

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
August 10, 2009
Austin, Texas**

**Standards Committee: Revision of Standards
Committee Mission and Procedures
(Prepared by: Polly Reynolds, Standards Committee Chair)**

BACKGROUND

The Standards Committee has completed a two-year process to review and revise our mission and procedures. We initiated the process in February 2008, with a proposal to the Council to begin a formal review of our role within SAA. Surveys, discussions, and research identified several issues:

- SAA members have little understanding about what the Standards Committee does.
- Standards are important and widely used in the archives profession, but more development, collaboration, and education are needed.
- Procedures to develop standards, as well as procedures to maintain and review adopted standards, are confusing.
- No process exists within SAA for the handling of such “non-standards” projects as best practices and thesauri.

In our February 2009 report to the Council, we concluded that the current structure, size, and charge of the Standards Committee do not allow us to address the above issues and concerns adequately; thus, we proposed developing a more active Standards Committee. In discussion of that report, Council members urged the Standards Committee “to continue to work toward developing a mission statement for the committee that supports a more proactive role in standards development and maintenance.” The Council asked the Standards Committee to bring recommendations to the August Council meeting that would address the structure, scope, maintenance, and financial implications of a more active Standards Committee. We submit this report along with five appendices that address the Council’s requests.

DISCUSSION

We will address our final recommendations in each of the areas that the Council requested.

1. *Definitions of standard, guideline, best practice, thesaurus, etc., that would inform the committee's mission and identify its areas of responsibility (and, by extension, how non-standards projects should be handled).*

We used or modified existing definitions of standards, best practices, and guidelines¹ and have incorporated these definitions in an existing document on the Standards Committee webpage ([Appendix 1](#)). We agreed that the Standards Committee should oversee best practices in addition to standards.

Additionally, although the Standards Committee would consider any proposal to develop a thesaurus to be a standard, we would not actively oversee every thesaurus project for several reasons. First, not everyone agrees that a thesaurus should be considered a standard in every instance. Next, a thesaurus would require more maintenance and revision than the Standards Committee would be able to monitor adequately. Finally, thesauri tend to be more published works, and therefore Publications Board oversight would be more appropriate. Although the Standards Committee would not be involved in every thesaurus, we would link to all SAA-approved thesauri from our webpage.

We have updated the existing Standards Committee section in the Council Handbook ([Appendix 2](#)) to incorporate proposed details on our areas of responsibility and procedures, as well as definitions of standards and best practices.

2. *A proposed structure of the Standards Committee and its working groups (by standard or by categories/topics?).*

We would structure the Standards Committee and its subgroups both by standard and category. Subcommittees would be reserved for all SAA-adopted standards and would be responsible for the education, promotion, maintenance, and review of the assigned standard. Working groups could be formed around a particular topic (like description or preservation) or project (like a best practice). All groups developing a standard would be given a working group designation. Additionally, the Standards Committee might also identify standards development needs and assign a working group responsibility for such an area. Subcommittees would be ongoing (as long as the adopted standard remains in use), while working groups would be ad hoc and re-chargeable annually.

To take on the additional responsibilities of an active Standards Committee, we recommend increasing the Standards Committee size from six to nine members. Furthermore, to better ensure continuity of long-term Standards Committee projects, we also recommend that the Standards Committee chair serve for two years and then become an *ex officio* member for one year.

We have modified several existing documents from the website (Appendices 2 and 3) to incorporate all proposed changes to the structures and duties of the Standards Committee and its subgroups.

¹ We define a guideline to be a type of standard (see Appendix 1, page 7, paragraph 1).

3. A process to maintain any standard that SAA adopts.

The proposed structure of the Standards Committee would (we hope) allow for a clearer process for the ongoing maintenance and review of SAA-adopted standards. Upon adoption of a standard, the Standards Committee would assign an ongoing subcommittee to oversee that standard. In addition to working on the formal revision of the standard, the subcommittee would also be responsible for monitoring the standard's use and application, gathering ongoing comments and feedback from users on the standard, promoting the standard, and educating individuals on the use of the standard.

We recognize that standards are always changing and, therefore, a process for regular review of standards is necessary. We recommend updating the maintenance and review process to be more like that of other standards-developing organizations. The current procedures do not specify a particular review cycle timeline, instead offering a typical range of five to seven years. Like ARMA International and Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM), we would require that the review process for all SAA-approved standards be completed within five years, with formal review beginning three years after adoption or reaffirmation.

We have updated the “Procedures for Review and Approval of an SAA-Developed Standard” ([Appendix 3](#)) to incorporate the proposed changes and additions.

4. The financial implications of a) expanded mission of committee and b) maintenance of any standards adopted by SAA.

An expanded Standards Committee would require financial support from SAA. In order to take on these additional projects and responsibilities, the Standards Committee would need to meet face to face more than once a year. We recommend travel support for a midyear meeting. Additional travel support for some members of the Standards Committee to work on collaborative projects, such as those detailed in the ARMA/SAA Memorandum of Understanding, may also be necessary.

