



# Records in Contexts Conceptual Model (RiC-CM) Consultation Draft v0.1

## Overview of the Feedback Received from the Archival Community

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1

Thank you for inviting me to speak about the results of the community consultation on the draft Records in Contexts Conceptual Model last year.

I'm very pleased to be here this morning.

I am a corresponding member to EGAD and I am an archivist/librarian who works in standards at Library and Archives Canada.

As part of my contribution to this project, I took initiative by offering to help organize the feedback for review, reference, and use by EGAD.

## Presentation Overview

1. Community consultation
2. Organizing and analyzing the results
3. Themes, topics, and issues raised:
  - a) General feedback
  - b) Feedback on RiC-CM entities
  - c) Feedback on RiC-CM properties
  - d) Feedback on RiC-CM relations
4. Conclusions and next steps



Image credit: <https://pixabay.com/en/feedback-opinion-megaphone-speakers-2073918/>

2

(\*) Today I'll start by briefly explaining the consultation process...

(\*) and my methods for organizing and analyzing the results.

(\*) Then I'll share some of the main themes, topics and issues raised --- from general points, to ones about specific entities, properties and relations.

My main goal today is to share with you my analysis and interpretation of the comments, specifically highlighting the issues of primary concern to the community, as well as giving some concrete examples of issues raised.

My approach will be like a journalist: my focus will be to report on the results of the community consultation. So, I won't be identifying any resolutions to the issues or concrete plans for their revision. This is largely because EGAD is still working on this.

(\*) At the end I'll mention some next steps for EGAD and how this feedback will be addressed.

## Community Consultation on RiC-CM

- September 2016 – January 2017
- 62 individuals, groups or institutions responded
- Representing 19 countries and 2 international organizations
- Totalling hundreds of pages of comments on many aspects of the model

3

The consultation period was conducted about a year ago.

The response rate was very good, given that there were 62 distinct commenters (individuals, groups or institutions) representing 19 countries and 2 international organizations.

On the whole, the comments were rather lengthy, covering a variety of issues in the draft model.



"The good news is we're getting a lot of feedback.  
The bad news is we're getting a lot of feedback."

Image credit: <https://www.andertoons.com/business/cartoon/6537/good-news-getting-feedback-bad-news-getting-feedback>

4

Sometimes feedback might seem like a double-edged sword --- but really, it's all good in this case!

EGAD very much appreciated all of the insightful, detailed, and useful feedback, although it will take some time to finish working through all of the comments.

## Geographic Origin of Commenters

- Australia
- Austria
- Belgium
- Brazil
- Canada
- Croatia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- International Organizations
- Italy 😊
- Japan
- The Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Poland
- Spain
- Switzerland
- United Kingdom
- United States of America

5

I thought you might find this interesting:

Here's a break down of the geographic origin of the commenters.

(\*) There was one really helpful submission from representatives of the Italian archival community – maybe some of you contributed to that. Thank you!

## Organizing and Analyzing the Feedback: Phase 1

- Comments first grouped by submitter (individual, organization)
- Comments were then broken down and organized by theme/subject

### **Result:**

- six tables (260+ pages) of 1000+ distinctly numbered comments (verbatim)

• Table 1 Broad comments by subject	• Table 4 RiC-CM's Properties
• Table 2 RiC-CM's Introduction	• Table 5 RiC-CM's Relations
• Table 3 RiC-CM's Entities	• Table 6 RiC-CM's Appendices

6

What did I do with these comments to organize them?

I devised my own process, first grouping comments by each submitter.

Then, I broke apart the comments by theme or topic, in part adhering to the organization of the RiC-CM document. A trade-off or sacrifice to doing this was that the context of each comment within its original submission was compromised, but one could always refer to the original source if necessary.

(\*) The end result was six tables of hundreds of pages of comments quoted verbatim.

## For Example:

Comment #	Commenter	Issue	Comments Submitted
1-152	35- Fictitious Organization  Commenter #35 of 62	Recommend re-using existing ontologies wherever appropriate  Category of issue	The basis of RiC-O and its relation to RiC-CM is unclear. Will RiC-O be based on existing standards and ontologies (e.g. ISO, CIDOC-CRM, PROV-O, PREMIS)? While in some cases it might be appropriate to create new ontologies for a domain, linked data best practices support reusing existing vocabularies wherever possible. What will EGAD's approach be?

From Table #1, Comment #152

Fictitious Organization's original (fictitious) comment

7

This is a made-up example to depict what these tables look like.

Here is comment #152 from Table 1, with the source and issue identified, alongside the quoted comment, which is about re-using existing ontologies in RiC.

## Organizing and Analyzing the Feedback: Phase 2

- To support further development work and the proposed 'Digest' strategy (to respond to the community's feedback publicly on the ICA-EGAD-RiC listserv)
- Consolidation of comments by summarizing them

### **Result:**

- 55-page thematically-organized summary of the comments (paraphrased and reduced, according to my own assessment of the original comments)

8

The results of Phase 1 of my analysis were useful but still rather lengthy and difficult for EGAD to use.

There was also an idea to produce 'Digest' responses for the community, clarifying issues that had been raised in the feedback. You may remember seeing this posted to the RiC listserv last spring.

So, in phase 2, I further consolidated the feedback, summarizing the comments.

(\*) The end result was a 55-page document, which seemed more usable for EGAD's purposes.

## For Example:

Section 1, General Issues; 1.2 Modelling		
[Table row]	[Summary of issue]	Comment #
1.2.6	<p>RiC does not explicitly mention other semantic models (e.g. PROV-O). Re-using portions of existing ontologies is encouraged, wherever possible, for reasons of economy (not re-inventing the wheel) as well as fostering interoperability with the rest of the semantic web community.</p> <p>It is unclear if RiC took existing ontologies or models into account. What RiC-O will comprise is unclear, as is its relation to RiC-CM. Lacking information on RiC-O restricts the ability to comment meaningfully on RiC-CM.</p>	<p>This previously-mentioned comment was one of many about this issue. One can track this number back to the source.</p> <p>1-150, 1-151, <b>1-152</b>, 1-153, 1-154, 1-155, 1-156, 1-157, 1-158, 1-159, 1-160, 1-161, 1-162, 1-261</p>

Here is comment #152 again, this time grouped with other similar comments. There are 14 in total.

