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**ISO TC 46/SC 9 N 442**

2006-02-20

To: ISO TC 46/SC 9 members  
Selected liaison organizations  
ISO/TC 46/SC 9 Working Group 5 (ISSN)

From: ISO/TC 46/SC9 Secretariat

**Subject: Voting results and comments on ISO Committee Draft 3297,  
*Information and documentation – International Standard Serial  
Number (ISSN)***

Dear Colleagues,

Attached are the voting results and comments on ISO Committee Draft 3297 concerning revision of the ISSN standard.

CD 3297 was approved for advancement to the Draft International Standard (DIS) stage by 22 of the ISO member bodies that voted. There was 1 negative vote.

Comments on the Committee Draft were submitted by 9 ISO member bodies and by GS1 (formerly EAN International) and the International DOI Foundation, both of which have formal liaison status with TC 46/SC 9.

The comments on CD 3297 have been forwarded to TC 46/SC 9 Working Group 5 for discussion and response at their meeting on March 13-14, 2006 at the ISSN International Centre in Paris.

A revised version of this document incorporating WG 5's responses to comments on CD 3297 will be distributed in April 2006.

**ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN:**

- 1. ISO TC46/SC9: For information**
- 2. ISO TC46/SC9/WG 5: For discussion and response at the WG5 meeting, 2006-03-13/14.**

With regards,

*[original signed by]*

Jane Thacker  
ISO TC 46/SC 9 Secretary



RESULT OF VOTING ON COMMITTEE DRAFT 3297	
Date <b>2006-02-20</b>	<b>ISO/TC 46/SC 9 N 442</b>
Title of TC/SC concerned <b>Information and documentation – Identification and description</b>	

<b>CD 3297</b>	<b>ISO/TC 46/SC 9 N 411</b>	Circulated: <b>2005-10-30</b>	Voting ended: <b>2006-01-30</b>
English title:	<b>Information and documentation – International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) [revision of ISO 3297:1998]</b>		
French title:	<b>Information et documentation – Numéro international normalisé des publications en série (ISSN)</b>		

**Compilation of the results of voting on ISO Committee Draft 3297**

Member body	Member status	Vote (on approval to circulate the draft as a DIS)			Comments	Did not reply
	P/O	Approve	Disapprove	Abstain		
SA (Australia)	P	SA			--	
BDS (Bulgaria)	P	BDS			--	
SCC (Canada)	P	SCC			SCC	
SAC (China)	P	SAC			SAC	
ICONTEC (Colombia)	P					ICONTEC
HZN (Croatia)	P	HZN			--	
CNI (Czech Republic)	P	CNI			--	
DS (Denmark)	P	DS				
SFS (Finland)	P	SFS			SFS	
AFNOR (France)	P	AFNOR			AFNOR	
DIN (Germany)	P	DIN			--	
MSZT (Hungary)	P	MSZT				
UNI (Italy)	P	UNI			--	
JISC (Japan)	P	JISC			--	
KEBS (Kenya)	P					KEBS
NEN Netherlands	P	NEN			--	
SN (Norway)	P	SN			--	
PKN (Poland)	P	PKN			--	
IPQ (Portugal)	P	IPQ			--	
GOST R (Russian Fed.)	P					GOST R
SABS (South Africa)	P	SABS			--	
AENOR (Spain)	P	AENOR			--	
SIS (Sweden)	P	SIS			SIS	
SNV (Switzerland)	P	SNV			SNV	
ANSI (U.S.A.)	P	ANSI/NISO			ANSI/NISO	
DSSU (Ukraine)	P					DSSU
BSI (U.K.)	P		BSI		BSI	
<b>Totals (P-members only)</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>

**Comments also received from:** GS1 (formerly EAN International); International DOI Foundation; and EVS (Estonia).

NOTE: Abstentions and incomplete votes are not counted

## COMMENTS ON ISO COMMITTEE DRAFT 3297

### COMMENTS FROM BSI (U.K.):

#### Specific comments

1. **Throughout:** We propose that “Medium-Neutral ISSN” and “MNI” be replaced by “Collocating Number” and “CN” throughout the document. Since the proposed Media Neutral ISSN is not, in fact, an ISSN, the term is unhelpful and is already causing considerable confusion.  
  
**N.B. The UK National Body will be prepared to change its vote from “No” to “Yes” if this change is agreed.**
2. **Section 3.9.** The definition of the CN in Section 3. Point 3.9 gives the definition starting as: “ISSN designated by the ISSN network to enable collocation...” Since it is not an ISSN, the following alternative wording is suggested for the definition: “A number applied to the different media versions of the same continuing resource to enable collocation. The number will take the form of the same eight digits of the first assigned ISSN to that continuing resource
3. **Section 7.** We recommend adding some wording in section 7 that states what the CN is *NOT* so that people understand that it is *NOT* an ISSN and is totally different from an ordinary ISSN.
4. **Annex B, B10.** Since there are many proprietary metadata schemas in use in the serials sector, further recommendations and examples of how to use the CN in metadata would be welcome. Currently, many publishers do not make it explicit which media-version ISSN they are using when providing an ISSN in metadata. For the CN to work effectively, publishers will need to clearly indicate when they are using the CN as opposed to an ISSN. Publishers should be encouraged to adopt a common approach to storing and communicating ISSNs and CNs, the former in a way which makes the medium explicit.
5. **Annex C – Metadata, Table C1.** “Country of publication” uses ISO 3166 and “Language of Publication” uses ISO 639.2. As both of these standards are cited in Section 2, (Normative References), they should also be cited here in the metadata table. Date (ISO 8801), Key title (ISO 4 Serial Title Word Abbreviations) and possibly UDC should also be listed in Section 2 and mentioned in the metadata table.
6. **Annex C – Tables C1 and C2.** There seem to be inconsistencies between Tables C.1 and C.2 in that some of the elements that are mandatory in C.1 are not marked as mandatory in C.2. Presumably if they existed in the pre-publication record (Table C1) they would still exist in the fuller record (Table C2). This applies to Title, Publication Status, Date(s) of Publication and Frequency.

7. **Annex C – C3.** The first sentence in Section C3 is confusing and requires some punctuation. Suggestion: “The ISSN metadata, maintained by the ISSN Centre or national or regional ISSN centres, shall include.....”.
8. **Annex D – Roles and Responsibilities of the ISSN Centres.** This annex makes no mention at all of the CN. It would be useful if there were a statement about who will do what in relation a) to retrospective allocation of CN and b) future allocation.

### **General comments**

9. It would be useful to include a brief annex explaining how ISSNs that are currently stored in link resolvers will acquire the CN.

## **COMMENTS FROM SCC (Canada):**

### **Introduction**

- **Introduction**, general comment: Is it time for the ISSN community to reconsider its use of the term "continuing resource"? We note that the current draft of *RDA: Resource Description and Access* (which is scheduled to replace AACR in 2008) no longer uses this term.

