UK NATIONAL ONIX GROUP - Minutes
CILIP Building, 7 Ridgmount Street, London WC1E 7AE
Thursday 4th December 2014, 2pm

Present
Alaina-Marie Bassett, BIC
Graham Bell, EDItEUR
Kat Coveyduck, Virtusales
Toby Gill, Virtusales
Ingrid Harrold, Dorling Kindersley
Alex Ingram, EDItEUR
Lada Kriz, Penguin Random House
Karina Luke, BIC
Fawzia Nazir, Publishing Technology
Karen Osterley, Pearson
Laura Payne, Penguin Random House
Jack Tipping, Bowker
Gabrielle Wallington, Waterstones
Howard Willows, Nielsen (Chair)

Apologies
David Bugler, Macmillan
Sarah Crossley, Wiley
Dan Edwards, Penguin Random House
Eric Green, Bibliographic Data Services
Andrew Henty, Virtusales
Martin Klopstock, Kogan Page
Samantha Lovett, Nielsen
Peter Mathews, Cambridge University Press
David Seymour, Taylor & Francis Group
Alfred Willmann, Penguin Random House
Tim Wilson, Hachette

1. Apologies and introductions
The Group introduced themselves for the purpose of the minutes. LK attended this meeting as AW’s delegate. HW noted that this is the last meeting of the UK National ONIX Group before the sunset date of ONIX 2.1.

2. Review of minutes and actions from the last meeting
- ISTC Activity
  The ISTC Board’s Working Group reported their recommendations to the Board in late September 2014, saying that ISTCs should change in order to gain more traction. They said more flexibility is needed so that organisations can use ISTCs more easily and more appropriately for their needs. HW commented that this could mean that ISTCs will no longer be international which could, in turn, cause long-term issues. He noted that nothing tangible has been released publically. GB noted that any full revision process for the ISO standard would be a two-year project and suggested that the process would involve a large amount of discussion about the project’s requirements to resolve current disagreements. He also commented that GLIMIR – developed by OCLC and used by the library community – appears to be a potential alternative to using ISTCs, but it too doesn’t necessarily meet the needs of the supply chain (if anything, it is less granular than the ISTC).
  **ACTION:** HW to continue to report any further developments to the Group at the next meeting.

- BIC Product Data Excellence Award (PDEA) Accreditation Scheme
  At the last UK ONIX Group meeting, this Group discussed the possibility of indicating that a given cover image linked to an ONIX message was provisional, or at least subject to being updated,
revised or replaced. The Group also discussed the use of a ‘No Image Available’ flag for backlist titles, including Out of Print (OP) titles. GB was to report back to the Group about these issues, after speaking to the ONIX National Groups.

GB informed the Group that these issues are still being considered by the National Groups but noted that most are not overly keen on the idea of an explicit indication of provisional images. (The UK Group itself was not universally in favour of the suggestions.) He noted that there are more National Groups that need to be consulted and he will therefore report back to this Group about any decisions made at the next meeting.

**ACTION:** GB to consider all options and present proposal to this Group at the next meeting.

- ‘Digital Exclusive’
  At the last meeting, GB was tasked with finding a way to express ‘digital exclusive’ (as distinct from the existing ‘digital original’). GB noted that this flag also needs to be addressed by more National Groups and as such is still under discussion. He noted that those Groups that have been approached already agreed that this flag is necessary. He suggested that this flag will be included in Codelist Issue 29 (which will be released before the London Book Fair, April 2015).

- **BIC Bites**
  The Group were informed that five BIC Bites were launched in November 2014, including the following two ONIX-themed Bites: *An Introduction to ONIX and Migrating from ONIX 2 to 3*. These had been circulated to the Group for comment prior to the Bites’ release. Further BIC Bites are now in production; forthcoming topics include EDItX and Basic Metadata.

3. **Codelists**

- **Review of Issue 27**
  GB noted that the addition of ‘Shorts’ to List 78 was not a universally popular decision but was deemed to be necessary nonetheless. He noted that these sorts of publications (which might cover any genre or subject, fiction or non-fiction) are often marketed in a different way, so the new code will be particularly useful to smaller organisations that specialise in this format. He also noted that Issue 27 saw the documentation of the number of decimal places that are required for the precise expression of prices for all currencies.

  GB noted that the other changes to Issue 27, including the additions to ‘Series’, were largely put in place for French publishers’ requirements. He noted that French publishing is far more hierarchical in its approach to list structure (sets, series, subseries etc) than other countries.

