EAD by SAA and international communities.
- Develop members of the archives profession who are capable of promoting and maintaining EAD over time.
- Communicate its activities to relevant SAA components and EAD-using communities internationally.
- Collaborate as needed with the Schema Development Team to maintain the relevant EAD schemas and/or Document Type Definitions (DTDs).

* For this charge, in lieu of a standard review cycle, the TS-EAD shall undertake a revision of EAD 2002, which is to be completed in no more than five years (i.e., by August 2015).

Reporting

The chair (or co-chairs) of the Technical Subcommittee for EAD shall report at least annually to the chair of the SAA Standards Committee on the occasion of the SAA annual meeting. If extramural funding is obtained by SAA, the chair (or co-chairs) shall provide all necessary narrative reports to the SAA office in order that the reporting requirements of SAA and the funding source are met.

Length of Charge

The TS-EAD shall be charged for five years, beginning February 2010, with the charge expiring at the SAA annual meeting of the fifth year, or until the revision of EAD is completed as described in the "Procedures for Review and Approval of an SAA-Developed Standard," whichever is shorter. After the charge is completed, if Encoded Archival Description continues to be an approved standard of SAA, the TS-EAD shall be re-charged for a subsequent review cycle.

Membership

The members and chair(s) of the TS-EAD shall be appointed for the length of time necessary to complete a revision of EAD, which shall not exceed five years. The technical subcommittee shall have five members who are members of SAA and sufficient international membership to ensure effective representation of EAD professional communities outside the United States. All members shall demonstrate significant knowledge of and experience with archival description generally, and with EAD specifically.

The TS-EAD shall have a chair who is a member of the Society of American Archivists. The technical subcommittee is encouraged to have a co-chair from among its international members.

SAA members of the TS-EAD shall be recommended by the Standards Committee for appointment by the Vice President. International members who are able to represent other professional EAD-using communities effectively shall be appointed at the recommendation of the TS-EAD chair(s), who is/are responsible for ensuring appropriately diverse international representation. Members and chairs may be reappointed to the TS-EAD for consecutive review cycles, but at least one new SAA member must be appointed per review cycle.

Ex officio members of the Technical Subcommittee for EAD shall include the following if they are not regular members of the subcommittee.

- Chair of the Standards Committee (or an appointed representative).
- Chair(s) of the EAC Working Group (or any successor committee).
- Chair and members of the Schema Development Team.
- Chair of the EAD Roundtable.
- Liaison from the Network Development and MARC Standards Office of the Library of Congress.
- Liaison from OCLC Research.

Communication

The TS-EAD shall carry out its charge primarily via electronic mail, regular mail, and conference calls. It shall meet at the SAA annual meeting and as necessary with funding from SAA or from extramural sources (with prior approval by the SAA Council).

Support Statement: Creation of the Technical Subcommittee for Encoded Archival Description is an integral step in the process of revising the Society's standards maintenance procedures. It also initiates the five-year process of revising EAD.

Fiscal Impact: Charging the Technical Subcommittee for Encoded Archival Description should have no immediate fiscal impact on the Society. The work of revising EAD will require fiscal support, either from the Society or from external funding sources (with prior approval by the SAA Council).

RECOMMENDATION 2

THAT the SAA Vice President appoint the following individuals to serve on the Standards Committee's Technical Subcommittee for Encoded Archival Description, for a term to begin in February 2010 and extend through review and revision of EAD 2002, which is to be completed in no more than five years (i.e., by August 2015).

Recommended Appointments to the Technical Subcommittee for Encoded Archival Description

The Standards Committee recommends that the following people be appointed to TS-EAD. Additional international members may be recommended at a later date once the EAD revision process is under way.

SAA Members:

- Michael Rush (Co-chair), Yale University
- Michael Fox, Minnesota Historical Society
- Kris Kiesling, University of Minnesota
- Kelsey Shepherd, University of Massachusetts, Amherst
- Brad Westbrook, University of California, San Diego

International Members:

- Bill Stocking (Co-chair), British Library
- Angelika Menne-Haritz, Bundesarchiv, Germany
- Claire Sibille, Archives de France
- Henny van Schie, Nationaal Archief, Netherlands

***Ex Officio* Members**

- Glen Gardner (Library of Congress liaison)
- Merrilee Proffitt (OCLC Research liaison)
- Cory Nimer (Standards Committee representative)
- Kathy Wisser (EAC Working Group chair)
- Daniel Pitti (Schema Development Team chair)
- Terry Catapano (Schema Development Team)
- Michele Combs (Schema Development Team)
- Mark Matienzo (Schema Development Team)
- Karin Bredenberg (Schema Development Team)
- Jacquelyn Ferry (EAD Round Table chair) (changes with EADRT chairmanship)

Support Statement: The recommended individuals provide the necessary expertise and experience to ensure appropriate review and revision of EAD 2002.

Fiscal Impact: None.

