DC-Government Working Group

Seattle WG Session, Wednesday 31 September 2003

Attendees: Andrew Wilson   Co-chair
               Maewyn Cumming   UK
               John Roberts   New Zealand
               Gill Baker   UK
               Rod Wilson   UK
               Diane McCollum   USA
               Andy Everett   USA
               Michael Warner   UK
               Cecil Somerton   Canada
               Karen Morgenroth   Canada
               Marie-Claude Côté   Canada
               Nancy Brodie   Canada
               Kelly Green   USA
               Thom Pick   Germany
               Hsueh-Hua Chen   Taiwan
               Hsiao-Ming Yu   Taiwan
               Frank Klaproth   Germany
               Brian Westra   USA

1.   Welcome and presentation/registration

Andrew welcomed participants, and noted that there were 18 WG members in attendance.

2.   Brief status of deliverables after DC 2002 by Chair

Andrew reported on the status of the DC-Government deliverables which arose from the Florence meeting in 2002.

1.   Survey of government implementations of DC metadata
Andrew noted that a survey was done after DC2001 but there had been a limited response. There was a need for a new survey to assist in development of an application profile. A particular interest is in what additional elements ands refinements are being used. Little progress had been made so far on developing the new survey. Once it is ready the survey would be sent to the mailing list and the compiled results published on the DC-Government web page of the DCMI site.

2.   DC GOV Application Profile
Andrew apologised for the slow progress and asked the question "What do we want from the application profile?" The Working Group needs to be clear on this before it can continue to develop one.

3.   Functional requirements for description of government services using DC
The document had been circulated last year but John had not yet been able to find time to revise and issue a new version.

4.   Provision of DC-based training material/course information
Nancy Brodie said that the government of Canada was working on a training initiative which might be able to feed into the DC-Government work. She reported that the

GoC survey would be posted to the DC-General mailing list. Nancy asked participants to send their trainng materials to her. She will collect all the training materials together and send them to DCMI which was also interested in putting together a suite of training materials. The materials would be made available on the DCMI website.

5   Exchange of definitions
It was acknowledged by the group generally that there is a need for a common understanding of the terms used when talking about metadata in the government con text. However, no progress has been made in the last year on developing a common glossary.

6.   UDDI
Palle said that preliminary work had started but was not yet complete. He thought it would eventually be possible to prepare a crosswalk.

7.   Guidelines for using DC to describe service
Waiting for resolution of the functional requirements document.

3.   Special deliverables status: Dublin Core Government Application Profile by editorial group (John Roberts)

Maewyn Cumming discussed the CEN workshop which was developing an application profile for government use [CEN is the European standards body]. The workshop was on a fast track process to produce "Workshop agreement" as a less formal document than a standard. This would be an e-Government application profile.

DCMI itself is developing guidelines on how to prepare an application profile which would be useful for the development of the Working Group application profile. The Working Group agreed use the CEN application profile (workshop agreement) as a basis for consideration for the DC-Government application profile. It might be possible to adopt the CEN e-government profile as the application profile for the DC-Government Working Group. Maewyn agreed to circulate the CEN link to DC-Government mailing list.

John asked Working Group participants to send comments on the CEN agreement to him. John and Maewyn will compile all the comments received and post the compilation to the DC-Government mailing list.

John also noted that the editorial group would need to consider the results of the DC-Government survey before the draft application profile could be finalised.

4.   Deliverables for DC 2004

Andrew asked participants to talk about what deliverables the group should work on in the coming year. There was lengthy discussion about developing terms for adding to the dcterms namespace, as well as other namespaces.

The Working Group felt that there was a need for the Usage Board to determine whether DCMI will allow the incorporation of terms that have a consensus for use in one of the Working Groups but which are under the jurisdiction of a public administration.

Cecil Somerton brought up the issue of complexity of management if application profiles need to reference multiple namespaces.

The Working Group agreed that work on development of the application profile needs to continue.

The Working Group also asked that the Government survey result be updated and made available on the DC-Government webpages.

Andrew Everett said that he would post something about UDDI to the DC-Government mailing list.

The Working Group also agreed that there is a sense among them that the issue of describing services is important and must be continued. Thom Pick suggested that other Working Groups may also be doing some of this work. John said he would bring the matter up with other Working Group chairs to see if there was a common need for service description guidance.

Frank Klaproth discussed the Renardus project in the context of some discussion about metadata search engines. He said that t he project was established with the same drivers that the Government Working Group has and had provided much material online. The URL for the project is: www.renardus.org

The work on developing a set of definitions for commonly used terms within the community also need to proceed, but the difficulties of multiple conflicting definitions across jurisdictions would make this a complex item to resolve.

Makx Dekkers advised that DCMI also had its own plans for online training resources. He asked the Working Group chairs to send a reminder to the Government mailing list asking people to send training materials to Nancy. Nancy noted that the material did not have to come just from governments. She also said the GoC had commissioned a mapping which she will share with list when it is made public.

5.   Revision of Working Group charter

The DCMI Directorate had requested Working Groups to revise their charters to include something about cooperation with other international metadata initiatives. After discussion about the aims of this request the Working Group agreed to revise the charter but to ensure that the revised charter required that the aims of the Working Group be furthered by any such cooperation. The group discussed a proposed wording and Andrew undertook to send the proposed rewording to the mailing list for confirmation.

Nancy asked about including other international organisations in the charter, groups such as the United Nations, World Health Organisation, etc. She also suggested the introduction of phrase "public administration" to replace 'government' in the charter wording. Nancy undertook to send the correct form of words to the mailing list for agreement by the Working Group.

6.   Any other business

The group raised and discussed two other issues of concern to participants.

1. The issue of persistent identifiers is of great concern in the Government community and elsewhere. Maewyn advised that she was looking at some work that

had been done by the Australian and Canadian governments. She also said that work needs to be done on this issue. She suggested that Government Working Group members might think about setting up a specific Working Group on this issue. Andrew advised that the issue had been of concern to the Architecture Working Group for some time and that this was probably the best forum for the question at the moment. It would probably be useful for the Government Working Group chairs to follow any discussion on this issue on the Architecture Working Group.

2 The issue of the existence of actual documented proof that metadata improves searching was also raised. Often governments wanted to know and see the benefits of adopting metadata before they would commit to specific metadata projects. There was a real need for some quantitative proof that metadata actually enhanced searching. The Working Group participants thought that there was a role for the Working Group in facilitating an attempt at getting such information. A project on this topic at the University of Washington was mentioned , but it is apparently at an early stage.

Participants were thanked for attending the Government Working Group meeting and for their discussion and comments.