- **Proposals for Issue 28**
  GB informed the Group that proposals for Issue 28 were still in draft form and could not be circulated to the Group in advance. He circulated the draft, and noted that proposed additions to Issue 28 will include:
  - a new eBook file format
  - a new spiral binding
  - the inclusion of a code for books that have a ‘buggy loop’
GB commented that the new eBook file format, Page Perfect, is based on a PDF format (Code 048). He also noted that there are currently 3 types of spiral binding yet only two – coil and plastic coil – have possessed a code up until now, meaning some books bindings aren’t specified; this new code will bridge the gap and stop the need for assumption. GB noted that the inclusion of a code for buggy loops stems from a high quantity of these books being in existence and a need for retailers to be able to search for them. FN commented that the term ‘buggy loop’ may not be familiar to the US but GB noted that this wording can be translated however they see fit, providing the meaning of the code remains the same internationally.

Post-Meeting Update: the wording ‘with fastening strap’ has been proposed, as this is understandable beyond the English language markets.

- Suggestions for Issue 29

GB noted that a need for additional job roles within the comic book industry has been drawn to his attention and this will be considered for inclusion in Issue 29. He noted that such updates would include job roles such as ‘Inker’ or ‘Colourist’. AI noted that these jobs are culturally-specific and are dependent on the way in which the comic books are produced. He suggested that this addition will only be useful if the definition of each job role is adequate.

4. ONIX activity

- Twilight Period

GB informed the Group that the twilight period for support on ONIX 2.1 is going ahead; as was decided at the ONIX International Steering Committee at Frankfurt Book Fair in October 2014. The twilight period would comprise a fixed-term, non-extendable, non-repeatable period of 12 months, during which a select number of key code lists used only in ONIX 2* (the most important are Lists 7, 10 and 78) would continue to be updated as required. The Steering Committee had also discussed whether, and to what extent, this decision should be publicised, noting that the sunset date (which was announced three years ago) will go ahead as planned and should not be undermined in any way by the twilight period. As a result, only a low-key note about twilight support was included with the documentation for Issue 27.

GB confirmed that, from the 1st January 2015, there will be a significant change in the accessibility of ONIX 2.1 documentation from EDItEUR. He noted that the documentation for 2.1 will be archived – and will therefore be more difficult to locate – and online XML tools, including DTD and XSD, will be removed entirely. As a result, XML validations that rely on the DTD or XSD files on the EDItEUR website will fail as of 1st January 2015. EDItEUR have written a document describing a workaround to avoid such failures: http://www.editeur.org/files/ONIX 2.1/ONIX_2.1_local_DTD_and_XSD_instructions_with_FAQ.pdf

He noted that there are other, possibly better, ways of working around the removal of the DTD and XSD files – which are not detailed in the document – but that the document describes the simplest method.

GB informed the Group that a limited amount of support will be available to ONIX 2.1 users during the twilight period to help those who are unable to migrate before the end of 2014.
The consensus of the Group was that twilight period support should not be actively publicised but will go ahead in the manner discussed above.

- **ONIX Training Courses**
  AB informed the Group that the schedule for 2015 ONIX training courses is under discussion and will be published as soon as possible. GW suggested that Waterstone’s may require in-house ONIX training, en masse, in the future.
  
  *Post-Meeting Update: Bibliographic Metadata & ONIX is now scheduled to take place on both Wednesday 6th May 2015 and Thursday 3rd September. Advanced ONIX for Books will take place on Thursday 7th May 2015 and A Technical Introduction to ONIX & XML will take place on Thursday 12th March 2015.*

- **Acknowledgement messages**
  It was noted that ONIX messages can fall into black holes: sender organisations cannot always tell whether their message was received and processed or not. As a response to this, EDItEUR has designed an ‘Acknowledgement message’ that can be used to confirm receipt and processing of an ONIX message, or in more sophisticated implementations, can be used to report back errors in the ONIX, queries about the data and even suggestions about how to improve it. The Group were informed that this is being trialled by Hachette in France and draft documentation is available on request from EDItEUR. The final documentation will be published in January 2015. So far, the feedback has been positive.

- **US National ONIX Group**
  GB noted that US organisations have been particularly slow to move from ONIX 2.1. This may in part be down to Bowker’s inability to accept ONIX 3.0 (though Bowker plans accept it from very early 2015). A survey will be released shortly by BISG to help the US National ONIX Group assess where each organisation is in the process. AI suggested that momentum is beginning to build now, and any progress made in the US will help the book industry globally. GB noted that the survey will provide some feedback on progress, a revised timescale for full migration, and a support matrix. KL questioned whether BIC should produce a similar survey for use in the UK. GB suggested that a support matrix would be useful in order to see what data elements from ONIX are being used. He noted that BISG have not yet produced their support matrix questionnaire but will release it in early 2015.