This approach allows you to see which issues were of greatest concern to the community; in other words, those that received many comments vs. just a few.

You'll be seeing some graphs throughout my presentation which will be based on numbers like these. So, they will all be approximated figures, since they will be based on my own individual method for organizing and tallying the comments. They will hopefully help to illustrate some trends in the feedback for you.

## General Feedback on RiC-CM

10

Let's start talking about the community's feedback, beginning with general feedback about the draft conceptual model as a whole.

First, I would like to note some of the positive feedback received, for example – many appreciated the move toward a multi-dimensional approach, away from a traditional hierarchical structure, as well as moving toward the semantic web or linked data.

But today I will focus on the problems or issues raised because these types of comments will be the focus when EGAD is working on revising the model to produce a new version.

## General Feedback on RiC-CM

- **Foundation:** e.g. a metadata schema, conceptual model, or both?
- **Scope & audience:** e.g. includes custodial management? Includes active records / records managers? Applicable to private papers?
- **Underlying principles:** Full range of relevant principles not identified? Principles that were identified were not fully explained?

11

These are some of the general issues raised with the draft.

First, it wasn't clear if RiC was intended to function as an over-arching model, or as a metadata schema, or both.

The scope of the model and its intended audience weren't always clear:

- Would RiC descriptions also support custodial management tasks?
- Did it provide enough coverage to different parts of the record continuum, particularly 'upstream'?
- Being business-heavy gave the impression that it was not as applicable to private papers.

Some commenters felt that the underlying principles for the model, including provenance, were not fully articulated, and that other archival principles relevant to description, such as accountability and transparency, were absent.

## More General Feedback...

- **Modelling:** e.g. re-use of existing ontologies? Relation to other standards? Modelling archival description itself? Rationale for design decisions like entity vs. property?
- **Users & their needs:** e.g. participatory description? Does RiC improve service to users?
- **Digital records:** Too little or too much?
- **Interoperability:** Stronger connection to records management?

12

Many commenters asked for information on the design principles, rationales for modelling choices, whether existing ontologies had been considered, or could be used, and about the fate of the existing four ICA standards. Many also asked about the control elements (or, metadata about a description) being absent from the draft.

Some were concerned that RiC didn't seem to address user-contributed description, as well as the fact that it wasn't clear how RiC descriptions would improve access for users.

Some felt that digital records were not adequately addressed, such as a lack of sufficient granularity; lack of expressing differences between information, representation and carrier; and not expressing the technological context of records. At the same time, there were others who felt that too much focus was given to accommodating digital at the expense of analogue.

Some felt positively about the potential of RiC to support interoperability, but others felt that it didn't go far enough, for example, in the connection to records management.

## Even More General Feedback...

- **Presentation:** e.g. incompleteness, terminology problems, lacking element obligations
- **Transitioning to RiC:** e.g. feasibility, tools, training, crosswalks
- **Development process:** e.g. transparency, membership, inadequate communication, timelines, translation

13

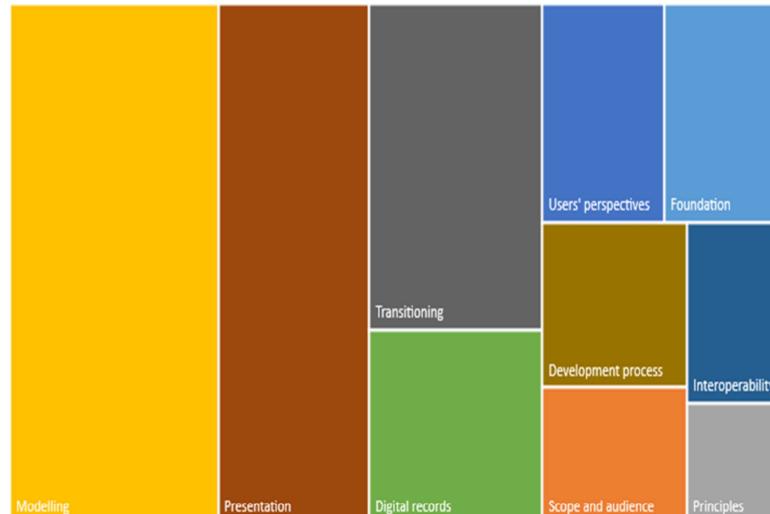
Many commented on the incompleteness of the draft – such as missing definitions, confusing terminology, and not explaining which elements were mandatory.

Many questioned the feasibility of implementing RiC, alongside requests for tools, crosswalks and training.

And some asked about the development process, including lack of transparency about EGAD membership, insufficient communication with the community, project timelines, and translation plans.

## General Issues of Highest Concern

- **Modelling** (e.g. re-use of existing ontologies and relation to other standards? Rationale for design decisions? Modelling descriptions themselves?) (77)
- **Presentation** (Ineffective; incomplete; unclear) (56)
- **Transitioning** (Feasibility? Need guidelines, tools and training) (40)
- **Digital records** (Too much / too little) (24)
- **Users' perspectives and needs** (19)
- **Foundation**: e.g. schema, conceptual model, or both? (18)
- **Development process** (e.g. not transparent; insufficient consultation) (17)
- **Scope and audience** (14)
- **Interoperability** (e.g. connection to RM) (12)
- **Underlying principles** (8)



14

Here's a visual summary of the same issues I just mentioned: modelling, foundation, presentation, transitioning, digital records, and so forth.

The intent of this graph is to highlight for you what the most prominent issues were: you can see that they were modelling concerns (in yellow), presentation issues (in brown), and questions around transitioning to RiC (in grey).

The numbers in brackets represent the number of comments for each of these themes, according to my methods for counting.

# Feedback on RiC-CM Entities

15

Now that we've covered the general feedback about the model as a whole, let's start looking at comments about specific components of RiC, starting with its entities, or the main 'things' being described in the model, such as Records, Agents and Functions.

I will provide a fair bit of detail on this part of the feedback, given that the entities are arguably the fundamental building blocks of the model. They are where you start, when building a model.