We also ask for support for the development, implementation, and maintenance of a standards Web portal. The survey revealed that the archives community strongly supports the development of a standards Web portal on which the Standards Committee would post standards, thesauri, endorsed external standards, and best practices. From our understanding, the new SAA website infrastructure should support the Standards Committee's needs, but we also would need space and SAA staff support to develop and maintain the portal.

Finally, SAA staff support would be necessary to coordinate the work of the Standards Committee. Other standards-developing bodies, such as ARMA and AIIM, have an individual on staff devoted solely to standards work. We recommend that SAA either hire an individual (on a part-time basis) or designate an existing staff member to assist the Standards Committee for 5-10 hours a week.

Standards are constantly changing and require regular revision and review. Financial

support for the maintenance of SAA-adopted standards is crucial. Although exact funding needs will depend on the standard, travel funds for meetings and editorial funding for rewriting published standards may be needed. In the procedures, we ask subcommittees to submit a detailed report of financial needs during the review cycle. At a minimum, standards subcommittees will require travel support for one meeting a year (in addition to the annual meeting) during the formal review of a standard.

5. Propose appropriate name/designation: Board or committee?

We propose to remain a committee. (See the May 2009 Council report for discussion of our preference). We have replaced all mentions of “board” with “committee” in all of the revised documents appended.

6. Raise other issues as appropriate.

The Council asked for the Standards Committee’s thoughts on endorsing external (non-SAA) standards. From the survey conducted last year, we found that many archivists use external standards and best practices in their work. However, no real guidance exists for archivists on how the standard or best practice is used or who uses it. The Standards Committee would review submitted external standards and add endorsed standards to SAA’s standards Web portal. A central location for posting such standards would also help inform the Standards Committee of areas that should be developed within SAA. We have included the proposed written procedures for endorsing external standards as [Appendix 4](#).

We have also voted to recommend disbanding of the Technical Subcommittee on Descriptive Standards (TSDS). The proposed increase in committee size as well as the expanded role of the Standards Committee and its subgroups would replace the need for TSDS at this time. TSDS Chair Michael Rush has prepared a transition plan ([Appendix 5](#)) that recommends the handling of members, responsibilities, and current projects if TSDS is dissolved.

RECOMMENDATION 1

THAT the SAA Council approve the proposed changes to the Standards Committee’s Mission and Procedures outlined in “Standards and Best Practices Development and Review” (Appendix 1).²

² We have described most of the major changes to the documents in Recommendations 1-3. However, we have also made a number of other revisions, including deleting redundant information and fixing grammatical and spelling errors. Because many of these documents have not been updated since the 1990s, we also added references to electronic communication (e-mail, websites) and changed some outdated information. It would also be too lengthy to mention all of the changes in these documents, but we have included references to links to the original pages for comparison.

RECOMMENDATION 2

THAT the SAA Council approve the proposed changes to “Standards Committee Charge and Description” (Appendix 2), including expansion of the Committee from six to nine members.

RECOMMENDATION 3

THAT the SAA Council approve the proposed changes to “Procedures for Review and Approval of an SAA-Developed Standard” (Appendix 3).

RECOMMENDATION 4

THAT the SAA Council adopt the proposed “Procedures for SAA Endorsement of an External Standard” (Appendix 4).

RECOMMENDATION 5

THAT the SAA Council approve the following additional changes in the Standards Committee’s structure and appointments in light of the previous recommendations:

- **That the Technical Subcommittee on Descriptive Standards be disbanded with thanks; and**
- **That the DACS and EAD Working Groups be renamed “subcommittees” of the Standards Committee; and**
- **That an Archival Facilities Guidelines Subcommittee of the Standards Committee be formed and begin formal review of the “Archival Facilities Guidelines” in 2012 and complete that review in 2014.**

Support Statement: The proposed revisions to the mission, description, duties, and procedures of the Standards Committee would allow for a better understanding of the Standards Committee’s role within SAA; more collaboration, education, and development of standards and best practices; a clearer process for developing and maintaining standards; and improved oversight and publicity of non-standards projects.

Fiscal Impact: Financial implications (see Discussion item #4) include the possibility of one additional committee meeting per year (estimated expense of \$6,600: 9p x \$350 [avg] airfare/ground = \$3,150 + 9p x \$155/d x 2d lodging = \$1,395 + 9p x \$45/d x 1d per diem = \$405 + food/beverage @ \$1,650) and either the hiring of a part-time staff person or reassigning a current staff person to provide support at 5-10 hours per week.