### **Clause 5, Assignment of ISSN**

- **Clause 5**, technical comment: There should be a more explicit statement in clause 5 to address the current ISSN assignment practice that all versions of an electronic continuing resource (e.g. PDF, HTML, and e-mail versions) are covered by the same ISSN plus the qualifying term "online". Neither clause 5.3 or 5.5 makes this clear. In fact, they could imply the opposite depending on the reader's interpretation of what constitutes "media". Some people might consider PDF and HTML to be formats, not media, so these statements are open to possible misinterpretation.
- **Clause 5.3**, technical comment: We suggest rephrasing this clause to remove possible confusion over what is meant by "a defined medium". Where is the medium defined? One suggestion is to substitute "*in a particular medium*".
- **Clause 5.5**, technical comment: The terms ""editions" and "media" are not interchangeable. "Editions" also implies geographic and language editions. Does the following rewording capture the intended meaning of 5.5?  

*"Separate ISSN and key titles shall be assigned to the different media editions of a continuing resource that is published in more than one form of media, regardless of whether each media edition bears the same title or not."*
- **Clause 5.6**, technical comment: It is not clear what happens to the MNI when a major title change occurs (see our 2<sup>nd</sup> technical comment on Annex B.1, below). Clause 5.6

should be revised to specify what happens to the MNI, as well as the key title, when a major title change occurs.

Possible revision: *"In cases where the continuing resource undergoes a major change in title ..., a new ISSN shall be assigned with the corresponding new MNI and new key title established."*

### Clause 7, Medium-Neutral ISSN

- **Clause 7**, technical comment: We suggest replacing the phrase "medium-neutral functionality". Since the MNI is a key concept being introduced into this edition of the ISSN standard, it would be helpful to reword this clause to provide more explanation (which would also be easier to translate into other languages). We suggest the first sentence be rephrased along the lines used in Annex B.1:

*"To facilitate the usefulness of ISSN in applications that require identification of the continuing resource without regard to the particular medium in which it is issued, a single Medium-Neutral ISSN shall be ...."*

### Clause 8, Printing and display of ISSN

- **Clause 8.1**, technical comment: Add a new paragraph referring to Annex B.10 for information on how the MNI should display, e.g. *"For specifications on the display of MNI, see Annex B.10."*
- **Clause 8.1**, technical comment: It would be helpful to include a MNI in the examples at 8.1 showing how several related ISSN are displayed together. The second sentence of B.10 implies that this could happen, so an example at clause 8.1 would be helpful.
- **Clause 8.3**, editorial comment: Change the wording from: "...shall appear on the title screen or failing it, on the main menu, and, if ..." to: *"shall appear on the title screen or its equivalent and, if ...."*

### Annex B, Medium Neutral ISSN

- **Annex B**, technical comment: A concern was expressed about the prefix "MNI" because it does not bear an obvious connection to the ISSN system. The suggestion was that the prefix "ISSN-MN" would be preferable because it demonstrates a clear connection with the ISSN "brand". This instant recognition seems particularly beneficial when the Medium-Neutral ISSN is embedded in other identifiers such as the DOI and URN. Another benefit is that "ISSN-MN" would file in conjunction with other ISSN in any lists, such as those referred to in the second sentence of B.10.
- **Annex B.1**, technical comment: The MNI and ISSN are not codes. We suggest: *"The Medium-Neutral ISSN (MNI) provides a collocating device for the different media versions of a continuing resource...."*
- **Annex B.1**, technical comment: This clause states that a MNI is applied to "the different media versions of the same continuing resource, whether the title is the same or not". Clarification is needed as to whether and how a significant title change in the first

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media version (which bears the ISSN designated as the MNI) would affect the handling of the MNI in records of the ISSN Network. For example, what happens when the print version whose ISSN is also the designated MNI has a significant change of title requiring the assignment of a new ISSN and key title (as per clause 5.6) but the Web version of that resource does not undergo a title change. How would this situation be handled in terms of the MNI?

- **Annex B.2**, technical comment: Specify which level of agency within the ISSN Network is responsible for designating the MNI. Is this designation done by the International Centre or by the national centres? Alternatively, reword the sentence as:  
*"An MNI shall be designated only by an authorized centre of the ISSN Network."*  
Rationale: The current wording implies that the entire Network has to be involved each time a MNI is designated.
- **Annex B.5**, editorial comment: The sentence could be clarified by rewording as:  
*"The ISSN that is assigned to the first medium version of a continuing resource to be entered in the ISSN Register shall also be designated as the MNI for all versions of that continuing resource."*
- **Annex B.7**, editorial comment: The specification should be clarified by adding the following: *"... no separate metadata record will be created for the MNI in the ISSN Register."*

### Annex C: Metadata

- **Annex C**, general comment: The difference between Table C.1 and Table C.2 is unclear. Is it necessary to have separate Tables here? If it is, then the reason for the distinction between Tables C.1 and C.2 should be made more evident in the paragraphs that precede them.
- **Annex C**, editorial comment: We suggest changing the title of Annex C to "Metadata for ISSN registration".
- **Table C.1 vs. C.2**, technical comment: Why is "Type of continuing resource" in Table C.2 and not in Table C.1? "Type of continuing resource" seems like the kind of data element that ought to be recorded when the ISSN is assigned.
- **Tables C.1 and C.2**, technical comment: There is no specification indicated in the blank cells of the second columns. Change the heading on the second column to "Status". Replace the word "Yes" with "Mandatory". In the blank cells in the second column, specify either "Optional" or "Optional, if applicable".
- **Tables C.1 and C.2**, technical comment: "Place and Publisher name" should be listed as separate data elements and "place" should be an optional element. In many cases, the place of publication for a continuing resource on the Web will be unknown.

- **Table C.2**, technical comment: The data element for "Electronic location and access" should be "Mandatory if applicable".

#### **Annex E, Use of ISSN in other identification systems**

- **Annex E**, general comment: In our opinion most of the text of Annex E should be removed from the standard and placed on the ISSN-IC Web site instead. It does not seem necessary to explain the normalization rules of DOI, OpenURL etc. in the ISSN standard. The section on OpenURL seems arcane for anyone who is not already familiar with OpenURL – and those who are familiar with OpenURL are not likely to be using the ISSN standard as their encoding specification. Furthermore the distinctions between the pilot version of OpenURL and the 2004 specification reinforce the impression that, vis-à-vis ISSN, this material is better suited to publication in some other form that can be updated and re-issued more easily than the ISO standard.
- **Annex E**, editorial comment: We suggest that Annex E be substantially reduced. Retain clause E.1 but almost everything that follows can be removed and re-issued in some other form by the ISSN-IC. The sections on DOI, URN, OpenURL, and SICI could be reduced to usage scenarios and examples (as implied by the first sentence of E.1) with references to the appropriate Web addresses for specific information. The exception to this suggestion is section E.6 on bar codes (see our comment on E.6, below).
- **Annex E.2.2**, Syntax of a DOI, editorial comment: The example is incorrect as it shows a 9-digit ISSN in the DOI.
- **Annex E.6**, EAN bar codes and ISSN, editorial comment: We suggest that section E.6 should be reorganized as a separate Annex on "Bar codes and ISSN" with the focus being on the EAN (GS1) bar codes.

