Introductions and Apologies
The Group welcomed Katy Gibson, the new Admin Assistant at BIC, and delegates from Dorling Kindersley and EDItEUR; Ingrid Harrold and Alex Ingram. The Group introduced themselves for the purpose of the minutes.

JW commented that there was very good attendance, but also a large quantity of apologies for this meeting. In addition, it was noted that SC, SL and AT have now been absent from three or more consecutive meetings. The Group were reminded that the Terms of Reference for this Committee state that all members of this Group need to attend every meeting or should send a delegate in their place in the event that they are unable to attend.

ACTION: AMB to liaise with SC, SL and AT about their attendance of this Committee.

Review minutes and actions from the last meeting and any matters arising
The minutes from the last meeting of the Metadata Sub-Committee were approved with minor amendments from GB.

ACTION: AMB to amend the last meeting’s minutes with GB’s comments, accordingly.

- Weights & Dimensions
AMB noted that the discussion about weights and physical attributes was added to the agenda of the Physical Supply Chain Committee meeting, which took place on 9th December 2014. The Physical Supply Chain Committee agreed that this topic needs to be addressed and have since
passed it over to the Product Data Excellence Award (PDEA) Review Task & Finish Working Group (T&FWG). GW noted that this is an important issue which needs a solution, and suggested that this T&FWG could take a long time to establish that solution. This was a concern to the Group as it is a pressing problem. AW noted that this is a distribution issue, to which JW agreed and suggested that retailers will need to be present on the new PDEA Panel. AB noted that some organisations try to work around this issue by populating other fields. JW commented that it might be best for organisations to find their own solutions and be given credit for this through the accreditation scheme, rather than a one-size-fits-all solution.

GW noted that the accreditation scheme cannot validate any system. AH suggested that weights and dimensions should be released six weeks before the publication date by publishers. It was noted that this issue is related to the suppliers and thus their accreditation application. It was also noted that the problem arises in the information relayed from distributor to publisher, whereby the data inputted by the distributor overrides that of the publisher.

**ACTION:** AMB to add this item to the agenda for the next PDEA Review T&FWG meeting.

### 3. Updates from other BIC Committees

**BIC Survey Results**

AMB informed the Group about the results of a recent survey undertaken by BIC; 600 members were contacted, with a 10% response rate. The survey consisted of twenty questions where the respondent could rank how important the issue was to them from 'Very Important' to 'Not Important'. The survey sought to establish the areas BIC should focus on in 2015/16. The results were as follows:

**Top 5 areas that were considered “Very Important” by BIC members (in order):**

1. To review and have deep rooted involvement in current (and new) industry standards such as ONIX, Thema, etc.
2. To continue to establish best practice guidelines in new, undocumented areas of the book supply chain, for example Print on Demand.
3. To ensure current best practice guidelines and any additional associated documents are regularly reviewed and remain up to date, e.g. EDI, Web Services, IRI, etc.
4. To ensure BIC’s Accreditation schemes remain current and are a fair reflection of practices in the book industry.
5. To raise awareness of the documents, guidelines and tools that already exist to aid efficiency in the book industry supply chain.

**Top 5 areas that were considered “Important” by BIC members (in order):**

1. To commission research papers on specific topics (this would need sponsorship / external funding).
2. To organise regular paid for events for BIC members and the wider book industry.
3. To seeking input and advice on specific supply chain issues / challenges from other industries.
4) To continue to invest time and resource into the marketing and promotion of BIC’s activities and as an organisation in general.

5) To organise regular free information/knowledge sharing events for BIC members.

It was noted that there were no surprises, especially with issues surrounding ONIX and Thema appearing at the top of respondents’ priorities. JW noted the survey was very useful to give a determined focus for BIC as well as revealing peripheral issues which continue to be of concern to the industry. He continued by noting that BIC’s core competencies are development, maintenance and promotion of standards and best practice in the industry.

4. **BIC Review of Physical Supply Chain: review metadata issues**

It was noted that this review was carried out by Simon Edwards (SE) under the Physical Supply Chain Committee. There was some concern expressed by the Group as to whether those involved in the review were challenged on the issues that were raised extensively enough and there was a call for further responses. JW questioned both the report’s purpose and what actions are going to be taken following the review. He also questioned who the audience of the report is, noting that he would be concerned if the survey is for general readership. JW suggested a dialogue between this Group and the Physical Supply Chain Committee was still necessary but commented that a line-for-line response to the report would be unnecessary.