Standards and Best Practices Development and Review

[Original located at:

http://www.archivists.org/governance/handbook/standards_com2.asp]

Responsibilities of the Standards Committee

The SAA Standards Committee, created by the Council of the Society of American Archivists in 1990, is responsible for initiating and facilitating the development of standards, best practices, and guidelines; providing review and comment on standards and best practices that are relevant to archival theory and practice; educating the archives community about the value and role of standards and best practices; and partnering with related information management professional organizations on standards and best practices of mutual concern and interest.

As one of its responsibilities, the Standards Committee establishes, with Council approval, procedures for initiating, developing, reviewing, and approving all standards developed by the Society of American Archivists through its subgroups, as well as procedures for reviewing standards submitted by outside groups to SAA for its endorsement. [Link to Procedures]

The Standards Committee works with groups on standards and standards-related projects from the initiation of the proposal, through development and review, to submission of the standard to the SAA Council for final approval.

The Committee also serves to coordinate the work of SAA representatives to standards organizations, such as the National Information Standards Organization (NISO), the Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM), the American Library Association (ALA), the American Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC), and ARMA International (per the 2008 Memorandum of Understanding for Standards Development between ARMA and SAA). [Link to document]

Standards

The SAA Standards Committee defines a standard to be an industry agreement that establishes qualities or practices that make possible sharing of information, development of common vocabularies and practices, and more effective interaction among archivists, librarians, records managers, information managers, preservation administrators, and historians and other allied professionals. SAA standards must be approved by the SAA Council and are regularly maintained and reviewed by professionals in the community.

Standards of many kinds are now central to archival practice. These include standards used in automated information systems, in preservation management, and in other technical areas, as well as standards and guidelines relating to professional practice.

Standards can take many forms. The most exacting are *technical standards* (e.g., Z39.50, the standard for intersystem data searching and retrieval), which, if applied correctly, can be expected to produce uniform and consistent results. A second type is *conventions* or *rules*, which are more flexible and accommodate more variation in local practice (e.g., “Describing Archives: A Content Standard” [DACCS]). They will produce similar, but not necessarily identical, results when applied consistently. A third type is *guidelines*, which provide models of preferred practices and/or serve as criteria against which to measure products or programs (e.g., “Archival and Special Collections Facilities Guidelines for Archivists, Librarians, Architects, and Engineers”).

Developing Standards within SAA

The Society of American Archivists recognizes the central importance of consensus to the development of standards. However, consensus on a specific standard may not always equate with unanimous and unqualified approval by all concerned, for in most cases this will be difficult to achieve.

The Standards Committee procedures for standards development within SAA mandate broad review of any proposed standard by all groups, both inside and outside of SAA, that have an interest in the standard. Important features of the review process are:

- Establishment of the need for the standard through a formal "request for initiation of a standards project,"
- Publication of notices in appropriate SAA media about initiation and ongoing progress in standards development projects,
- Publication and/or distribution of full texts of proposed standards by the SAA office, and
- Formal invitations to representatives from outside organizations to participate in the development and/or review of drafts of proposed standards.

The Standards Committee is primarily concerned with the process of standards development. The best possible effort will be made to ensure that all reasonable opinions are considered in the development process and that most disputes are resolved before a document is deemed ready for consideration by the Council as an SAA standard. Responsibility for the content of a standard rests with the group that is developing or revising the document. This may be an existing subgroup within SAA or one that is created on an *ad hoc* basis specifically to develop the standard in question.

Final adoption of a document as an SAA standard rests with the Officers and Council of the Society of American Archivists.

Once a standard is adopted, an ongoing subcommittee in the Society is assigned maintenance responsibilities so that the document can be promulgated widely, monitored in its application, and revised when necessary.

The Standards Committee has prepared detailed procedures for standards development and review. [[Link to Procedures](#)]

Best Practices

Although SAA is infrequently in a position to develop technical standards on its own, it plays an important role as a participant in work undertaken by other organizations, such as the National Information Standards Organization (NISO) and the Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM), that do develop technical standards. SAA more often is involved in developing best practices, which are developed by the Society's committees, sections, roundtables, or other designated groups. Best practices are procedures and guidelines based on experience and research that demonstrate that they are optimal and efficient means to produce a desired result.³ In contrast to standards, best practices:

- Are generally developed in emerging areas,
- May eventually become formal standards if they become widely accepted and used, and
- Are monitored periodically, but are not subject to a formal and regular review and maintenance cycle.

The procedures for best practice development and review are less formal than those for standards development and review. A group may submit a completed best practice document along with a proposal form [[link](#)] to the Standards Committee for consideration. The Standards Committee votes on the proposed project and, if it is approved, the chair of the Standards Committee will forward the documentation to the SAA Council for official endorsement. The Standards Committee will post all SAA-adopted best practices to the standards website.