#### **Annex F, Use of Medium-Neutral ISSN in other identification systems**

- **Annex F**, General comment: As in our comment on Annex E above, we suggest that most of the text of Annex F should be removed from this ISO standard and published on the ISSN-IC Web site instead, where it is better suited to updating and additions. The purpose of Annex F should be to explain how and why MNI would be useful in other identifier systems. We suggest retaining clause F.1 and editing the remainder of the annex to focus on the usage scenarios and examples only. In addition, references to the NISO standards are not necessary; it is more useful to refer to the Web sites for the DOI and OpenURL.

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### **COMMENTS FROM AFNOR (France):**

- **Clause 7 and Annex B**, body of the text: Give examples to illustrate MNI in the body of the text and more specifically in clause 7 and Annex B entitled "Medium Neutral ISSN"

**Annex C:** At the end of clause C.1.1, add the following: *all required elements shall be maintained;*

**Annex D:** Enhance this Annex with the following actions to be added after sentence in d):

*e) Designate or validate MNIs according to agreement established with the national centers*

*f) Maintain and provide a central register including all MNI designations*

**Annex E and F:**

Keep only text related to ISO standards.

Regroup identification systems in a separate Annex with their corresponding Internet addresses.

For Annex E, keep clause E.6 “EAN barcodes and ISSN” and refer to ISO standards 19005-1 and multipart standard ISO 15930.

**Annex F:** Give MNI examples

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## COMMENTS FROM SIS (Sweden):

General comment: We congratulate the working group to an excellent work. The text is clear and pedagogical and it is easy to read and follow. First of all we would like to point out that we fully support the concept of Medium-Neutral ISSN (MNI). We also appreciate the scope (chapter 1) for its generosity and broadness, and note with satisfaction that ISSN are assigned free of charge (chapter 11).

Annex E.4.1 "URN and ISSN – Overview", technical comment: It says: “The URN has no associated global infrastructure that would enable resolution outside local implementations which have developed their own means of resolution.”

We object to the formulation of this sentence which, in our opinion, could give the erroneous idea that there is a URN organisation that should have worked out a global resolution service.

Proposed change: This responsibility lies in fact on local organisations and owners of Namespace Identifiers (NID), which we think should be more clearly expressed here.

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## COMMENTS FROM ANSI/NISO (U.S.A.):

**General comment #1:** We welcome the updating of the standard, the clarification of its extension to other continuing resources, and the reinforcement that different media versions require different ISSNs, but we are uncomfortable with the term "medium-neutral identifier

(MNI)". The implication from the name is that this is an ISSN that applies to a serial irrespective of its medium. If that is its purpose, we believe that a) it should not be the same as a medium-specific ISSN (which is the proposal in the CD - that the MNI is the same as the first ISSN assigned to a serial), and b) that it should be called something like a "Serial Work Identifier", the assignment of which could still be done by ISSN agencies.

If, however, the purpose of the MNI is one of collocation, we feel that it should be more explicitly called a "Serial Collocating (or Collocation) Number".

Proposed change: Give strong consideration to renaming the MNI to something like:

Collocating ISSN

Serial Collocating Number

**General comment #2:** Well-defined and thorough implementation guidelines and supports will be critical to the success of the proposed changes. As can be seen from these comments, many organizations utilizing the ISSN in their systems have a great deal of confusion about how to implement the new MNI and ISSN.

Proposed change: Critical: Develop implementation guidelines similar to what was done in support of the ISBN standard revision.

**General comment #3:** Although we support the MNI, we have some concerns about the ripple effects through linking mechanisms such as OpenURL and "closed" identifier lists in protocols such as ISO ILL and, to a lesser extent, NCIP. Indexing and retrieving the "right" record(s) in an ILS also will be affected by the MNI - favorably in the long run.

**General / Technical comment #4:** A syntactical difference between a MNI and an ISSN is preferred. This would allow the OpenURL not to have to rely on the 'key' element in the OpenURL (mni= instead of issn=).

One issue that would be good to raise is the fact that the MNI has the same structure as a regular ISSN. Unless MARC assigns it a tag or at least subfield of its own – some ILS will have no way to distinguish it from a regular ISSN. Some kind of structural difference is significant not just for linking but also for matching.

Proposed change: Critical: Define / specify the MARC syntactical / record structure difference between the MNI and ISSN.

**General / Technical comment #5:** I do not know of any plans how this number will be carried in MARC records. And generally, I feel that there is not enough information about MNI in this standard. For instance, in Annex B there is a statement that "the MNI will be recorded as a data element in a designated field of all the metadata records"(B7), but there is no information whether this field has been designated or if we are awaiting some other lengthy process to approve this field. There is no timeline for this new element. We know what to expect from regular ISSNs but when and where are we going to see the first MNIs? Could these issues be addressed in some informative annex as were the possible uses of ISSN in other identification systems explained in Annex E?

Proposed change: Add an informative annex to address issues of MNI as a data element in MARC records.

**General comment #6:** Our understanding is that the Medium Neutral ISSN is intended primarily as a tool for libraries and vendors to use in collocating different formats of the same content, but we have some concerns that the mechanisms for disseminating the MNI are not as clearly spelled out as they are for the regular ISSN. There's no indication that publishers would be expected to print or display the MNI on the resources in question, and thus we're not sure how a library (or vendor) that didn't have access to the ISSN database might go about discovering which of several ISSN might be the MNI in situations where it isn't clear which format was first published. A collocating tool like the MNI is desperately needed, but may not reach its full effectiveness if it isn't widely disseminated. As written, the standard doesn't seem to include any mechanism for distributing information about assigned MNIs beyond the ISSN database.

Proposed change: Address issues relating to dissemination of MNI information.

**General comment #7:** The full DOI system specification is currently a working draft within ISO TC46 as ISO WD 26324. Conformance with the DOI system specification will aid in interoperability between two ISO TC46 identifier systems.

**Clause 3.9, technical comment:** Proposed change: Expand this definition to include some of MNI's characteristics disclosed later in the document, and thus making the definition more specific. Example: MNI - first ISSN assigned to a registered title to enable collocation among different media versions of the same continuing resource and designated by the ISSN Network regardless of the existence of other versions.

**Clause 3.9, technical comment:** Proposed change: The definition of ISSN Medium-Neutral should state a preferred display format in line with the requirements described in 3.4 on p. 2 of the draft. The definition in 3.9 should also state that the ISSN Medium-Neutral is a distinctive data element from the ISSN.

**Clauses 3.9 and 7 and Annex F, technical comment:** Proposed change: For the Medium-Neutral ISSN examples of actual resources should be listed for illustration purposes, either in sections 3.9, 7, and/or Annex F.

**Clause 7, technical comment:** The standard calls for different ISSN's for the different versions, then in the Medium Neutral section (7, p. 4) it says "a single Medium-Neutral ISSN (MNI) shall be designated for all media versions ..."

Proposed change: Clarify if a resource could actually have 2 ISSN's one for the individual part and one for the medium neutral?

**Clause 7 and Annex B, technical comment:** The proposed example of how the medium-neutral ISSN would be written or printed is not as effective in identifying that the number that follows the label is an ISSN.