## General Feedback on RiC Entities

- **Choice of Entities:** suggestions for changing some entities to properties, or vice versa
  - To entities: e.g. Event/Relation, Name, Classification, Access Conditions
  - To properties: e.g. Occupation, Position, Documentary Form

16

First, starting with the general feedback on RiC entities:

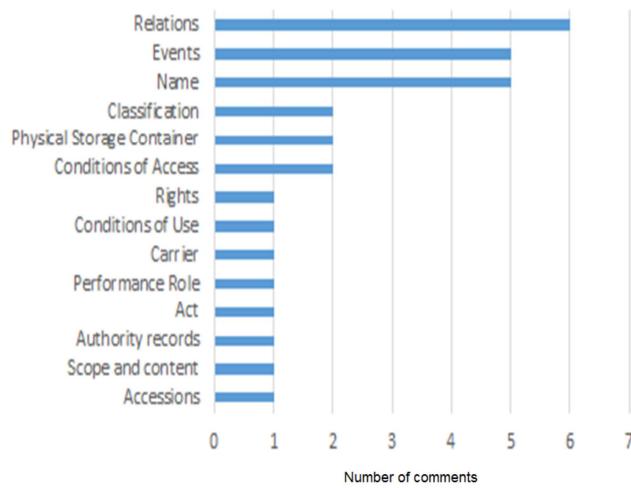
Some of the general comments here were about the choice of entities. There were suggestions for changing some entities to properties, or vice versa.

Modelling something as an entity allows you to make statements about it.

In some cases, this was a gap – when something was a property that should perhaps be an entity – while in other cases, there didn't seem to be a practical need for this – when something was an entity that should perhaps be a property.

## Suggestions for New RiC Entities

- Relations and Events
- Name
- Rights, Conditions of Access, Conditions of Use
- Differentiating Content from Carrier and Physical Storage/Containers (Record-entities)
- Others: Performance Role, Act, Authority Records, Scope and Content, Accessions



17

This graph summarizes the suggestions made for new RiC entities.

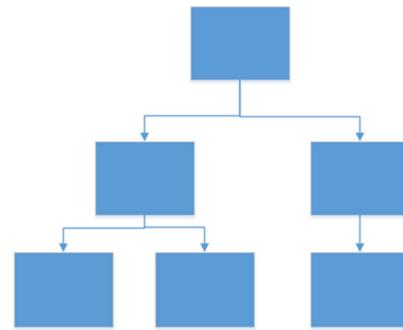
As you can see, there was comparatively a fair amount of interest in having a Relation or Event entity. These are the first two bars at the top.

The third bar down is Name, and suggestions for having Name as an entity rather than a property were also popular. There were questions around how one could designate relations between names otherwise. For instance, there might be different versions of the same name that one would wish to relate together.

Some of the other suggestions focused on controlling rights and conditions information separately as entities, creating entities to help differentiate content from carrier and storage, and “one-off” suggestions for entities that might be useful in specialized archival contexts, for example, Performance Role for dramatic archives.

## Classifying or Organizing RiC Entities

- Top entity “Thing”
- Primary and secondary entities:
  - Primary:
    - Record entities (Record, Record Set, Record Component)
    - Business/Functional entities (Function, Activity, Mandate)
    - Agent
    - Place
    - Concept/Thing
  - Secondary:
    - Date; Occupation; Position; Documentary Form; Function (Abstract)



18

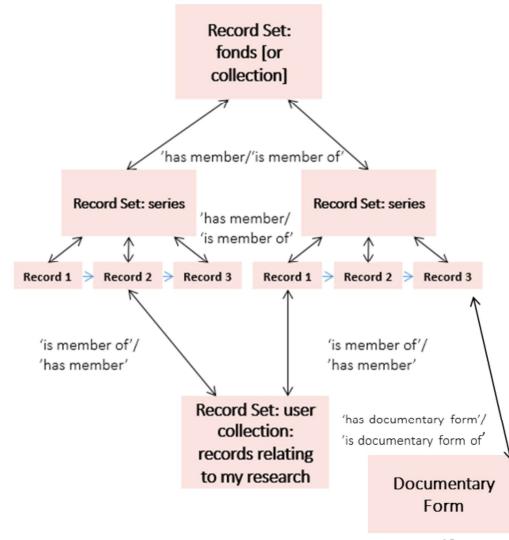
In addition to suggestions for new entities, there were also suggestions for classifying or organizing entities, including typing them as primary and secondary, or by having a 'super-entity' 'Thing', under which all others would be sub-entities.

Grouping or structuring entities could allow for economies such as inheriting or sharing properties, or avoiding redundancy.

One main idea was to focus on core recordkeeping entities, to differentiate them from secondary ones. These ‘primary’ (or core) entities could be grouped in a hierarchical structure with secondary or even tertiary entities.

## Record-related Entities

- **Record:** a single item
- **Record Component:** the parts that make up a Record
- **Record Set:** the groups or aggregations of which a Record may be a member
- **Documentary Form:** a particular format of a Record



19

Moving on from the general feedback, let's look at feedback given on specific RiC entities.

We've already gone over the model with Daniel, so I won't pause for long on these slides, but here are RiC's Record-related entities: Record, Record Component, Record Set, and Documentary Form.

## Feedback on Record-related Entities

- **Distinctions between Record, Record Component, Record Set not always clear:**
  - Compound Record vs. Record Set
  - Complex layers in the digital context: e.g. is a geo-dataset a Record, a Record Component (part of a map view), or a Record Set?
  - Alternative modelling proposed by some: have a single ‘Record’ entity, whether an aggregation or not
- **Documentary Form:** suggestion to model as a property instead