For Information or Assistance

The Standards Committee is ready to assist any SAA subgroup or outside organization to devise a strategy for developing a new standard or best practice or for reviewing and/or revising an existing document so that it can be considered for formal adoption as an SAA standard or best practice. Please contact the chair or any member of the Standards Committee for further information. [[Link to roster](#)]

³ The Standards Committee has modified the best practice definition from: *A Glossary of Archival Records and Terminology*. Retrieved May 26, 2009 from: http://www.archivists.org/glossary/term_details.asp?DefinitionKey=1770

Standards Committee Charge and Description

[Original located at: <http://tinyurl.com/lqp6pa>]

I. Purpose

The Standards Committee is responsible for initiating and facilitating the development of standards and best practices; providing review and comment on standards and best practices that are relevant to archival theory and practice; educating the archives community about the value and role of standards and best practices; and partnering with related information management professional organizations on standards and best practices of mutual concern and interest.

II. Committee Selection, Size, and Length of Term

The Committee consists of nine appointed members who serve staggered three-year terms and one of whom shall serve as chair. The committee also shall include *ex officio* members, including chairs of all subcommittees or working groups that report to the Standards Committee, representatives of other SAA groups whose interests and activities closely interact with those of the Standards Committee, and members who serve as SAA's representatives to external organizations that deal with matters within the committee's area of concern. *Ex officio* members shall include:

- SAA's representative to the Association for Information and Image Management;
- SAA's representative to the Association of Records Managers and Administrators Standards Development Committee;
- SAA's representative to the American Library Association's Committee on Machine-Readable Recording of Bibliographic Information (MARBI), responsible for maintaining MARC21;
- SAA's representative to the American Library Association's Committee on Cataloguing Description and Access (CC:DA), responsible for maintenance of the Anglo-American Cataloging Rules;
- SAA's representative to the National Information Standards Association; and
- A representative from the Canadian Council of Archives' Canadian Committee on Archival Description; and
- Other SAA representatives appointed to standards-developing organizations.

The vice president annually appoints three members, whose terms begin at the end of the Annual Meeting. The vice president biennially appoints the chair. The chair shall serve a two-year term and then become an *ex officio* member for one year.

The committee may form (and disband) subcommittees. The Standards Committee will charge subcommittees to oversee all SAA-maintained standards. Subcommittees are responsible for the maintenance and review of the assigned standard (which requires that they monitor all feedback and calls for revision of the standard) and for promoting the standard and educating appropriate communities about it. Subcommittee chairs serve as regular or *ex officio* members of the Standards Committee and shall be appointed by the Standards Committee. With the approval of the Standards Committee, the subcommittee chair appoints subcommittee members. Subcommittee members must have expertise related to the standard that they are responsible for maintaining. Subcommittees may be disbanded by the Standards Committee with Council approval if the standard for which they are responsible is not scheduled for revision.

The committee may form (and disband) *technical working groups* for areas requiring specialization or technical expertise, such as description or preservation, in which the number of standards, the degree of technical expertise required, and the speed of change in the standards landscape are such that the Standards Committee by itself could not keep pace. The Standards Committee also may form *working groups* to research and develop best practices or standards. For all approved standards development projects, the Standards Committee will assign a working group to be responsible for developing the standard, which will most often be the group that proposed the original project. Working group chairs shall be regular or *ex officio* members of the Standards Committee. Working groups may be formed (and disbanded) by the Standards Committee and shall be chaired by a member of the Standards Committee or by a member of an official group within SAA. Working groups are *ad hoc* and “re-chargeable” annually.

III. Reporting Procedures

The chair prepares an annual report and submits it to the Council in accordance with established procedures. The chair is responsible for coordinating the formulation and evaluation of the annual report and other planning documents as needed in consultation with committee members. Each current subcommittee and working group chair is responsible for preparing and submitting an annual report of the group's activities to the Standards Committee chair.

IV. Duties and Responsibilities

To fulfill its mission as described above, the Standards Committee is specifically charged with:

- Overseeing the process of standards development by identifying standards needs; establishing working groups or subcommittees, as necessary, to research, prepare, monitor, and review standards, best practices, and guidelines; and recommending action on proposed standards to the SAA Council.
- Reviewing or endorsing, when appropriate, other national and international standards that affect archival practice.

- Establishing a process for the periodic review of all standards that are relevant to archival theory and practice.
- Conducting maintenance reviews of SAA-adopted standards in accordance with established review cycles.
- Publicizing and promoting standards-related news and information to the archives community.
- Endorsing and developing workshops, conference programs, and other educational opportunities related to archival standards.
- Collaborating with international and national associations on standards development projects.

VI. Meetings

The Standards Committee meets once per year at the SAA annual meeting and again in midyear, depending on operational need and contingent on SAA Council funding. Although regular meetings are open to any SAA member who wishes to attend, the Committee shall also hold public meetings as needed at the SAA annual meeting to report on the progress of ongoing standards development or review projects and to receive questions and suggestions.