In the proposed example, "MN" represents medium-neutral. It would be clearer in the proposed example that the number that follows is indeed based on the ISSN standard. This approach also parallels how a medium-specific ISSN is written or printed. The use of ISSNMN, either as upper case or lower case letters, as part of a DOI or an Open URL also seems appropriate.

Proposed change: Recommend that the English term be changed to ISSN Medium-Neutral (ISSNMN). This term and its abbreviation parallel the French term ISSN Medium-Neutre and emphasizes that the number that follows is based on the ISSN standard. We also suggest the following example as the prescription for how the ISSN Medium-Neutral would be written or printed:

Example:

ISSNMN 0251-1479

**Clause 8.1, paragraph 5**, technical comment: Distinguishing information (i.e. online, print, etc) must be required whenever an ISSN is displayed. This could be accomplished in section 8.1 by replacing "may also" with "must also"

Proposed change: Reword paragraph as follows:

"When serials or other continuing resources are produced in different media for which different ISSN and key titles are assigned, the related ISSN **must** also be displayed on or in the serials or other continuing resources, each with additional, distinguishing information."

**Clause 8.1, Examples**, technical comment:

Proposed change: If the medium qualifiers used in the examples under point 8.1 such as Print and Online are prescriptive, then a list of qualifiers and their definitions appropriate to other media would need to be added to the standard.

Recommend that "Electronic" and "Internet" be added to the Standard as acceptable substitutions for "Online" in display implementations.

**Clause 8.3, 1<sup>st</sup> sentence**, editorial comment: Grammar and clarity of meaning.

Proposed change: Change wording "or failing it" to "if that is not possible."

**Annex B**, editorial comment: Given the use of the ISSN in tagged systems, it would have been helpful to see the record coding (either from the ISSN network or MARC 21) for a serial with both an MNI and an ISSN, e.g., will the 022 be repeatable

Proposed change: Provide an example of record coding for a serial with both an MNI and ISSN.

**Annex B**, technical comment: The draft standard provides the most detail about the MNI in Annex B (p. 8). However, there are many additional facets about the nature of the MNI that have not been included in the draft. We think that these additional aspects of the MNI need to be addressed:

Proposed change: Address the following issues regarding the MNI:

- 1) What happens in this case: An ISSN is assigned to a continuing resource, in the first media-defined version of that continuing resource, so this ISSN becomes an MNI. However, the ISSN was assigned in error (e.g. the ISSN was already used) and is later cancelled. In the meantime the newly cancelled ISSN has already been used to collocate the first media-defined continuing resources and other subsequently media-defined continuing resources with distinct ISSNs. Does this newly cancelled ISSN continue to collocate and represent all media-defined continuing resources and their ISSNs? Or does

the new ISSN assigned to the first-media defined version of the continuing resource become the new MNI?

2) Apply the same question above (a) to ceased titles and merged titles.

3) If all formats of a continuing resource are released at the same time and each has their own ISSN, which one ISSN will become the MNI?

4) Will the MNI be assigned, retrospectively, to all continuing resources?

**Annex B**, technical comment:

**Rights Management & MNI:** Further explanation about the MNI's relationship to rights management is necessary. The draft standard does not seem to mention any of the potential effects of the MNI on rights management, for which there are a multitude of concerns, which follow:

Proposed change: Address the MNI's relationship to rights management for the following:

**Format** – The format of a work usually dictates the rights that a rightsholders wants to apply to the work. Therefore, while the MNI collocates all versions of a continuing resource, it would seem that the MNI itself cannot be used for rights management purposes because it further enhances the division between the format of a work (which the MNI does not distinguish) and rights.

**Content** – The content that may exist within one media-specified continuing resource with an ISSN could potentially differ from the content that could exist within another media-specified continuing resource with an ISSN, wherein the 2 resources share the same title. In this case, the MNI is collocating works of the same title, in different mediums, that have different content. Therefore, it seems that the MNI would not facilitate rights management since the MNI does not address the need to manage the rights of particular content.

**Annex B**, technical comment: Enforcement of MNI:

The ISSN standard has been adopted by many producers of continuing resources, but not all of them, and certainly not adopted as frequently as the ISBN standard. Yet the introduction of the MNI is based on a broad adoption of the ISSN standard.

How can we expect that publishers will comply with the use of the MNI when publishers frequently do not comply with the principle of applying distinct ISSNs to each defined-media continuing resource?

Proposed change: Address the following issues regarding enforcement of MNI usage:

How will the ISSN standard be further enforced to achieve MNI adoption? Will works that do not have an ISSN (e.g. the title, in its online format, has no ISSN), wherein at least one other title has an ISSN (e.g. the title, in its print format, has an ISSN), still be collocated under the MNI?

**Annex B**, general comment: Proposed change: Address the functionality of the MNI in these instances:

How does an MNI function if the publisher does not seek distinct ISSNs for each media and hence each media has the same ISSN? I.e. All media versions of the serial have the same ISSN, which is also the MNI? How will resolution services know what media-defined continuing resource they should resolve to?

Does the MNI include or identify works that are issued with a continuing resource (e.g. supplements), but that don't have their own ISSN (so therefore, would not have their own MNI)? Does it depend on the issuance of the supplement, in terms of frequency (i.e. it must have the same frequency as the serial with the ISSN) to the serial with the ISSN & MNI?

**Annex B.5**, technical comment: Given that the MNI is going to be the first media-defined assigned ISSN (per Annex B, B.5), there is no obvious way (e.g. via algorithmic deconstruction of the ISSN, a certain character in the ISSN, etc.) that users may easily know which ISSN is the MNI. This places a very strong burden upon ISSN support services, which must be available to all parties that use the ISSN for identification. It seems that a programmatic way to determine exactly what any one MNI might identify would be more helpful.

Proposed change: Identify a programmatic method for easily determining which ISSN is the MNI.

**Annex B.6**, technical comment: All ISSNs are designated or assigned; therefore this statement does not clarify what the MNI is exactly.

Proposed change: Clarify the statement "the MNI shall consist of the same eight digits as the designated ISSN."

**Annex B.7**, technical comment: This MNI record represents in a way the "work" for a continuing resource based on format. It seems like it would be helpful to have some metadata about this MNI for the purpose of display and function.

Proposed change: Consider the use of a separate record for the MNI.

**Annex B.10**, technical comment: Annex B (p. 8), #10 it states that they see this number as being used by systems and do not see a need for it to be human-readable. I could not possibly disagree more with them. Many times publishers give different versions a slightly different title, or just with our cataloging rules we end up giving these items different (uniform) titles. I think this number would be invaluable to collect all the versions of a title by using this one number.

Proposed change: Require that the MNI be human-readable just as the ISSN is.

**Annex B.10**, technical comment: Disagree that it is unlikely that the medium-neutral ISSN would be used for human-readable purposes. We believe that users would want to be able to identify that their search results were based on entering the ISSN Medium-Neutral as the search key. We see the ISSN Medium-Neutral becoming more important as a search key than the medium-specific ISSN. NLM is considering printing the ISSN Medium-Neutral in its publications "*List of Journals Indexed for MEDLINE*" and "*List of Serials Indexed for Online Users*."