RECOMMENDATION 3

THAT the SAA Council adopt the following charge and description for the Standards Committee's Schema Development Team:

Standards Committee Schema Development Team

Purpose

The Schema Development Team (SDT) of the SAA Standards Committee is responsible for development and editing of all Extensible Markup Language (XML) schemas, Document Type Definitions (DTD), and related technical documents maintained by SAA and its subgroups. These include the schemas and/or DTDs that express Encoded Archival Description (EAD), Encoded Archival Context – Corporate Bodies, Persons, and Families (EAC-CPF), and any other markup standards developed by the Technical Subcommittee for Encoded Archival Description and the Encoded Archival Context Working Group (or any successor groups).

To fulfill its mission as described above, the Schema Development Team is specifically charged to:

- Carry out, under the direction of the Technical Subcommittee for Encoded Archival Description (TS-EAD) and the EAC Working Group (or any successor group), the maintenance and ongoing development of their respective standards, in accordance with the schedules laid out by their charges and SAA's "Procedures for Review and Approval of an SAA-Developed Standard."*
- Develop members of the archives profession who have the technical skills necessary to create, develop, and revise XML schemas, DTDs, and related technical documentation.

* All revisions to technical standards must have the approval of the appropriate maintaining body.

Reporting

The chair of the Schema Development Team shall report at least annually to the chairs of the SAA Standards Committee, the TS-EAD, and the EAC Working Group on the occasion of the SAA annual meeting. If extramural funding is obtained by SAA, the chair shall provide all necessary narrative reports to the SAA office in order that the reporting requirements of SAA and the funding source are met.

Length of Charge

The Schema Development Team shall be charged for one year, beginning February 2010, and continuing through the 2011 SAA annual meeting. If the Technical Subcommittee for EAD, the EAC Working Group, or another SAA subgroup continues to be engaged in the active development or revision of XML encoding standards, the Schema Development Team shall be recharged annually on the occasion of the SAA annual meeting. If no SAA subgroup is actively engaged with the development or revision of an XML encoding standard, the Schema Development Team may be discharged.

Membership

The Schema Development Team shall have from three to five members, including a chair, to be recommended by the Standards Committee for appointment by the Vice President. The chair shall be a member of SAA, but the Schema Development Team should include international members. The number of members shall vary depending on the STD's workload. If additional members are deemed necessary, the chair shall make a recommendation to the Standards Committee. The members and chair may be reappointed to the Schema Development Team for consecutive terms, but at least one new member must be appointed every five years. All members shall demonstrate experience with the design and syntax of schemas and/or DTDs.

Ex officio members shall include the following:

- Chair of the Standards Committee (or an appointed representative).
- Chair(s) of the Technical Subcommittee for EAD.
- Chair(s) of the EAC Working Group.
- Chair of any future SAA group responsible for XML schemas and/or DTDs.

Communication

The Schema Development Team shall carry out its charge primarily via electronic mail, regular mail, and conference calls. It shall meet with the Technical Subcommittee for EAD and the EAC Working Group at the SAA annual meeting and as necessary with funding from SAA or from extramural sources (with prior approval by the SAA Council).

Support Statement: Creation of the Schema Development Team supports the work of developing, revising, and maintaining technical standards, specifically EAD and EAC-CPF, and aims to expand the schema expertise available within the Society.

Fiscal Impact: Charging the Schema Development Team should have no immediate fiscal impact on SAA. The work of revising EAD will require financial support, either from the Society or from external funding sources (with prior approval by the SAA Council).

RECOMMENDATION 4

THAT the SAA Vice President appoint the following individuals to serve on the Standards Committee's Schema Development Team, for a term to begin in February 2010 and extend through August 2010. If any SAA subgroup continues to be engaged in the active development or revision of Extensible Markup Language (XML) encoding standards, the Schema Development Team shall be re-charged annually on the occasion of the SAA annual meeting. Otherwise, it may be discharged.

Recommended Appointments to the Schema Development Team

The Standards Committee recommends that the following people be appointed to SDT.

SAA Members:

- Daniel Pitti (Chair), University of Virginia
- Terry Catapano, Columbia University
- Michele Combs, Syracuse University
- Mark Matienzo, Yale University

International Members:

- Karin Bredenberg, Riksarkivet, Sweden

***Ex Officio* Members**

- Cory Nimer (Standards Committee representative)
- Michael Rush (TS-EAD co-chair)
- Bill Stocking (TS-EAD co-chair)
- Kathy Wisser (EAC Working Group chair)

Support Statement: The recommended individuals provide the necessary expertise and experience to ensure appropriate review of proposed revisions to SML encoding standards.

Fiscal Impact: None.

RECOMMENDATION 5

THAT the Encoded Archival Description (EAD) Working Group be disbanded with thanks.

Support Statement: Reorganization of the Standards Committee and revision of its procedures has created a new body, the Technical Subcommittee for Encoded Archival Description, that appropriately replaces the Encoded Archival Description Working Group.

Fiscal Impact: None.