**ACTION:** JW to discuss questions above with KL.

5. **Price & Availability Task & Finish Working Group (T&FWG): Update on progress**

GW provided an update on the progress of this Group. It was noted that this was a well-attended Working Group however, GW noted that she is the only retailer present and suggested the Group would benefit from further representation from retailers. GW also noted that she is encouraged by the progress made on reviewing the TRADACOMS code list, and suggested that the group will complete this revision at the next meeting. Furthermore, GW expressed her hope that the work of this T&FWG will make organisations consider their audience by using the appropriate codes. To date, the T&FWG has agreed that no new codes are needed. GW spoke of how the Group were establishing when to/when not to use the codes and how they hope to produce a draft document by the end of the next meeting; which will then require ratification. GW commended that the openness and candianness of those involved and noted that this facilitates the process. IH noted that there were risks involved if the codes were being redefined and that any changes made would not happen overnight where practices and uses had been long-established. However, GW commented that the work of the T&FWG was concerned more with clarification, not a redefinition, and they are working to establish how the codes are received / interpreted with a view to clarifying their use and encourage consistency within the industry. GW encouraged the Group to provide any feedback on the work done so far.

**ACTION:** AMB to circulate minutes of Price & Availability T&FWG to attendees of this meeting.

IH asked whether eBooks would be discussed by this T&FWG and commented that availability codes may not be appropriate for these products. GW confirmed that eBooks will be addressed but further down the line after the code lists had been tackled and once the group has widened its scope.
The book industry’s supply chain organisation

6. Product Data Excellence Award (PDEA) Accreditation Scheme: Update
The Group were informed that 11 organisations were accredited or reaccredited in October 2014, including one new applicant: Harlequin (UK) Ltd. JT noted that the PDEA accreditation panel will meet next on Wednesday 21st January 2015 to review 14 organisations’ applications – including 4 new applications.

JT informed the Group that this Group has now been established and met for the first time on Wednesday 3rd December. JT noted that the book industry’s attentions are turning towards digital accreditation so this revision is timely but noted that, since the Group has only met once so far, little progress had been made. He noted that the criteria for this scheme needs to be revised to encourage organisations to apply and informed the Group that a survey for organisations to fill out will shortly be produced to ascertain why organisations do / do not apply, and what would encourage them to do so. JT noted that the project will take two years to complete. This extensive period of time was questioned by the Group but GW noted that the revisions and progress made will be published along the way. JT noted that this scheme was last revised in 2010 and, as such, there is a lot of work to do in order to revise it to reflect the industry as it currently stands and include new technologies... The Group agreed that incremental change was preferable to an immediate overhaul of current systems. JT commented that there is great scope for many more organisations to be accredited by BIC who currently do not apply. JT noted that the next meeting of this T&FWG will be on 24th February 2015 and the minutes for this Group are on the BIC website.

ACTION: AMB to circulate the minutes for this T&FWG to this Committee.

JT raised the issue of promotion for this scheme, noting that corporate backing for the scheme will increase demand for it and encourage organisations to apply. JW commented that the PDEA accreditation is a flagship scheme for BIC and that organisations must be aware of the scheme in order to apply. GW noted that there are two key marketing focuses: organisations who are already accredited and organisations that have never applied / heard of the scheme. The Group agreed that ONIX and Thema should be reflected in the new scheme.

ACTION: AMB to add the promotion of this scheme to the Training, Events & Communications Committee agenda for the next meeting.

AMB informed the Group that this T&FWG met for the first time on Wednesday 3rd December 2015 and noted the extensive scale of the project at hand. The Group were informed that Karina Luke is the temporary Chair of this T&FWG but a consultant is being sought to take on the project long term. GW noted that neutrality was key in seeking a Consultant for such a role. HW noted that some
amendments to acquisitions and divestments have been made to ONIX by EDItEUR; these will be made available on the EDItEUR website by the end of January.

9. Other Task & Finish Working Groups
AMB noted that there was nothing of note that directly impacts this Committee. JW asked whether anyone felt that there was a need for any other T&FWGs to which there was no response. He suggested that the Committee should think about whether there was a need for further T&FWGs for physical attributes.
ACTION: ALL to think about whether a T&FWG is needed to discuss physical attributes.