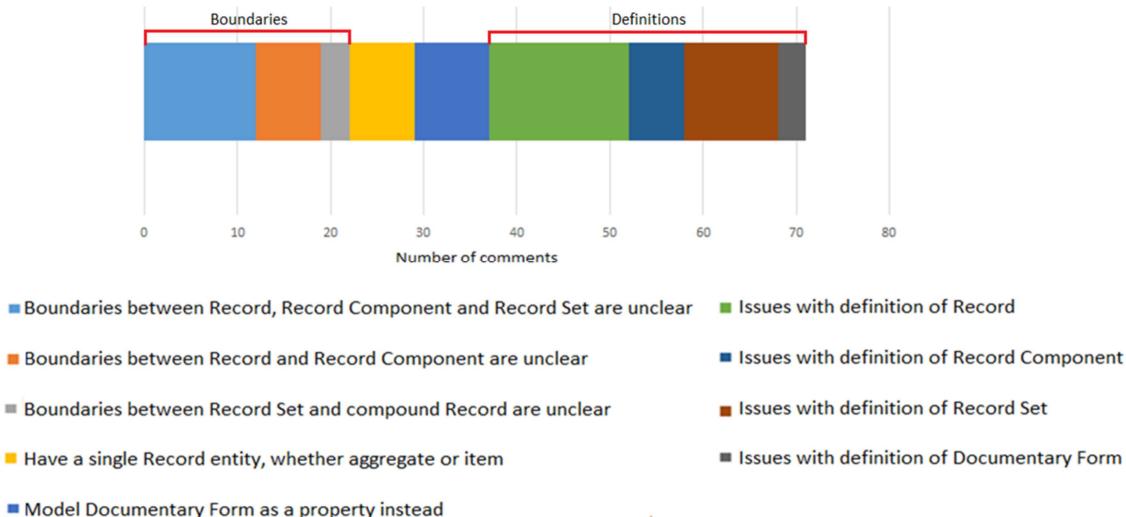
20

Generally there was positive feedback on Record, Record Component and Record Set – though some suggested having just one entity (whether aggregate or item), given the fact that distinctions between the three might not always be clear, particularly with respect to digital records.

On the other hand, the benefits of having a distinct Record Set entity were acknowledged, as it supports identifying aggregations in a more flexible way, and helps break away from a traditional, hierarchical, mono-provenancial approach.

For Documentary Form, some felt it might be sufficient to have it as a property of Record instead.

## Record Entities: Main Issues Raised



21

Here is a visual representation of the main issues raised about Record entities.

A large number of comments concerned issues of overlap or lack of clarity between the Record-related entities. So, the boundaries between these entities were unclear. This is up to the yellow bar.

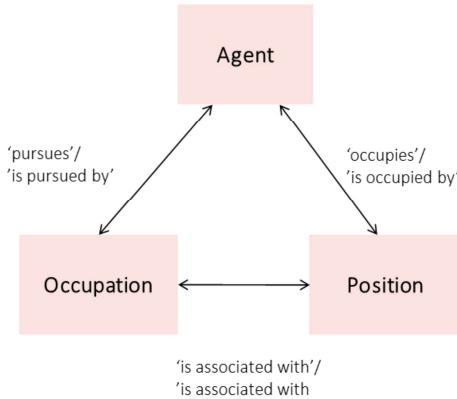
A similar number of comments focused on problems with the definitions of these entities (from green bar to the end). Comments expressing concern over unclear definitions were generally common, and they are very important – it must be made as clear as possible what the RiC entities and other components are intended to represent.

Moving on from the Record-related entities,...

## Agent-related Entities

### Agent:

- includes these types:
  - Persons
  - Groups: corporate bodies, families
  - Delegate-Agents: software, robots, probes
- allows definition of identity types:
  - Given
  - Assumed
- has two related entities:
  - **Occupation**: profession or trade
  - **Position**: role within a corporate body



22

Here are the RiC Agent-related entities: Agent, Occupation and Position.

## Feedback on Agent-related Entities

- **Agent:**

- Model sub-entities for types of agents (person, group, corporate body) for appropriate application of properties

- **Occupation/Position:**

- Some overlap with other business entities: distinctions not entirely clear
- Too much focus on a business context
- Be properties of Agent instead of entities

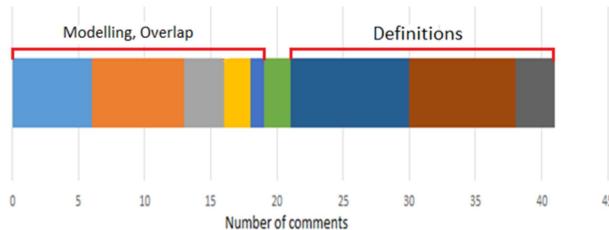
23

One suggestion for the Agent entity was to model sub-types, so that distinct properties could be assigned per each Agent sub-entity.

For Occupation and Position, there was some fuzziness regarding exactly how they were distinct from some business entities.

They also underlined the apparent business-focus of RiC and some felt they could perhaps be properties of Agent rather than distinct entities themselves.

## Agent-related Entities: Main Issues Raised



- Agent modelling issues, including need for sub-classes
- Distinction between Agent, Occupation, Position and various business entities unclear
- Distinction between Occupation and Position unclear
- Occupation and Position should be properties of Agent
- Position could be a property of Occupation
- Position and Occupation: disproportionate focus on business context
- Issues with definition of Agent
- Issues with definition of Occupation
- Issues with definition of Position

24

Again, here is a visual summary of the issues.

Modelling issues for these entities, including addressing the apparent overlap between them, were often commented upon (up to the green bar).

Again, the second largest portion of comments concerned definitional issues (from the medium blue bar to the end).

Now it's time to talk about RiC's Business entities....

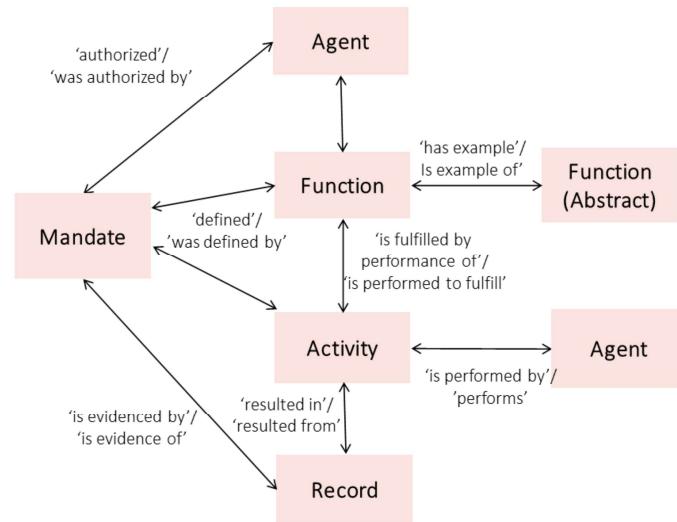
# Business Entities

**Function:** an Agent's broad goals or purposes

**Activity:** actions performed by an Agent in fulfilment of functions

**Function (Abstract):** generic functions

**Mandate:** authority or rules that define the Functions and Activities of Agents



25

Here they are: Function, Activity, Function (Abstract), and Mandate.

## Feedback on Business Entities

- **Modelling:** overlap/redundancy
- **Application concerns:** practical and consistent way to distinguish between these entities?
- **Functional provenance:** in or out of scope?
- **Mandate:** practical to use?