APPENDIX 3

Procedures for Review and Approval of an SAA-Developed Standard

[Original located at: http://www.archivists.org/governance/handbook/standards_com1.asp

We have also updated the procedures to incorporate more electronic means of communication, since the procedures have not been updated since 1995.]

I. Submission of a Proposal for a Project to Create, Revise, or Review an SAA-Developed Standard

Proposals must be submitted by official groups within SAA. Individuals interested in the development of a standard may consult with the Standards Committee on appropriate groups for submission of a standards proposal.

I.A. The proposing group shall:

I.A.1. Download a blank PROPOSAL FORM from the Standards Committee website.
[Link to form]

I.A.2. Complete the PROPOSAL FORM, which shall include:

- Name of sponsoring group and name of individual to contact;
- Concise statement of identified need for standard;
- Expected effect/impact on individuals and institutions;
- Scope of coverage/application;
- Format, content;
- Known existing standards that are closely related to or affected by the proposed standard;
- List of other SAA subgroups, outside organizations, and experts who will be consulted during the development or will be asked to review the standard before it is submitted for adoption by SAA Council;
- Time table for development process; and
- Budgetary implications for SAA, including direct costs for meetings, travel, copying, and postage as well as indirect costs for SAA staff time.

I.A.3. File the PROPOSAL FORM with the Standards Committee.

I.B. The Standards Committee chair shall:

I.B.1. Enter receipt of the PROPOSAL FORM in the STANDARDS PROJECT LOG on the Standards Committee webpage and send acknowledgement of receipt to proposing body.

I.B.2. Distribute copies of the PROPOSAL FORM to the other members of the Standards

Committee. The chair may also distribute copies of the proposal form to subcommittees or working groups for comment.

I.B.3. Collect comments and suggestions from members of the Standards Committee and other subgroups to which the proposal was distributed.

II. Standards Committee Action in Response to Proposal

The Standards Committee will take one of the following actions in response to a proposal, as appropriate:

II.A. Return for revision

The Standards Committee will return to the proposing group a PROPOSAL FORM that is incomplete or that requires revision and request that it be revised and resubmitted.

II.B. Decline proposal

The Standards Committee may decline to approve undertaking a standards project because

- (1) A similar standard already exists;
- (2) The proposed standard is in direct conflict with an SAA-adopted standard or policy;
- (3) Another group is already working on a similar standard (in which case the Standards Committee will suggest that the two parties work together toward common ends);
- (4) There is insufficient demand or potential benefit to SAA members to warrant the expense of its development;
- (5) The proposed standard does not fall within the scope of the Standards Committee;
- (6) The proposed standard would be more appropriate as a best practice (in which case the Standards Committee will advise the proposing group to follow the procedures for developing a best practice).

The proposing group may file an appeal with the SAA Council within 60 days of notification by the Committee.

II.C. Submit for Council approval of undertaking project (when necessary)

Some proposals may require significant financial support from SAA (e.g., creation of an *ad hoc* task force). If the Standards Committee agrees that the proposal has merit but may require significant SAA funding, the Standards Committee will send the PROPOSAL FORM and any accompanying correspondence or other documentation to the SAA

Council for approval of undertaking the project. The Council's Executive Committee may be able to grant approval and expedite the process.

II.D. Approve proposal and announce intention to initiate project

If the Standards Committee agrees that the proposal has merit (and any necessary Council approval to undertake the project has been granted), it will publish a "Notice of Intention to Initiate" via all appropriate SAA media. This step is taken to notify the membership that a project will soon be under way and to solicit comments and participation from interested parties. Official project approval will be granted automatically 30 days after publication of the "Notice" unless the comments received by the Standards Committee chair are such that the proposal warrants reconsideration, in which case the Committee will refer the proposal and comments back to the proposing group for review and response.

II.E. Make assignment to primary group for development

For all approved standards development projects, the Standards Committee will assign a working group to be responsible for developing the standard. In most cases, the proposing group will be the primary development group. In some cases, however, the Council may create a task force or working group (see II.C. above) to take responsibility for the development process. Once the standard is adopted, the Standards Committee will assign a subcommittee to maintain and review the adopted standard (see V.C.I.).

III. Standards Development Process

III.A. Consultation with other SAA subgroups and external organizations

The developing group will engage in extensive consultation with interested parties inside and outside of SAA that are essential to the development of standards, and must submit to the Standards Committee evidence that such consultation has taken place. The developing group must address all written comments addressed to the group and all comments made at an SAA open meeting. The Standards Committee will assist the developing group in publicizing the project and identifying consultants.

Consultation should be pursued through several means:

III.A.1. Letters sent at the beginning of the project to heads of organizations known to have an interest in the standard under development, inviting their comments and/or participation in the development process, as appropriate.

III.A.2. Publication of notices in the newsletters or websites of these organizations about the intention to develop the standard and, later, providing updates on the progress of the development project.

III.A.3. Publication of the draft standard in appropriate SAA media.