  GW noted that retailers in the UK are dependent on their data provider, and Waterstone’s provider, Nielsen, is not ready to transmit ONIX 3.0 feeds as yet (though it can receive it). GB noted that most of the major publishing systems used in both the UK and US are able to output ONIX 3.0 files, but there is still no pressing demand from recipients for ONIX 3.0. LP noted that Penguin Random House do not want a two-tier system, whereby ONIX 2.1 feeds are sent to some and ONIX 3.0 feeds to others. She noted that the extra data in ONIX 3.0 feeds could put organisations who can only receive ONIX 2.1 at a disadvantage. GW noted that Waterstones will continue to liaise with Nielsen re the provision of ONIX 3.0 to ensure that their systems will be ready to accept and make full use of the extra details available.
**ACTION:** AB to add the discussion about a support matrix to the agenda for the Product Data Excellence Award (PDEA) accreditation scheme review Task & Finish Working Group.

5. **Promotion and uptake of ONIX 3.0**

HW informed the Group that Nielsen are currently working on new systems which will be as ONIX 3.0-compliant as possible, but confirmed the above observation that there is a lack of demand for ONIX 3 feeds from retailers. He noted that Nielsen currently has 20 live ONIX 3.0 feeds from data suppliers and a further 20 are in testing.

TG informed the Group that one of Virtusales’ German clients have categorically stated that they have no interest in receiving ONIX 3.0 feeds until the end of 2015. He questioned whether anyone else in the Group had experienced the same. GB noted that Germany is very similar to the UK in that there are a large number of data suppliers and recipients which have not yet migrated.

KO informed the Group that Pearson have started an internal project to update their systems. She noted that this is a very formal project which is estimated to take 9 months to complete; it was begun in November 2014. She noted there is a positive outlook about this project despite the fact that no organisations have directly requested ONIX 3 feeds. She commented that, once the project is completed, Pearson will be able to offer both ONIX 2 and ONIX 3 feeds.

JT informed the Group that Bowker will be live by the end of 2014. He noted that there are not a lot of files in testing at the moment – maybe 15 to 20. He also noted that, once Bowker’s system is live, they will be able to receive and output ONIX 3.

GW informed the Group that Waterstone’s new website will use ONIX 2.1 feeds. She noted that, once they are offered 3.0 feeds, Waterstone’s will work to accept them.

IH informed the Group that ONIX 3.0 is used on Dorling Kindersley’s internal website which has, in turn, highlighted some issues that are now being worked on in collaboration with Nielsen. She noted that Dorling Kindersley are concentrating on print for the time being but will address digital products in 2015. She also noted that the project was scheduled to finish by the end of 2014 but that the likelihood of meeting that deadline is looking unlikely.

LP noted that Penguin Random House receive more requests from recipients for Excel spreadsheets than they do for ONIX 3.0 feeds. She noted that they will contact their recipients about ONIX 3.0 but will not hold out hope for its use.

LK informed this Group that The Random House Group are currently testing their system with Nielsen for both print and digital products. He noted that Google have now requested that Random House supply them with ONIX 3.0 feeds, and commented that ONIX 3 was also requested by Amazon several months ago but LK did not receive a reply to his response. He noted that there is interest in ONIX 3 in Sweden and the Middle East. GB noted that Sweden implemented the upgrade to ONIX 3.0 in one weekend, and as such it is not surprising that they are requesting ONIX 3 feeds. LK estimated that The Random House Group will be able to send ONIX 3 feeds by March 2015.
FN informed the Group that Publishing Technology are in the process of renegotiating with Firebrand.

KL informed the Group that the Product Data Excellence Award (PDEA) accreditation scheme review Task & Finish Working Group intends to support ONIX 3.0 usage in the revised scheme. She noted they will also discuss the possibility of a support matrix at their next meeting. She also suggested that more BIC Breakfasts will go ahead in 2015, some of which will discuss ONIX and metadata.

Post-Meeting Update: The first BIC Breakfast of 2015 has been schedule for Tuesday 20th January 2015: Basic Metadata – Getting it right. This event is sponsored and hosted by Bowker.

6. Proposed topics for ONIX workshops / clinics – (ongoing action)
GB informed the Group that the Acquisitions & Divestments Task & Finish Working Group (which answers to the Digital Supply Chain Committee) had raised a question about expressing divestments in ONIX 3.0. He noted that the transfer of responsibility for products can be expressed using List 1: Code 08 – divested; Code 09 – acquired. GB confirmed that he will add an example to the Best Practice Guidelines so that organisations have an example of what this feed should look like.

ACTION: GB to add an example to the Best Practice Guidelines as detailed above.

Post-Meeting Update: Done, an updated Best Practice Guidelines document will be available on the EDItEUR website alongside Codelists issue 28 in late January. An early copy is available on request from EDItEUR.

7. A.O.B.
None.

8. Date of next meeting
March 2015 – date TBC.

ACTION: GB to inform AB of the planned timetable for Codelists Issue 29 (so draft proposals can be made available).

ACTION: AB to schedule the next meeting in March, this meeting should take place after the release of draft proposals for Issue 29.