Proposed change: Change as appropriate to ensure that the MNI can and will be used for human-readable purposes.

**Annex B.10**, technical comment: The specific display requirements for the MNI differ from the suggestions for display of the online or print ISSN. This appears to continue when the

MNI is used in a DOI and some of the other constructed identifiers. The display requirements for the other variations of the ISSN are generally vague and different formats are acceptable. But the standard becomes very specific about the MNI. This really doesn't make sense because the MNI is really just the first ISSN assigned and it will always be the ISSN of a specific format also.

Proposed change: Clarify display requirements for the MNI vs. other variations of the ISSN.

**Annex C, Tables C.1 and C.2**, technical comment: For the item "Additional Physical Form Title" being mandatory if applicable: If the MNI is going to be on all the records then the additional physical form titles should be derivable from the data using the MNI. It would seem that at application time the knowledge of Additional Physical Form Title would be incomplete. I'm not sure it should remain mandatory.

Proposed change: Review whether Additional Physical Form Title should be mandatory.

**Annex C, Table C.2**, technical comment: Proposed change: The ISSN Medium Neutral is listed as a separate data element. Therefore, can implementers of the standard conclude that the ISSN Medium Neutral is indeed a separate data element distinct from the medium-specific ISSN?

**Annex D**, general comment, Stability & Support of MNI: Would the service(s) implemented via the ISSN Register that provides the MNI look-up and distribution be free or fee-based? It does not seem feasible to charge a fee for this service due to concerns regarding "enforcement of MNI" comment.

Proposed change: Provide free look-up services for MNIs.

**Annex D**, general comment: Clause B2 states "An MNI shall be designated only by the ISSN Network")

Proposed change: Should "Designate MNI" be part of ISSN centre's roles and responsibilities?

**Annex D.2, item c)**, technical comment: Currently as a subscriber to ISSN Portal, I am more likely to find information on new ISSNs in bibliographical records in OCLC than I am in the central register. This needs to change, especially when it looks like the ISSN central register is going to be the only source of information about MNI.

Proposed change: Include requirement that the ISSN International Centre will "maintain and make available the central register of all ISSN assignments IN A TIMELY MANNER".

**Annex E**, technical comment: Proposed change: Address these issues regarding resolution services & MNI:

If the MNI is collocating all versions of a continuing resource and yet is also specific to one version of a continuing resource, how does the DOI know what resource to resolve to?

**Annexes E.1 and F.1**, editorial comment: Proposed change: "New identifier standards such as the InfoURI are emerging..." should be something like "New identifier standards such as the INFO URI have recently emerged...".

**Annexes E.1 and F.1**, editorial comment: Proposed change: Note that "InfoURI" as a term doesn't have any legitimacy. Use "INFO URI" as in HTTP URI or URN URI.

**Annexes E.1 and F.1, footnotes p. 6 and 11**, editorial comment: The correct way to cite an HTTP URI is with the path element.

Proposed change: The link "<http://www.issn.org>" should really have a trailing slash as in "<http://www.issn.org/>".

**Annex E.2.1**, technical comment: DOI is *not* a system for "identifying content objects", but as we put it in the DOI I-D "DOIs are identifiers for entities of significance to the content industries". And somewhat later: "an identifier of an entity for use in networked environments". Note that the CrossRef position is that DOIs reference works - not manifestations.

Proposed change: Revise description of a DOI.

**Annex E.2.2**, technical comment:

Explanation: There is potential for ambiguity in view of (1) possible confusion of the MNI with the ISSN for a related manifestation; and (2) automated processes which may not recognise MNI in the string. Both may lead to an erroneous conclusion as to the referent of the identifier. Including a specification in DOI metadata minimises the chances of such ambiguity. The DOI system consists of four components: syntax; description; resolution; and administration.

Syntax: the specification ensuring that a unique character string is assigned to the object that the DOI identifies. The DOI is an opaque string (a dumb number). Therefore no definitive information should be inferred from the specific character string used for a DOI (for example. The fact that a DOI prefix contains a Registrant code issued to a specific organization does not indicate ownership of rights, or current management responsibility). We recommend that even if the MNI label is carried in the DOI string itself, as recommended by ISSN (which may be useful for immediate readability) it should not be expected that the MNI would be extracted from the DOI or that users of the DOI will pick up the meaning from this string.

Description: a registered set of metadata elements that precisely describe the referent (object that has been identified with a DOI). The referent of a DOI can be an entity of various types (e.g. abstract "works", physical "manifestations", performances) that are not directly accessible in the form of a digital file or other manifestation: this is the case for the MNI. The DOI Registration Authority provides a Data Dictionary which enables the definition and precise ontology of all such metadata elements, based on a contextual metadata framework as a structured ontology compliant with logical axioms and constructors common to ontology languages such as W3C's OWL (Web Ontology Language). The dictionary is consistent with ISO standard ISO/IEC 21000-6:2004 Information technology, Multimedia framework (MPEG-21), Part 6: Rights Data Dictionary.

Resolution: the description of a DOI is specifically designed to be accessible via records stored in the resolution system for the DOI, and thus declared to other applications to assist in interoperability. Resolution of a DOI involves the retrieval of a record which includes reference to metadata that identifies the object by describing it.

Administration: the metadata for a DOI which has an MNI referent should be created by a DOI Registration Agency, following the rules of the DOI System, in co-operation with the ISSN agency to minimise the risk of diverging descriptions for the same referent.

Proposed change: It is noted in E.2.2. that “the DOI string is considered to be opaque (i.e. no meaning should be read into the number)”. The precise description of the MNI referent should be included in the DOI metadata, rather than simply including the MNI in the DOI syntax string as proposed in the annex. Further, the DOI description should be consistent with that of the ISSN agency for the same referent.

**Annex E.2.2**, technical comment: "DOI numbers are unique alphanumeric names". DOIs are not "numbers" but strings, and strictly not even "alphanumeric" since *\_any\_* UTF-8 chars are allowed. The DOIs as "numbers" concept is legacy thinking placing DOIs along with ISSNs, ISBNs, etc.

Proposed change: Revise reference to DOIs as numbers.

**Annex E.2.2, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph**, technical comment: The recommended syntax paragraph seems to contradict the paragraph E.1 that talks about linking to a specific medium. If the DOI is built with simply a prefix of “issn”, it does nothing to indicate the specific medium of the entity.

Proposed change: Resolve contradiction between E.2.2 and E.1 regarding linking to a specific medium instance or the medium-neutral instance.

**Annex E.2.2 and F.2.1**, technical comment:

Explanation: As ISSN is not a DOI Registration Agency, its recommendations regarding DOI construction cannot be read as having official authorisation by the International DOI Foundation.

Proposed change: Item E.2.2 refers to “the recommended syntax for constructing a DOI suffix using a DOI...” and F.2.1. refers to “the recommended form for a DOI suffix using an MNI...”. It should be made clear that these are recommendations by the International ISSN Agency, not the International DOI Foundation.