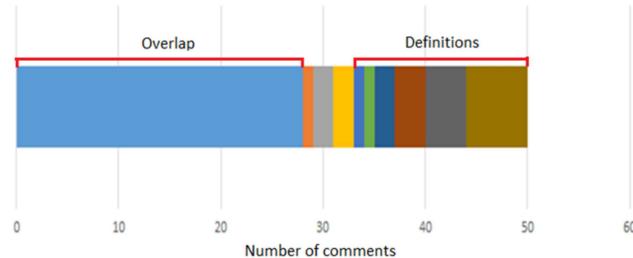
26

There were concerns about overlap among the business entities, particularly between Function and Activity, questioning whether there would be a practical and consistent method for distinguishing among and using them.

The need for Function (Abstract) was questioned, or put another way, why just Function in the abstract but not also Activity in the abstract, for example?

Some also asked about functional provenance, which wasn't explicitly detailed in the RiC document, and whether Mandate would be practical to use.

## Business Entities: Main Issues Raised



- Modelling issues: overlap across business entities, distinctions between them unclear
- What about functional provenance like in ISDF?
- Utility of including Function (Abstract)?
- Is Activity modelled as abstract or concrete?
- Should Mandate be modelled as subordinate to Agent?
- Is Mandate practical to use?
- Issues with definition of Function
- Issues with definition of Function (Abstract)
- Issues with definition of Activity
- Issues with definition of Mandate

27

In this visual summary, you can see that the majority of comments here were about overlap between the business entities (in light blue).

And again, there were many concerns about the definitions of these entities (from the medium blue over to the end).

## Entities Shared with Others: Date, Place, Concept/Thing

### Date:

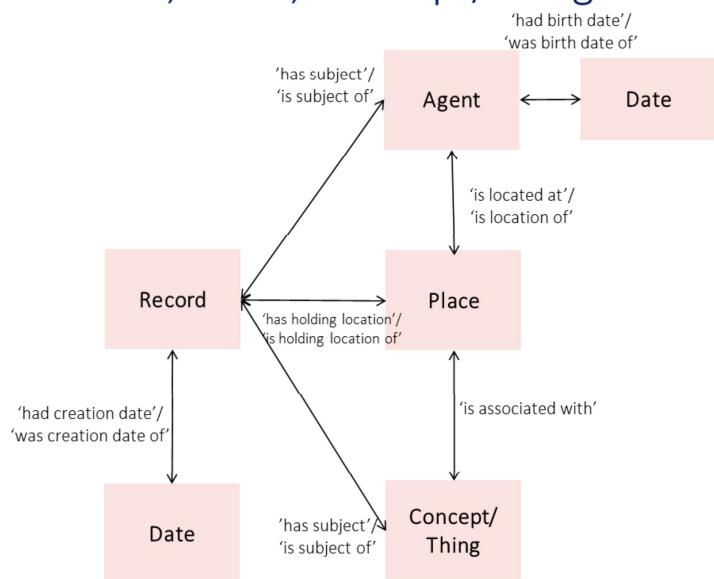
- chronological information
- describing temporal contexts of other entities

### Place:

- geographic or administrative points or areas
- describing spatial contexts of other entities

### Concept/Thing:

- topics that may be the subject of other entities
- e.g., abstract ideas, material things, events



28

The last grouping of RiC entities we will talk about are those that RiC shares with other sibling heritage communities: Date, Place, and Concept/Thing.

## Feedback on Date, Place, Concept/Thing

- **Date**

- Modelling: property versus entity, or both?
- Why is date currently only a property of relations?

- **Place**

- Jurisdiction and geographic place are dissimilar
- What about when a Place could also be an Agent (e.g. an archival repository)?

- **Concept/Thing**

- Not clearly defined, potential overlap with other entities
- Danger of being an over-used catch-all when implemented?

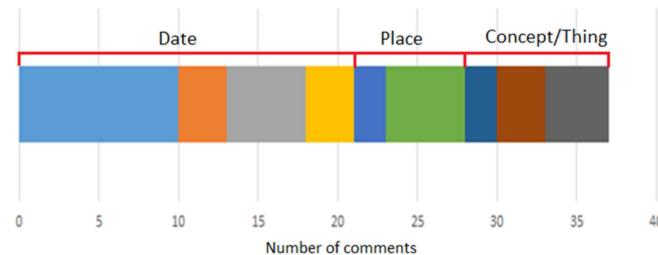
29

There were a lot of questions around Date, particularly about it being simultaneously modelled as an entity and as a property of Relations. Many felt that generally it should be a property of all RiC entities.

For Place, the need for clearer distinctions between jurisdictions and geographic places were mentioned, as well as questions about overlap between Place and Agent, for example when a Corporate Body may also be a 'place', like an archival repository.

For Concept/Thing, overlap with other entities was of concern, since it was scoped to include all of them, and there was a fear of it being over-used as a catch-all in implementation, if it wasn't clearly explained.

## Date, Place, Concept/Thing: Main Issues Raised



- Question modelling Date as an entity vs. as a property
- Date should be modelled with more detail and precision
- Issues with definition of Date
- Requests for implementation guidance for Date
- Question modelling Place as an entity vs. as a property
- Issues with definition of Place
- Rationale for including Concept/Thing as an entity?
- Why not model Concept/Thing as a top-level entity?
- Implementation concern with Concept/Thing as "catch-all"

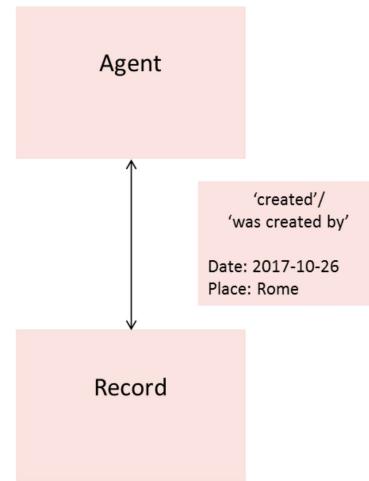
30

In this visual summary, you can see that the majority of comments about these entities concerned the Date entity, its modelling, its definition, and questions concerning implementation issues (up to the medium blue bar in the middle).

For Place and Concept/Thing, most comments concerned modelling, definitions, and implementation issues as well.