10. UK ONIX National Group Update
JW informed the group that the sunset for ONIX 2.1, which was scheduled to go ahead on 31st December, had now been initiated. The twilight period also went ahead as of this date, for the period of a year. AI informed the Group that all documentation for ONIX 2.1 has now been archived and formal support has been removed. He noted that approximately fifty calls have been received by EDItEUR since 1st January 2015 regarding this archiving, which was on a smaller scale than anticipated. Resources outlining the details about DTDs were made available on the EDItEUR website and AI reported that there were 800 downloads of this documentation and 600 downloads of the package outlining the details surrounding DTDs. Furthermore, AI reported 420,000 failed short DTDs, 100,000 failed reference DTDs, 320,000 short XSDs and 5,000 reference XSDs as well as 18,000 other failed downloads. AI reported that these were in fact much smaller numbers than anticipated, which is reassuring. Furthermore, AI also reported that there were very few people who did not deal with the change and that those who had problems solved them by implementing the available tools. He noted that he is unaware of any serious issues that have not been resolved. JW noted that the “sunset” had certainly raised the profile of ONIX 3 though HW commented that there is still not a pressing demand for it from retailers.

- ONIX feed images
It was noted that the idea of a provisional or final image is still under discussion. GB is investigating this matter and will report back to the Group on this at the next meeting. JW commented that this matter is also being addressed by the PDEA Review T&FWG.
ACTION: GB to report back to the Group about ONIX image feeds at the next meeting.

- ONIX Acknowledgement Message
HW raised the issue of using acknowledgment messages in ONIX. AI commented that as of the 14th January 2015 an ONIX message will be able to be structured in an XML fashion and will incorporate error reporting too. He noted that this was initially a Pilot Project which was trialled by both Hachette in France and the National Library of France. He suggested that there is now compelling evidence for its commercial use. AI noted that this standard was formulated to provide a way for organisations to show that a file has been received and interpreted, and subsequently then provide a way to respond to this in ONIX. Essentially, there can now be an acknowledgement of receipt and an acknowledgment of any errors in the processes of interpreting the file. AI noted that the codes could be extended for further responses in the
future. AH commented that the use of these messages is dependent on the recipient implementing the system too. He noted that Nielsen’s practice is to send only a receipt. GW suggested that the PDEA Review T&FWG could consider acknowledging the use of these messages into the new scheme, should a scheme for suppliers be drawn up.

AI went on to inform the Group of the following deadlines for code lists:

- Issue 28 released at the end of January 2015.
- Deadline for EDItEUR to send proposals to the National Groups: 6th March 2015.
- Deadline for comments from National Groups back to EDItEUR: 8th April.

The Group were informed that BISG will shortly be releasing a survey to ascertain where the US is in its implementation of ONIX 3. AI commented that the survey will hopefully prove that the implementation of ONIX 3 has not been as hard as originally anticipated. AI noted that BISG’s best practice guidelines for ONIX 3 are also in the process of being updated. He suggested, if the survey proves to be beneficial to the US, BIC might do the same in the UK. He also noted that GB has now given 3 webinars on the migration from ONIX 2.1 to 3.0 in the US, and took part in a number of BIC Breakfasts on the topic throughout 2014.

11. UK Thema National Group Update

HW noted that Thema 1.1 was released in November 2014. In this release, only additions and modifications to existing headings or scope notes (for clarity) are permitted (i.e. there were no deletions or relocations); notably in Fiction, Sciences and also in Children / Teenage codes where a key development is the expansion of ‘general interest’ headings for use with fiction or as non-fiction codes. This development has allowed for a great improvement in the mapping between BISAC and Thema. HW noted that he is very pleased with the progress but commented that momentum now needs to build since many organisations were waiting for 1.1’s release before implementing it into their system. HW noted that there were no assumptions that a 1.2 version of Thema will be released anytime soon but suggested that Thema will be reviewed on an annual basis, if it is deemed necessary.

HW informed the Group that there are now 16 National Thema Groups globally including China, Japan and Denmark which he said was a clear indication that there was in fact a global market for it. He noted that several translations are now available on the EDItEUR website and commented that Germany is leading the way in their implementation. HW noted that Japan is currently only using Thema for new titles and suggested that Canada would begin to use Thema this year. HW advised that Nielsen are currently outputting Thema and that Amazon had indicated an interest in both Thema and ONIX 3 in recent months.

HW informed the Group that an update / presentation on Thema may be given by BIC at the London Book Fair 2015 (LBF), and discussion is underway about this.

**ACTION:** HW to liaise with KL about this presentation.
HW advised that some documentation (e.g. user guidelines) and mappings needed updating. AI commented that some users were undertaking their own mapping here.

