

Notes of International ISBN Agency Board Meeting

Conference room 304, Olympia, London Book Fair;

Thursday 16 April 2015

Neil Wilson, IFLA representative

Present:

Ronald Schild (Chair)
Piero Attanasio
Jens Bammel
Beat Barblan
Maarit Huttunen
Miguel Jiménez
Alenka Kanič
Jonathan Nowell
Carol Riccalton
Neil Wilson (IFLA representative)
Stella Griffiths
Nick Woods
Hartmut Walravens (*Item 4*)

Apologies:

Henri Barthel
Bernardo Jaramillo Hoyos
Olaf Winsløw

1. Review of Management Report

Carol Riccalton asked about the position in the Maldives where government approval was now required before the publication of literature, noting her concern at this rule. Stella agreed with the concern, but advised that the agency had reassured her that all publications that qualified for ISBN would receive ISBN. There are already other agencies where there are concerns over the use of ISBN as a tool for censorship. The Board agreed that the IIA should continue to monitor the situation in Maldives and other places where freedom to publish is being inhibited.

2. Global Register of Publishers

Stella advised that the Global Register of Publishers went online in October 2014. Usage seems to be increasing well. The '2015 PIID' (based on data provided in summer 2014) is the last that De Gruyter will publish.

3. Revision of ISBN Standard

a) Update on ISO Working Group progress

Although work on the revision of the ISBN standard is progressing well, Stella advised that a major issue was ISO's insistence upon the removal of any reference to registration agencies in the standard. Ronald asked for the reasons for ISO's stance and Stella advised that it was because ISO has no contract directly with the registration agencies, only with the IIA, though this position takes no account of the fact that ISBN has been operating in this manner for years without problems. Stella did note that the ISO Technical Program Manager, Mary-Lou Pelaprat, had very recently indicated that it might be possible to make an exception. Beat agreed that, if the group of registration authorities for the standards within SC9 (ISNI, ISTC, ISSN etc.) – who all operate the same way – could make a joint appeal then this should be considered.

b) ISBN Users' Manual

Alongside the Working Group for the revision of the standard, an ad hoc group is looking at making revisions to the Users' Manual. The latest draft now includes sections about self-publishers and the responsibilities of registrants. Given the removal of registration agencies from the Standard and increasing publisher non-compliance, it has been proposed to make at least brief reference in the Manual to *possible sanctions* such as an agency refusing to assign further ISBNs if the publisher does not supply them with adequate metadata. The Board agreed that this was probably a necessary step and that it should be further discussed with the national ISBN agencies at the AGM in September.

4. ISMN

Hartmut Walravens, Chairman of the Board of the International ISMN Agency outlined the history of the increasing cooperation between ISBN and ISMN and their respective registration authorities. Ronald advised that he felt that cooperation between the two identifiers was certainly beneficial. The Board agreed to take the opportunity to discuss the situation of ISMN with the national ISBN agencies further at the AGM later this year.

5. ISBN AGM

a) Update on AGM 2015 arrangements

The next meeting will be held in Bali, Indonesia on Sunday 20 September. It was hoped that agencies based in the general vicinity would be persuaded to participate and a seminar will be held on 20 September. A provisional agenda had been circulated in advance and it was agreed that it would be appropriate for there to be a presentation by the local publishers' association about the local industry situation. In addition it was agreed to include presentations on the rise of self-publishing and the issue of foreign publishers trying to obtain ISBNs from Canada.

b) Future AGMs

It has already been agreed that the 2016 AGM will be held in **Vienna, Austria**.

6. ISBN – 50th anniversary

Stella asked the Board for their thoughts about ways in which we could mark the 50th anniversary of the concept of standard book numbering (*noting that this is not the 50th anniversary of the ISO standard which is later*). Stella referred to World Standards Day on 14 October. Ronald liked the idea of tying it in with this day, but argued that the Tuesday of that week would be much easier logistically. That day, EDItEUR is likely to be holding a supply chain event in Frankfurt just before the Book Fair and Ronald proposed that we could organise something during that meeting. Carol Riccalton observed that the ISSN was celebrating a 40-year anniversary this year, and was doing so by publishing a series of journal articles. Jonathan suggested that perhaps a video could be put together – this could include 'talking heads' from the early days of standard book numbering. We should try to put a full press kit together to promote the anniversary.