III.A.4. Publication of the draft standard in external publications and/or circulation of the draft standard to heads of interested organizations.

III.A.5. Circulation of the draft standard to groups and individuals, inside and outside of SAA, with particular interest or expertise in the topic, including posting on electronic networks.

III.A.6. Joint meetings with interested organizations to discuss common concerns. These meetings could occur at the outset of the project or after circulation of a draft standard.

III.A.7. Open forums or hearings at the SAA annual meeting.

III.B. Preparation of the package containing the final draft of the standard and supporting documentation

Once it has completed the consultation process and prepared the final draft of the standard, the developing group will compile a package to forward to the Standards Committee for its review. This package will include:

III.B.1. Full text of the proposed standard.

III.B.2. Introductory narrative.

This section must include the scope of application, in particular:

- The purpose or objective of the proposed standard and
- The specific audiences, circumstances, or techniques to which it is directed.
- It should also contain background and other supplementary information, as necessary, that can provide a context for understanding how the standard was developed and when and how it will be used, including
- Brief history and methodology of its development
- Participants in the development process
- Relationship to predecessor documents
- Significant changes from earlier versions
- Glossary or definitions of terms, if necessary
- Illustrations or examples of how the standard can be applied
- Bibliography, if necessary.

III.B.3. Documentation of the consultation process

The developing group must submit documentation that the consultation process has taken place and that a reasonable agreement has been reached on the contents and intent of the proposed standard. This evidence may take the form of:

Copies of correspondence from other organizations supporting the proposed standard;

Clippings from publications and/or websites that publicized the development project or published drafts of the standard;
Copies of correspondence discussing areas of dispute in the proposed standard;
In case of unresolved disputes, explanations from the group responsible for development of efforts made to accommodate the expressed concerns and/or justification for approving the standard in the absence of universal agreement.

III.B.4. Maintenance and review plan

The submitting group must recommend a plan for maintenance and review of the standard it has developed. All adopted SAA standards will be assigned to an ongoing SAA subcommittee for necessary maintenance and review. Each will be assigned to a review cycle of no more than 5 years, at which time the SAA Council will be asked to reaffirm, revise, or rescind the standard. The "Maintenance and Review Plan" will suggest the appropriate subgroup for assignment and length of the review cycle. (See V.C.)

III.C. Notice of abandoned project

In the event that the developing group fails to reach general agreement on a draft standard or, for whatever reason, chooses to discontinue its work on the proposed standard, it shall notify the Standards Committee that it has abandoned the project. The Standards Committee shall publish a notice in appropriate SAA media that the project has been discontinued.

IV. Standards Committee Review of Draft Standard

Upon receiving the final draft package from the developing group, the Standards Committee will take the following actions:

IV.A. Review package

The Standards Committee will review the package to ensure that it is complete and that adequate consultation and review have taken place. It may return the package to the developing group if significant elements are missing.

IV.B. Notice of project completion/publication of revised draft standard

IV B.1. Notice of project completion

When the final draft package is deemed complete, the Standards Committee will publish a notice in the appropriate SAA media announcing that the standards development project has been completed and the draft standard forwarded to the Council. (See IV.C.)

IV B.2. Publication of revised draft standard.

Based on the substance of the revisions, the potential breadth of impact, and any apparent substantive remaining conflicts on content, the Standards Committee may determine that the entire revised text should be published via an appropriate SAA medium in order to ensure the broadest possible participation in and awareness of the standards development process. The Standards Committee will accept written comments on the revised draft addressed to the Standards Committee chair within thirty days of publication of the revised draft or notice of the availability of the revised draft.

If additional comments received after publication of the revision indicate widespread disagreement on the revised draft within the membership of SAA, the Committee may determine that the draft should be referred back to the developing group for response. Substantive changes to the draft standard as a result of these additional comments may require publication of a new "Notice of Completion" and notification or publication of a new revised draft.

The Standards Committee may determine that issues raised in the additional comments were already addressed adequately during the development and consultation process. The Standards Committee will then publish the notice of completion and forward the package to the SAA Council.

IV.C. Recommendation to the SAA Council.

At the conclusion of the development process, the Standards Committee will send to the Council a report on the process and a recommendation.

IV.C.1. Recommendation to consider adoption

When the Standards Committee is satisfied that the development and consultation process has been completed satisfactorily it will, after publication of the notice, forward the package to the SAA Council with a recommendation that the Council consider adopting the draft document as an official standard of the Society of American Archivists.

IV.C.2. Report on "irreconcilable differences"

The Standards Committee, after reviewing all documentation, may determine that disagreements raised represent substantive irreconcilable differences of views or professional positions. In this situation, the Standards Committee will forward the package to the SAA Council with an explanation of the remaining problems and, depending on the type of standard and breadth of impact, may or may not recommend that the Council consider adopting the draft as an official standard of the Society of American Archivists.