**Annex E.2.2 and F.2.2.**, editorial comment: Correctly done in E.2.3. Should be a hyphen (not an en dash) and no spaces.

Proposed change: Correct standard number reference to: Z39.84-2005

**Annex E.3 and F.3**, technical comment:

Within the OpenURL Framework, an Entity may be described by an ISSN, and hence an MNI, two distinct ways: with an Identifier Descriptor and/or with a Metadata Descriptor.

Some Entities of a ContextObject may be described by Metadata that conform to Metadata Formats registered in the OpenURL registry. For journals and parts of journals, current available Metadata Formats are:

info:ofi/fmt:kev:mtx:journal

info:ofi/fmt:xml:xsd:journal

In the KEV (XML) Metadata Format, the value expected to be associated with the key (tag) ‘issn’ is an ISSN number. The use of ISSN numbers in Metadata Descriptors does not require

registration of ISSN in the OpenURL Registry. The 'issn' key (tag) is simply a key (tag) like 'title' and 'aurlast'. (In the KEV Format, the key is prefixed with the Entity type when used within a ContextObject. For example, the key would be rft.issn in case the journal is the Referent.

To add MNI to the Metadata Formats for journal requires the registration of new journal Metadata Formats that include 'mni' as a key (tag) with an appropriate value definition. To use these new Metadata Formats within a Community, one must register new Community Profiles that include the new journal Metadata Formats. In this case, these new Community Profiles would likely be updated versions of the existing SAP profiles. (Note that Community Profiles cannot be changed; one can only register new Profiles.)

The above use of ISSN/MNI within OpenURL is described adequately in the Annexes at present.

However, an Entity may also be defined by an Identifier Descriptor. Identifiers used in Identifier Descriptors must be URIs, the Namespaces of the Identifiers must be registered in the OpenURL Registry, and registered Community Profiles must have selected the Identifier Namespace as part of the profile. For example, if the Referent were a journal (not a journal article), the following could be an Identifier Descriptor of the Referent:

```
rft_id=urn:issn:1234-5678
```

To use MNI in this way, it must be cast as a URI, the URI Namespace for MNI must be registered in the OpenURL Registry, and at least one Community Profile must have selected the URI Namespace for MNIs. (As for the Metadata case, this requires the registration of new Community Profiles, since existing Profiles cannot be changed.)

After registration as a URN, the MNI Namespace would be registered in the OpenURL Registry as

```
info:ofi/nam:urn:mni:
```

Within the OpenURL Registry, this would be the Identifier for the MNI Namespace and, to use the MNI Namespace, this Namespace Identifier would have to be included in a Community Profile. To use an MNI as an Identifier in an XML-Formatted ContextObject, one could then use the KEV pair:

```
rft_id=urn:mni:1234-5678
```

If the MNI Namespace were registered as an INFO URI, it would be registered in the OpenURL Registry as

```
info:ofi/nam:info/mni:
```

and this Namespace Identifier would be selected in a Community Profile. In an XML-Formatted ContextObject, it would appear as:

```
rft_id=info:mni/1234-5678
```

We suggest that the use of ISSN/MNI as an Identifier be included in the Annexes.

It has become very difficult to register new URNs. Because ISSN is already registered as an official URN, the road to MNI becoming an official URN may be less daunting than it would be otherwise.

However, registering MNI as an INFO URI is straightforward, as it grew out of the OpenURL standards work to accommodate commonly used identifier schemes within the

scholarly information world that are not URIs. As soon as MNI is registered as an INFO URI, it can be registered in the OpenURL Registry (INFO URI is registered with IANA as a URI).

Proposed change: Revise to include the use of ISSN/MNI as an Identifier.

**Annex E.3.1, 2nd sentence**, editorial comment: Proposed change: Revise sentence as follows:

"OpenURLs transport identifiers and/or descriptive metadata, ..."

**Annexes E.3.1 and E.3.4 and F.3.1 and F.3.3**, editorial comment: Version 0.1 was not a "pilot".

Proposed change: Remove references to the version 0.1 as a "pilot version". Consider replacing with:

"An earlier implementation and de-facto standard of OpenURL"

**Annex E.3.2.2**, editorial comment: Incorrect capitalization, lacking qualifier "encoded".

Proposed change: Replace "key/value pairs (or KEV)" with "Key/Encoded Value (or KEV)".

**Annex E.3.2.2 and E.3.3.2 and F.3.2.1**, technical comment: Inconsistent examples.

Proposed change: Suggest that the "http://[resolver?/" leader does not contribute anything useful. Suggest just cite a KEV pair, as in "&ft.issn=0987-5432" and "&issn=0987-5432". Introduce with some of wording like "would be encoded within an HTTP URI query string as:"

**Annex E.3.2.3**, technical comment: I think the statement about not using the eissn is inappropriate. This whole section is for the purpose of linking to medium specific entities. It is also inappropriate to recommend not using something just because of a perception that "not all OpenURL resolvers process it". This is an incorrect statement when considering commercially available resolvers.

**Annex E.3.2.3**, editorial comment: Incorrect capitalization, lacking qualifier "encoded", and no need for awkward doubling up of parentheses.

Proposed change: Replace "Key/Value" with "Key/Encoded Value (or KEV)".

**Annex E.3.4**, technical comment: The recommendation is that the builder of the OpenURL use an identifier that may or may not be present in the citation data from which the OpenURL is built. It is not in my opinion the OpenURL building function (the source) that needs to know about the MNI. It is the work of the resolver's knowledgebase. A knowledgebase must be able to identify items by any and all identifiers that come in to be resolved. The MNI ISSN should be one of x number of ISSN that is represented in the knowledgebase.

Proposed change: Revise to accurately reflect how OpenURL resolvers and knowledgebases will work with multiple ISSNs and the MNI.

**Annex E.4.2**, editorial comment: The html extension is incorrect.

Proposed change: Change the URL to: " *[text missing in original of NISO comments]*

**Annex E.4.2**, editorial comment: Note that RFC 2141 (URN syntax - 2.1) has the following: "Further, the Namespace Identifier is case insensitive, so that "ISBN" and "isbn" refer to the same namespace."

Proposed change: Make the NID string ("ISSN") lowercase. (Even if the examples in RFC 3044 show the ISSN NID as uppercase.)

**Annex E.6**, multiple occurrences, editorial comment: Barcode should consistently be a single word.

Proposed change: "barcode" not "bar code"

**Annex E2.2**, editorial comment: Proposed change: Replace "IDF Registration Agency" with "DOI Registration Agency"

**Annex E2.2, Example**, editorial comment re: page 14, DOI example for Nature at the top of the page: I believe there is an extra digit in the ISSN

Proposed change: Remove extra ISSN digit.

**Annex E.2.2, Example**, editorial comment: Proposed change: Remove the trailing "2" on the ISSN for Nature.

**Annex E.2.3**, technical comment: As we know from the OpenURL work, overlong URIs can be problematic for older servers or even clients/browsers. And we know that mailing URIs can be difficult - hence tinyurl, etc.