## Place and Date as Properties of Relations: Feedback

- Other shared properties of relations might be needed, for example:
  - who made the statement
  - with what degree of certainty
  - referring to which source(s)
  - when
  - at which place
  - reflecting which order/sequence
  - etc.



31

So, in addition to being entities, Date and Place were also properties of relations.

There was some concern about this.

Another general concern here was that additional shared properties might be needed, and this points to comments about control information or 'description about description' being missing from this draft of RiC.

If all descriptive triples are statements, they are being stated by someone, who has a certain degree of certainty about the information, possibly referring to a source, at a given time and place, and this assertion might be subject to a certain order or sequence in relation to other assertions.

These are all possibilities for consideration.

## Feedback on RiC-CM Properties

32

So now that we've talked about all of the RiC entities, we can move onto looking at some feedback on the RiC properties now.

Properties are the pieces of information one can record about entities.

## RiC-CM Properties: Overview

- Shared Properties for all Entities (4)
- Properties
  - of Record (17)
  - of Record Component (*same as for Record*) (17)
  - of Record Set (7)
  - Summarizing the Members of a Record Set (3)
  - Shared by all Member Records of a Record Set (9)
  - of Agent (10)

33

There are too many properties to itemize here, but essentially there are properties available for use with all entities, and properties specific to each entity in RiC.

## RiC-CM Properties: Overview Continued...

- Properties of
  - Occupation, Position, Function, Function (Abstract), Activity, Mandate, Documentary Form (3 each)
  - of Date (2)
  - of Place (3)
  - of Concept/Thing (2)
- Shared Properties of a Relation (2)

**Total properties: 97**

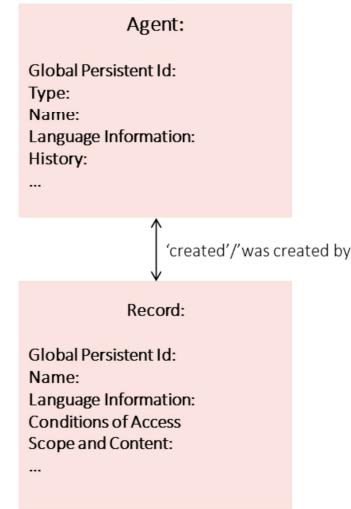
34

... with a grand total of 97!

But within this 97, where are some properties that occur more than once. So, more than one entity has a history property, for example.

## General Feedback on Properties

- **Indicating obligation** (mandatory, optional)
- **Indicating repeatability**
- **Grouping like properties that can apply to multiple entities** (e.g. type, description, history)
- **Data types** ('text', 'controlled term')



35

Regarding general feedback on RiC properties:

Some mentioned the fact that obligation of RiC properties – so, whether they are mandatory or optional – was not yet included and they wanted that information. Repeatability of properties was also mentioned.

Some suggested streamlining the presentation of properties. For instance, when possible, define a property once and have it usable for several entities. Examples include type, description and history properties.

Some felt that data types were beyond the scope of this model, either belonging potentially in the ontology or in implementation guidance. Conversely, some requested more detailed specifications for data types, asking that they not be left to implementation guidance.

## Sample of Suggestions for New Properties

- Record:
  - Life cycle / archival management (e.g. appraisal; disposal; registration)
- Agent:
  - other demographic characteristics (e.g. ethnicity; religious affiliation; race; cultural context; sexual orientation)
- Relation
  - Type (e.g. contextual; associative; structural; relation between Records; relation between Agents)

36

There were suggestions for new properties.

First, for Record, some asked for more information about records' life cycle management activities such as appraisal, disposal and registration. There was nothing specific about these in the draft RiC.

Second, for Agent, there were suggestions for additional demographic characteristics, or aspects of identity, such as ethnicity, religious affiliation, race, and the like.

Lastly, defining a Type property for use with Relations seemed sensible to some. Although Relation was not a RiC entity, two properties were defined for describing relations as I mentioned before, namely date and place. The idea behind the Type property here was that typing relations could be a useful organizational tool, to help improve semantic clarity (so, grouping similar relations together), which would help increase consistency when interpreting and implementing RiC relations in different contexts.

There were a lot of specific issues about RiC properties raised in the feedback. We have time for me to share two with you today.

## Sample Issue: Properties for Digital Records

- Incompleteness:

- RiC is not sufficiently nuanced/detailed for digital records and recordkeeping

- Need:

- To clarify some existing RiC properties for digital Records
- More properties for describing digital Records and their components
- Properties for describing systems contexts and dependencies
- More digital examples

37

First of all, many comments were made about RiC's treatment of digital Records. The main issue raised was that RiC was not sufficiently nuanced or detailed to accommodate digital records and digital recordkeeping.

With respect to RiC properties, commenters noted that some existing properties needed clarification, such as Encoding Format for Record, which could refer to any of character encoding, file format, MIME type, or AV codecs.

Also, some additional properties were needed, such as more specific properties for fixity information for Records. Some felt that the Authenticity and Integrity Note, which was a narrative free-text property, was not well-suited to containing checksum information, although it was seemingly the only available place for it.

Some commenters pointed out the significance of describing systems contexts and dependencies between aspects such as applications software, operating systems, and hardware, and that these were missing from RiC.

And some people asked for more digital examples, such as more digital documentary forms, to help make clear how certain properties would apply to digital Records.

## Sample Issue: Agent Identity and Gender

- Agent (Type=Person)
  - Identity Type
    - Archivist able to determine true vs. fictitious?
  - Gender
    - Complexity missing in RiC
    - Archivist has authority to ascertain gender?
    - Why only gender and not also other characteristics?
    - Repeatable, if it changes over time?
    - Useful information for users?

38

The second sample issue concerns Agent identity and gender.

For a person Agent, there was a lot of feedback on the issues of identity and gender.

- Some felt that the archivist would not be in a position to ascertain whether an identity was true or fictitious, and that distinguishing between a given and assumed identity was not very useful.
- The complexity of gender was absent in the draft RiC, and again, it arguably may not be the place of the archivist to make assessments on gender.
- Also, why identify gender and not other characteristics?
- What if gender changes over time?
- Is it really useful information for users?

So these are some of the issues raised about RiC properties. Now we can talk about feedback about the final piece of RiC, its relations.