AH asked whether records classified with *Thema* 1.0 codes needed to be converted to be valid in *Thema* 1.1. HW responded that all *Thema* 1.0 codes were valid in *Thema* 1.1, so any record classified under 1.0 could legitimately be described as being classified under 1.1. However, because of the changes in 1.1 it is possible that any given record could now be classified more precisely, but this could only be ascertained through manual review; there is no mapping from 1.0 to 1.1 that can automatically upgrade records. He noted that a list of new codes is available, complete with scope notes to inform organisations’ choices. AI noted that all changes are highlighted on the full list of *Thema* 1.1 available in the website. AH also suggested a published list of national territories where *Thema* had been adopted would also be useful.

**ACTION:** HW to look into the upgrading of documentation and report back to the Group at the next meeting.

**ACTION:** GB / AI to create publish a list of National territories where *Thema* has been adopted.

12. **Round-the-table feedback from each committee member on new areas that this Committee should be exploring / researching**

- **ONIX 2-3**
  AI noted that, after feedback has been received from the US survey, a focus on the migration from ONIX 2 to 3 would be beneficial. He suggested that documentation and/or further BIC Breakfasts could be produced to address this topic.

- **Generation BIC**
  AMB informed the Group that the BIC Operational Board have agreed this project should be discontinued so that BIC can concentrate its time and resources on other more pressing projects. She noted that there had been relatively little interest in Generation BIC overall. AB commented that this was a shame since, after putting posters up in Bertrams, she had witnessed increased interest in the scheme.

- **Print on Demand & Short Run Printing Task & Finish Working Group**
  GW noted that there is concern over how POD titles are expressed; she noted that POD is not an availability code. It was noted that the differences between a “short run” - which arises from multiple requests for printing - and “print when purchased” - which calls for an immediate one-off print of the product - requires more clarity. JW suggested that further discussion on this matter is necessary. The Group discussed the pressures / expectations for POD printing, e.g. customers expecting to wait no more than the quoted amount of days for delivery. AH commented that often publishers are not aware of such orders and do not see the request since they often go direct to the printer. There are further problems whereby products appear to be “available” but are in fact “print on demand”. AH noted that POD titles generally have NYP codes. He commented that a further code is needed to express “will be available as POD”.

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AMB noted that the first meeting of this Group is taking place on Wednesday 11th February 2015. The Group agreed to look keep a watching brief on this Group. JW encouraged members of this Committee to participate in the Group, should they wish to.

**ACTION:** AMB to add a watching brief of this T&FWG to the agenda for the next meeting.

**ACTION:** AMB to circulate the Project Brief and membership of this T&FWG to this Committee. All who wish to participate in the T&FWG should contact AMB directly to be added to the mailing list.

- **Best Practice for discoverability**
  AW questioned what makes a book discoverable and suggested that best practice guidelines for content could be produced; a check list of what makes your book more discoverable. JW agreed, noting that this Committee is often concerned with prohibitors / issues but not actually the content of the metadata. It was suggested that BIC and EDItEUR should collaborate on this set of guidelines for empirical evidence. AH suggested that using quantitative data to prove that sales have improved by following these best practices would be persuasive in encouraging them to be adopted. GW noted that this could not be reflected in the PDEA accreditation scheme since the data provided needs to be quantitative and does not, therefore, fall into the remit of the Review Group. The Group suggested that this could be a new BIC Project – possibly a Task & Finish Working Group. AI suggested that more real-life examples are need here to support an exploratory discussion. AW suggested that a training course on this topic could be produced once this set of guidelines have been finalised.

DE commented on the scope of this potential project, noting that it would need to include discoverability of products on search engines, such as Google, and also retailer platforms, such as Amazon. He noted that this is an ambitious project. The Group all agreed that it was a project at least worth discussing.

**ACTION:** JW to liaise with KL about this potential new T&FWG and potential collaboration with EDItEUR.

13. **Actions for the Training, Events & Communications (TEC) Committee to consider**
  JW noted that the TEC should maintain a watching brief on the PDEA Review T&FWG so that they are well informed later in the year.

**ACTION:** AMB to add this watching brief to the agenda for the next TEC Committee meeting.

HW noted that the BIC Subject Classification training course now includes an introduction to *Thema* as part of the course. This course will next run on 28th April 2015.

14. **A.O.B.**
  None.

15. **Date of the next meeting**
  Tuesday 21st April 2015.