Proposed change: Last sentence about brevity of strings might also make mention of embedding within URI strings.

**Annex E.4.1**, editorial comment: The html extension is incorrect.

Proposed change: Change the URL to: "<http://www.ietf.org/rfc/rfc2141.txt>"

**Annex F**, technical comment: Annex F recommends that the "MNI be used in OpenURL linking whenever possible because MNI gives link resolvers the maximum flexibility to resolve to whichever medium-specific version of a continuing resource are in the knowledge base" (p20). If the MNI is used in this regard, then it presumes that the target contains all ISSNs which are collocated beneath the MNI and this may not be true for all link resolving services. How can we be sure the MNI will resolve to the user's desired continuing resource given these circumstances? Alternatively, how could it be enforced that a target could possibly contain all the necessary works collocated under the MNI? This would require extensive testing and intervention before setting up a resolution service to ensure that all works were contained.

Proposed change: Clarify how use of the MNI in OpenURL can provide link resolution to all collocated ISSN works.

**Annex F.1**, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, technical comment: The statement that ends "the MNI should be used" is unclear. In a query there are two components, the request and the response. I can only assume the statement refers to the MNI being used in the request. But the request is bound by the metadata available at the source. So to say the MNI should be used is

impractical. The request must use the data available in the citation. It is the job of the resolver to match the identifier to the appropriate resource. It is the resolver that will make use of the MNI to related the various medium of an ISSN to each other and find one to satisfy the request. To me it seems that one should be able to put in a request (for example an OpenURL) using any of the ISSNs and separately and additionally request that the electronic copy is desired.

Proposed change: Revise to accurately reflect how OpenURL resolvers and knowledgebases will work with multiple ISSNs and the MNI.

**Annex F.2.1**, technical comment: This is where I start to read some inconsistencies. In this case a prefix is recommended but in the case of medium-specific ISSN's it is not. I just think that it should be either all use the prefix or none should.

Proposed change: Resolve inconsistency.

**Annex F.2.3.1**, technical comment: Proposed change: Include some statement that indicates what MARC fields are being suggested or at least that work is being done with x, y, and z to make this happen.

**Annex F.2.3.2**, editorial comment: Proposed change: Remove hyphen from "Cross-Ref"

**Annex F.3.1**, technical comment: With regard to OpenURL, how does the link resolver know whether to return information regarding specific media versions of the continuing resource when the MNI is used or whether to return information regarding all versions? Annex F, section F.3.1 notes that this is possible.

Proposed change: Clarify how use of MNI in OpenURL can return media specific vs. all versions.

**Annex F.3.1**, technical comment: The recommendation is to not use eissn, but they want to add mni as a data element to the OpenURL. Per my earlier statement, the building of an OpenURL is based on the available citation data. This recommendation seems to put the "work effort" on building the OpenURL instead of letting the resolver do the work. By this I mean that to get the MNI on an OpenURL out of a citation database it would require using say the print ISSN to get the MNI. This should be the work of the resolver.

Proposed change: Revise to accurately reflect how OpenURL resolvers and knowledgebases will work with multiple ISSNs and the MNI.

**Annex F.3.2.1**, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph, technical comment: The language should make clear that the details are to be discussed with the OpenURL community and that the OpenURL Maintenance Agency must approve the registration.

We should point out that NISO is in the process of appointing a Maintenance Agency for the OpenURL Registry. New registrations into the OpenURL Registry will become possible only after the MA has been appointed and developed in processes and procedures.

Proposed change: Revise 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph as follows:

In order to accommodate the MNI as defined in this standard, new journal format versions would be registered in the OpenURL registry, and new Community Profiles would be registered that include these new journal format versions. The new KEV and XML journal formats could include a new element respectively:

&mni = and <xs:element name="mni" type="xs:string" minOccurs="2">

The OpenURL Registry should be consulted for the definitive versions of the new Metadata Format and Community Profile.

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### **COMMENTS FROM SAC (China):**

It is very good to introduce of the concept of continuing resources and the new mechanism of Medium-Neutral ISSN to the standard. It is beneficial for the integrating and searching information resources. But we must make exact instructions for the execution of the standard so that people are not easily confused.

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### **COMMENTS FROM SNV (Switzerland):**

General comments:

After studying this draft standard, the Swiss ISSN Centre recommends the text be accepted. It is more complete and better adapted to the current context of serials publications. It brings together all the necessary information required by users and the ISSN network.

The following new elements are appreciated:

- The new definitions match those used at the international bibliographic level
- introduction of the Medium-Neutral ISSN
- the definition of metadata that publishers should supply when requesting an ISSN
- Annex B – Medium-Neutral ISSN
- Annex C – Metadata (contents of the ISSN record)
- Annex D – Roles ISSN Centres (CI et national centres)
- Annex E – Use of ISSN in other identifications systems
- Annex F – Use of Medium-Neutral ISSN in other identifications systems

#### **Annex B:**

Concerning the "Medium-Neutral ISSN ", while we had expressed some reservations in our comments on the previous version (document dated 12.05.2005), we are satisfied with the new denomination and the new definition given in the text. They are clearer and more explicit concerning the role of the MNI. However some questions remain concerning Annex B:

1. B.5 "The ISSN assigned to the first medium version ...": Which ISSN number should be taken when several different versions are registered simultaneously?

2. B.8 "The MNI shall be a mandatory metadata": In which MARC21 should the MNI figure? Should it be added retrospectively to ISSN records? Who will decide the ISSN to be used as MNI for ISSNs figuring in the ISSN Register?
3. Should the MNI be communicated to the publisher?

As we already indicated in our comments of the previous version (document dated 12.05.2005), we hope that the international ISSN Centre will propose application rules for the MNI that take into account the limited working capacity of some national centres.

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### COMMENTS FROM SFS (Finland):

**Clause 3.1**, editorial comment: The definition differs from the corresponding definitions in the ISBD(CR) and the ISSN Manual.

Proposed change: The definitions should be identical.

**Clause 3.3**, editorial comment: The definition differs from the corresponding definitions in the ISBD(CR) and the ISSN Manual. Also the term itself differs; ongoing integrating resource vs. integrating resource.

Proposed change: The definitions should be identical. The term should be "integrating resource".

**Clause 3.6**, editorial comment: The definition differs from the corresponding definitions in the ISBD(CR) and the ISSN Manual.

Proposed change: The definitions should be identical.

**Clause 5.5 (Note)**, editorial comment: The note in the corresponding clause of the current standard (7.4) has been left out. We believe that the matter stated in the note is not self-evident.

Proposed change: The note should be included in the new standard.

**Annex B.7**, general comment: Information on how the MNI will be catalogued (in Marc records) would be welcome.

**Annex B.10**, general comment: From this clause it is not clear how the MNI should be printed if the publisher also gives (in the same context) the ISSNs of the different media versions, e.g. how to make it clear which of the ISSNs given is the MNI and that the MNI is also the ISSN of one of the media versions. Should publishers be informed of the MNI?

Proposed change: Additional examples would be useful.