# Feedback on RiC-CM Relations

Example:

Record was created by Agent / Agent created Record

4.2.1 Record Relations					
Relation Number	Relation Domain	Relation Name	Relation Range	Inverse Relation Name and Number	Comments
RIC-82	Record	has copy	Record	is copy of (RIC-86)	
RIC-83	Record	has draft	Record	is draft of (RIC-87)	
RIC-84	Record	has original	Record	is original of (RIC-88)	
RIC-85	Record	has subject	Record	is subject of (RIC-810)	
RIC-86	Record	is associated with	Record	is associated with (RIC-85)	See also RIC-R13
RIC-87	Record	is copy of	Record	has copy (RIC-81)	
RIC-88	Record	is draft of	Record	has draft (RIC-82)	
RIC-89	Record	is original of	Record	has original (RIC-83)	
RIC-90	Record	is predecessor of	Record	is successor of (RIC-91)	
RIC-91	Record	is successor of	Record	is subject of (RIC-94)	
RIC-92	Record	is predecessor of	Record	is predecessor of (RIC-89)	
RIC-93	Record	is associated with	Record	was associated with (RIC-912)	See also RIC-R5
RIC-94	Record	had part	Record	was part of (RIC-97)	See also RIC-R14
RIC-95	Record	has part	Record	is part of (RIC-97A)	See also RIC-A13
RIC-96	Record	is associated with	Component	is associated with (RIC-97B)	See also RIC-R16
RIC-97	Record	is associated with	Component	was associated with (RIC-97B)	See also RIC-R15
RIC-98	Record	is associated with	Record	is associated with (RIC-93A)	See also RIC-R19
RIC-99	Record	is member of	Record Set	has member (RIC-A13B)	See also RIC-R20
RIC-100	Record	is member of	Record Set	was associated with (RIC-913B)	See also RIC-R21
RIC-101	Record	is associated with	Record Set	was addressed to (RIC-921)	See also RIC-R24
RIC-102	Record	was member of	Record Set	had member (RIC-A13B)	See also RIC-A13
RIC-103	Record	had member of	Record Set	had member (RIC-921A)	See also RIC-R21
RIC-104	Record	was held by	Agent	is rights holder of (RIC-920B)	See also RIC-R21
RIC-105	Record	has rights held by	Agent	is rights holder of (RIC-920B)	See also RIC-R21
RIC-106	Record	has subject	Agent	is subject of (RIC-920F)	
RIC-107	Record	is associated with	Agent	is associated with (RIC-920A)	See also RIC-R23
RIC-108	Record	is owned by	Agent	is owned by (RIC-920)	See also RIC-R21
RIC-109	Record	is owned by	Agent	owns (RIC-920B)	See also RIC-R23
RIC-110	Record	was addressed to	Agent	was addressed of (RIC-921)	
RIC-111	Record	was associated with	Agent	was associated with (RIC-921)	See also RIC-R24
RIC-112	Record	was authored by	Agent	authorized (RIC-920)	
RIC-113	Record	was created by	Agent	created (RIC-920)	
RIC-114	Record	was held by	Agent	created (RIC-920)	
RIC-115	Record	was held by	Agent	is holder of (RIC-921A)	See also RIC-R25
RIC-116	Record	was owned by	Agent	is owner of (RIC-920B)	See also RIC-R20
RIC-117	Record	was written by	Agent	wrote (RIC-921)	
RIC-118	Record	has subject	Occupation	is subject of (RIC-933)	
RIC-119	Record	is associated with	Occupation	is associated with (RIC-930)	See also RIC-R23
RIC-120	Record	resulted from	Occupation	resulted in (RIC-933)	
RIC-121	Record	was associated with	Occupation	was associated with (RIC-933)	See also RIC-R23
RIC-122	Record	had part	Position	is evidence of (RIC-97)	

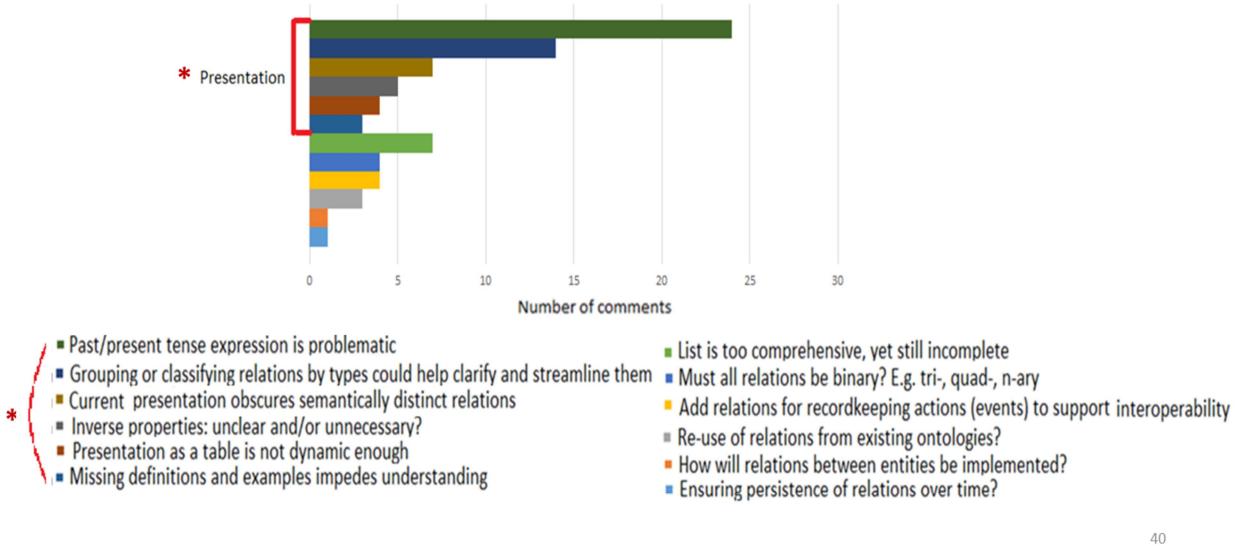
39

Relations in RiC are the various types of associations or relationships that can be designated between RiC entities.

This part of RiC is lengthy, as relations are presented per each domain entity, meaning that each unique relation appears twice. So, for example, (\*) both “Record was created by Agent” and “Agent created Record” are included in the overall list.

Relations between RiC entities range from a general association relationship, to provenancial relationships, subject relationships, and many others.