V. Promulgation, Maintenance, and Review of Adopted Standards

The Standards Committee shall ensure that the following actions are taken for each standard that is formally adopted by the SAA Council. Often the working group that

developed the standard will be actively involved or have primary responsibility for these activities.

V.A. Publication of the standard

V.A.1. Full text in the SAA newsletter

The preferred method of publication will be to publish the full text of the adopted standard in the Society's newsletter and on the SAA website.

V.A.2. Notice of availability in newsletter

Some standards may be too long to publish in the newsletter. For these, a notice of their approval and a summary of their contents will be published in the next SAA newsletter and/or on the SAA website, along with information about how to obtain a copy from the SAA website.

V.A.3. Notice in the *American Archivist*

Both SAA's journal of record, the *American Archivist*, and the SAA website carry official Council meeting minutes, which will record all formal approvals of SAA standards.

V.A.4. Added to Standards Committee webpage

The Standards Committee will post all formally adopted standards on the Standards Committee webpage with the following information: 1) the name of the standard, 2) a description of the standard, 3) a link to the full text of the standard or a description of where the standard can be obtained, 4) the date on which the standard was adopted, 5) next review date of the standard, 6) information about how comments and feedback for revision can be submitted, and 7) any additional supporting documents or information.

V.B. Promotion of the standard

V.B.1. Notice to heads of allied professional organizations

The President and/or Executive Director shall send a letter and copy of the adopted standard to all interested outside organizations to notify them of SAA's action. The Standards Committee will assist the working group that developed the standard in drafting the letter and identifying which groups to contact.

V.B.2. Press release to editors of professional journals and newsletters

The Executive Director and/or Managing Editor should, in cooperation with the developing working group and the Standards Committee, draft a press release to editors of allied professional journals and newsletters to announce the development and approval of the standard, providing its full text when possible.

V.B.3. Other publicity.

For standards of interest beyond professional circles, the Executive Director, Managing Editor, Standards Committee, and developing working group should determine how best to publicize their approval. The Standards Committee will assist the subgroup in developing workshops, conference sessions, or public forums on the new standard.

V.C. Maintenance of the standard

V.C.1. Subgroup responsible for maintenance and review

As part of the approval process, the Standards Committee will assign the standard to an ongoing SAA subcommittee for maintenance and review. In most cases, the subcommittee will be the working group that has been actively involved in its development.

V.C.2. Review cycle

All adopted SAA standards will be assigned a review cycle of no more than 5 years, with formal review commencing 3 years following adoption or reaffirmation. However, comments and revisions to the standard and proposals to revise adopted standards may be submitted at any time. At the end of the review cycle, the SAA Council will be asked to reaffirm, revise, or rescind the standard.

V.C.3. Monitoring and promulgating use.

The maintaining subcommittee will be responsible for promoting the proper and effective use of the standard and will regularly obtain comments and feedback on the standard for future review and revision.

V.D. Review of the standard

At least two years before the review cycle expires, the Standards Committee will notify the maintaining subcommittee that it should initiate a formal review of the content and use of the standard. In consultation with the Standards Committee, the group will prepare a plan that will ensure consensus using the same kinds of broadly based consultation and review that occurred when the standard was originally developed. The plan may include:

V.D.1. Other SAA subgroups and interested organizations outside of SAA that the subcommittee plans to consult

V.D.2. Proposed joint meetings with some of these subgroups and/or organizations to discuss proposed revisions

V.D.3. Proposed public hearings at the SAA annual meeting

V.D.4. Proposed publications, websites, or other communication media where comments

and proposed revisions will be submitted and be made publicly available.

V.D.5. Financial resources needed for revision and review, such as travel or editorial support.

The subcommittee will submit the plan to the Standards Committee, at which point the Standards Committee will decide whether the review process is adequate. If significant financial resources are required for revision and review, the Standards Committee will forward the plan to the SAA Council with a recommendation for funding.

V.E. Recommendation to the SAA Council

V.E.1. The maintaining subcommittee will submit a package to the Standards Committee containing its recommendation to reaffirm, revise, or rescind the standard along with documentation about the review process (as in III.).

V.E.2. The Standards Committee will review the package to ensure that the review plan was adequate. Assuming that no procedural questions remain unresolved, it will forward the package to the Council with the recommendation to reaffirm, revise, or rescind.

V.F. Notice and publication of reaffirmed, revised, or rescinded standards.

An information dissemination process similar to that outlined under V.A. and V.B. for new standards will be followed to ensure broad awareness of SAA actions concerning reaffirmed, revised, and rescinded standards.

Procedures for SAA Endorsement of an External Standard

I. Submission of a Proposal to Endorse an External Standard

Proposals must be submitted by official groups within the SAA. Individuals who are interested in submitting a proposal for the endorsement of an external standard may consult with the Standards Committee on appropriate groups to which they may wish to submit a proposal.