The proposal that "the ISSN assigned to the first medium version of a continuing resource to be registered shall be designated the MNI", should be reconsidered as it may cause technical problems in duplicate control of serials records and in ISSN-based OpenURL linking. A possible alternative solution would be assignment of a separate ISSN as MNI.

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## COMMENTS FROM GS1 (formerly EAN International):

### GS1 COMMENT 1 – Editorial and accuracy, Section E.6.2 Syntax, multiple changes:

Change: ...entire section [not ‘EAN’, announced name change to ‘GS1’].

TO: ...see **red font** [in excerpts below].”

Justification: New wording more accurately reflects the contractual arrangements for the use of EAN-13 Bar Codes based upon the ISSN number and uses correct ‘GS1’ terminology.

#### E.6.1 Overview

An EAN 13 bar code identifies a product to EPOS (Electronic Point of Sale) and other supply chain systems. It is designed to identify a wide range of products, but special provision is made for issues of continuing resources **with an assigned ISSN** by GS1. Additional information is available on the GS1 Web site at: [www.gs1.org](http://www.gs1.org).

#### E.6.2 Syntax

An **EAN-13** bar code symbology encodes 13 numerical digits, made up as follows:

- The first three digits are the **GS1 prefix 977 assigned for ISSN-based bar codes** for an issue of a continuing resource.
- The next seven digits are the ISSN (without the hyphen, and omitting the eighth, check digit) which identify the serial title.
- The eleventh and twelfth digits are **variants**, and **may be** used to express additional information **assigned by the publisher**. Normally this is to indicate a price change.
- The final digit is a check digit calculated according to modulo-10. The check digit appearing in the bar code will likely be different from the ISSN check digit.

It is also possible to use a two- or five-digit add-on to the 13-digit bar code. This allows extra granularity in which to express other information about the product. **When used with GS1 prefix 977 assigned for ISSN-based bar codes**, the add-on usually indicates the issue number through 2-digits. This is important information for efficient stock management. However, not all EPOS systems can scan the add-on, and separate manual or computerized stock management systems are then employed.



**Figure E.1 – Example of the bar coded version of an ISSN**

**E.6.3 Usage scenario**

The barcode uniquely identifies a particular issue of a serial to facilitate electronic capture and transfer of data throughout the supply chain by publishers, distributors, wholesalers, retailers, etc. Such data may include price, stock levels and sales figures

**GS1 COMMENT 2 – Editorial, Section E.4.3 Normalisation rules, second line:**

Change: ...may be encoded with *our* without hyphen..

TO: ...may be encoded with *or* without hyphen..

Justification: Typo

**GS1 COMMENT 3 – Editorial and accuracy, Bibliography, last page, item [21]:**

Change: ...[21] GS1 products and solutions: bar codes [cited 31 October 2005]. Available from: <<http://www.gs1.org>>..

TO: .....[21] GS1 General Specifications, Identification of Serial Publications, GS1 Prefix 977. Overview available from: <<http://www.gs1.org>>..

Justification: Correct bibliographic reference.

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**COMMENTS FROM INTERNATIONAL DOI FOUNDATION:**

Annex E, “Use of ISSN in other identification systems”, and Annex F, “Use of medium-neutral ISSN in other identification systems”.

**(1)**

*Item:* E.2.2 refers to “the recommended syntax for constructing a DOI suffix using a DOI...” and F.2.1. refers to “the recommended form for a DOI suffix using an MNI...”.

*Proposal:* It should be made clear that these are recommendations by the International ISSN Agency, not the International DOI Foundation.

*Explanation:* As ISSN is not a DOI Registration Agency, its recommendations regarding DOI construction cannot be read as having official authorisation by the International DOI Foundation.

**(2)**

*Item:* It is noted in E.2.2. that “the DOI string is considered to be opaque (i.e. no meaning should be read into the number” .

*Proposal:* the precise description of the MNI referent should be included in the DOI metadata, rather than simply including the MNI in the DOI syntax string as proposed in the annex. Further, the DOI description should be consistent with that of the ISSN agency for the same referent.

*Explanation:* There is potential for ambiguity in view of (1) possible confusion of the MNI with the ISSN for a related manifestation; and (2) automated processes which may not recognise MNI in the string. Both may lead to an erroneous conclusion as to the referent of the identifier.

Including a specification in DOI metadata minimises the chances of such ambiguity. The DOI system consists of four components: syntax; description; resolution; and administration.

- **Syntax:** the specification ensuring that a unique character string is assigned to the object that the DOI identifies. The DOI is an opaque string (a dumb number). Therefore no definitive information should be inferred from the specific character string used for a DOI (for example . the fact that a DOI prefix contains a Registrant code issued to a specific organization does not indicate ownership of rights, or current management responsibility). We recommend that even if the MNI label is carried in the DOI string itself, as recommended by ISSN (which may be useful for immediate readability) it should not be expected that the MNI would be extracted from the DOI or that users of the DOI will pick up the meaning from this string.
- **Description:** a registered set of metadata elements that precisely describe the referent (object that has been identified with a DOI). The referent of a DOI can be an entity of various types (e.g. abstract “works”, physical “manifestations”, performances) that are not directly accessible in the form of a digital file or other manifestation: this is the case for the MNI. The DOI Registration Authority provides a Data Dictionary which enables the definition and precise ontology of all such metadata elements, based on a contextual metadata framework as a structured ontology compliant with logical axioms and constructors common to ontology languages such as W3C's OWL (Web Ontology Language). The dictionary is consistent with ISO standard ISO/IEC 21000-6:2004 *Information technology, Multimedia framework (MPEG-21), Part 6: Rights Data Dictionary*.
- **Resolution:** the description of a DOI is specifically designed to be accessible via records stored in the resolution system for the DOI, and thus declared to other applications to assist in interoperability. Resolution of a DOI involves the retrieval of a record which includes reference to metadata that identifies the object by describing it.
- **Administration:** the metadata for a DOI which has an MNI referent should be created by a DOI Registration Agency, following the rules of the DOI System, in co-operation with the ISSN agency to minimise the risk of diverging descriptions for the same referent.

The full DOI system specification is currently a working draft within ISO TC46 as ISO WD 26324. Conformance with the DOI system specification will aid in interoperability between two ISO TC46 identifier systems.

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## COMMENTS FROM EVS (ESTONIA)

[EVS is an O-member of ISO/TC 46/SC 9]

General comment: Comparing with ISO 3297:1998 the ISO/CD 3297 meets more the need of an electronic environment. We appreciate very much presentation of the new concept of the Medium-Neutral ISSN (MNI), which is especially useful for linking in OpenURL environment. We would like also notice, that present Committee Draft includes more detailed definitions, which help the national centres in assignment of ISSN in right way.

The Estonian National Centre for Standardization as an observer member of ISO/TC 46 and its SC 9 supports the approval of ISO/CD 3297 as DIS.

Clause 2, technical comment: Normative reference to ISO 3166-1:1997

- 1) Change dated reference to undated reference
  - or
  - 2) Change the approval year of the standard before publishing of the new version of ISO 3297. The ISO 3166-1:1997 is under revision, FDIS ISO 3166-1 is expected in 2006.
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