## Main Issues Raised (1)



This graph depicts the main issues raised. I've grouped them to highlight the prevalence of issues about the presentation of RiC relations in the draft, which was the area of concern most commented upon. (\*) (\*) (\*) They are grouped from the top green bar through to the medium blue bar in the middle.

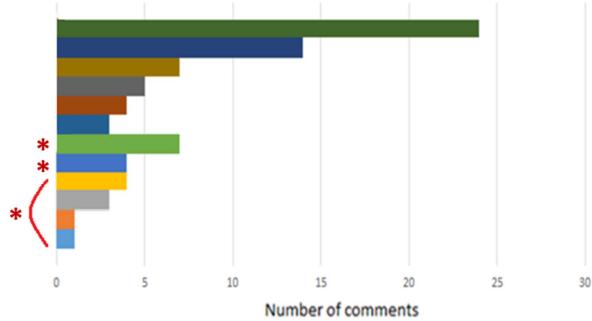
To start, many felt that presenting a particular relation in both present and past tenses was a concern. So, for example, having both “Agent owns Record” and “Agent owned Record”. This issue actually received the most comments, as you can see. This is the long green bar at the top. Some felt that it was unnecessary to state both tenses; that this created a potentially unmanageable amount of work, to maintain relations as they changed over time. Instead, date information could be provided as part of the description of a Relation. So, a date range could be applied to the “Agent owns Record” relation, to indicate when it was true.

A different suggestion concerning the presentation of RiC relations was to consider organizing or grouping them, which would allow some to be merged or re-used in different entity pairs. This refers in part to the proposed type property for Relations that I mentioned earlier – for instance, associative relations; contextual relations; structural relations; and so on.

Another point is that some felt that the current repetitive presentation of relations – or, having both “Agent owns Record” and “Record is owned by Agent” – made it difficult to locate semantically unique relations. Likewise, some questioned the need to present inverse expressions of relations, if the inverse could be inferred.

Lastly, the lack of definitions and examples made it difficult to understand the intended meaning of many RiC relations.

## Main Issues Raised (2)



- Past/present tense expression is problematic
- Grouping or classifying relations by types could help clarify and streamline them
- Current presentation obscures semantically distinct relations
- Inverse properties: unclear and/or unnecessary?
- Presentation as a table is not dynamic enough
- Missing definitions and examples impedes understanding
- List is too comprehensive, yet still incomplete
- Must all relations be binary? E.g. tri-, quad-, n-ary
- Add relations for recordkeeping actions (events) to support interoperability
- Re-use of relations from existing ontologies?
- How will relations between entities be implemented?
- Ensuring persistence of relations over time?

41

In addition to presentation issues, (\*) (\*) some felt that the RiC relations were very comprehensive (perhaps too much so) yet still incomplete, that is, certain important relations were missing. This is the light green bar showing in the middle.

(\*) (\*) Some asked whether all relations had to be binary – what about relations between more than two entities at a time? This is the blue bar directly below the green bar in the middle.

(\*) (\*) Otherwise, some of the other issues about relations concerned interoperability, re-use from other ontologies, and implementation concerns.

## Main Messages from Main Issues

- RIC should contain key relations presented in an efficient way
- Ways to group or cluster relations
- Strategy for managing the time-bound nature of relations

42

So, some of the main messages in the general feedback on RiC relations are that RIC should contain key relations presented in an efficient way.

That there might be ways to group or cluster relations.

And that there needs to be a strategy for managing the time-bound nature of relations, as some may exist only in the past, or some might change over time.

In addition to these general issues, commenters provided a variety of detailed or nuanced questions about adding new relations, or limitations implied by current gaps; and conceptual overlap between existing relations (this was in part due to the lack of definitions and examples in the draft).

I will provide two specific issues as examples.

## Sample of Specific Issues about RiC Relations

- Digital records:
  - Relating originals with copies (scans) and renditions (made for preservation or access purposes)
- Relation types – e.g. 'isAssociatedWith':
  - Too basic to be meaningful?
  - Model as 'top' relation, with all others being specializations (sub-relations)?

43

- (\*) First, for digital records: some recommended modifications to the model to allow for relating different manifestations of records, for instance, analogue records and their digitized counterparts, or renditions of digital records made for access vs. preservation reasons.

- (\*) Second, regarding the relation "isAssociatedWith": some wondered if it was too basic to be meaningful. Or if it should be defined as the primary relation type, with all other types being sub-relations, or specializations of it.

## Conclusions and Next Steps



Image credit: <https://wallpapersafari.com/beach-wallpaper-caribbean/>

44

We've made it through all of the feedback!

Here is a little visual relief for you before we move on...

So, what can one conclude from all of these comments, and what are the next steps for the RiC conceptual model?

## What Does all of this Feedback Indicate?

- The international archival community:
  - Is interested in RiC-CM's development and generally supports it
  - Invested time and energy to provide detailed, insightful and useful feedback, which will help guide improvements for the next draft
  - Wants a high-quality, useful, implementable product
  - Wants to better understand the development process and have ongoing opportunities to contribute or provide comments

45

In my opinion, the feedback shows that the archival community:

(\*) is interested in EGAD's work to develop a conceptual model for archival description and is generally supportive of it.

(\*) Thoughtful consideration of the draft resulted in detailed, insightful, and useful feedback. The comments will help improve the draft and represent a substantial contribution to guiding the revision.

(\*) The comments demonstrate that the community wants something of high quality, that is useful, and implementable.

(\*) Lastly, the comments show that the community would like to better understand the development process and have the opportunity to actively contribute to it via continued consultation, discussion, and feedback.

## Next Steps

- Addressing the community's feedback
  - Potential strategy: thematic digest of issues with updates to the ICA-EGAD-RiC list-serv
  - Opportunity for ongoing community feedback and dialog
- Strategy update in late 2017 / early 2018
- New version of RiC-CM perhaps by early 2018

46

As for next steps:

- EGAD is using the community's feedback to help guide the revision of the conceptual model.
- I mentioned the proposed digest strategy earlier: that EGAD could post responses to some of the main issues highlighted in the feedback, many of which I've mentioned here today.
- EGAD hopes to release a revised version of the conceptual model in Winter 2018.

# Thank you!

Draft RiC-CM available at:

<http://www.ica.org/egad-ric-conceptual-model>

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47

That's it for me.

Thanks everyone for your attention!