I.A. The proposing group shall:

I.A.1. Download a blank PROPOSAL FORM from the Standards Committee website. [link]

I. A. 2. Complete the PROPOSAL FORM, which shall include:

- Name of the standard;
- Brief summary of the standard;
- Group responsible for formulating/publishing the standard;
- Where the standard can be found (website link, publication details, etc.);
- How this standard affects archival practice;
- How the standard is being used in the archival profession (who is using it? how is it being used? Is it widely used?); and
- How the standard is reviewed or revised (how often? By whom? Is the review process open?)

I.A.3. File the PROPOSAL FORM with the Standards Committee.

I.B. The Standards Committee chair shall:

I.B.1. Enter receipt of the PROPOSAL FORM in the STANDARDS PROJECT LOG on the Standards Committee webpage and send acknowledgement of receipt to proposing body.

I.B.2. Distribute copies of the PROPOSAL FORM to the other members of the Standards Committee. The chair may also distribute copies of the proposal form to subcommittees or working groups for comment.

I.B.3. Collect comments and suggestions from members of the Standards Committee and other subgroups to which the proposal was distributed.

I.B.4. Arrange for a discussion to determine whether there is a consensus to endorse the standard.

II. Standards Committee Action in Response to Proposal

The Standards Committee will take a formal vote in response to the proposal:

II. A. Return for revision

The Standards Committee will return to the submitting group a proposal form that is incomplete or that requires revision and request that it be revised and resubmitted.

II. B. Decline

The Standards Committee may decline the endorsement of an external standard because: 1) the external standard is in direct conflict with an SAA-adopted standard or policy; 2) there is insufficient demand or potential benefit to SAA members; 3) the standard is not widely adopted or used in the archival field; or 4) the review process does not allow for SAA contribution or comment.

II. C. Endorse

If the Standards Committee agrees that the external standard has benefit to the SAA community, it will recommend the standard to the SAA Council for endorsement following the outline of the “Procedure for Review and Approval.” It will then take the following actions:

1. Publish the full standard or link to the standard on the standards webpage along with the endorsement proposal.
2. Notify the SAA community about the endorsement through appropriate SAA media.

SAA Technical Subcommittee on Descriptive Standards Transition Recommendations

As part of its restructuring, the SAA Standards Committee has recommended that the Technical Subcommittee on Descriptive Standards be dissolved. The members of TSDS were full participants in the Standards Committee restructuring process and support the decision. The following is a list of recommendations concerning the dissolution of TSDS and the transfer of its responsibilities.

Members

TSDS has seven members (excluding *ex officio* members). The terms of two members, Doris Malkmus and chair Michael Rush, expire at the 2009 Annual Meeting. The terms of Megan Friedel and Kathryn Young continue to 2010 and those of Laura Davis, Mark Matienzo, and Cory Nimer expire in 2011. The restructuring of the Standards Committee includes expanding the committee from six to nine members, requiring an additional member for each three-year staggered term. As such, I recommend that two members of TSDS, one whose term expires in 2010 and one whose term expires in 2011, be appointed to the Standards Committee to serve out the remainder of their terms. This, combined with three new members of Standards, will provide the needed nine members with staggered 3-year terms and provide some overlap with the expertise of TSDS.

***Ex Officio* Members**

Ex officio members of TSDS should be transferred to the Standards Committee. This includes the chairs of the Description and Reference, Access, and Outreach sections, the representatives to MARBI and CCDA, a representative of CCAD, and the chairs of the EAD and EAC Working Groups. Several of these are already *ex officio* members of the Standards Committee. The EAD Roundtable has had an *ex officio* representative to TSDS but, as it's unclear when or why this practice began, I recommend that it be discontinued.

Responsibilities

TSDS's primary responsibility for the past few years has been to monitor, review, and provide comment on emerging standards in the realm of archival description. The chair has monitored such activities and/or been alerted to calls for comment by the Standards Committee chair. I recommend that the chair of the Standards Committee appoint one of the former TSDS members to serve as Descriptive Standards Coordinator, responsible for relevant activity in the profession and prompting action by the Standards Committee as appropriate.

Reporting Committees

I recommend that any and all committees and/or working groups reporting to TSDS, including the EAD and EAC Working Groups, report to the Standards Committee.

Current Agenda Items

TSDS voted in February to ask the EAD Roundtable to undertake a revision of EAD. A formal request was sent to the chair of the EAD Roundtable, with no response to date. TSDS expects EAC-CPF (Corporate Bodies, Persons, Families) to be proposed as an SAA standard by the EAC Working Group this year. After that, TSDS expects the EAC Working Group to begin work on EAC-F (Functions). I recommend that pursuing a revision of EAD and encouraging the ongoing work of the EAC WG be priorities for the Standards Committee.

Michael Rush, TSDS Chair, 2007-2009
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