

# Federal Agencies Audio-Visual Working Group

## Notes from the meeting, December 11, 2007

*Abstract: Six agencies represented, agreement that activity has value, table of contents for future guidelines discussed, agreement to continue series of meetings.*

This meeting for federal agency representatives interested in audio-visual digitization standards was held at the National Audio-Visual Conservation Center, Packard Campus, in Culpeper on Friday, December 7, 2007. The event included a tour of the center, the new home for the Library of Congress Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division (M/B/RS). There were representatives from five agencies other than the Library of Congress: the National Archives and Records Administration (5), the National Agricultural Library (2), the National Library of Medicine (1), the Smithsonian Institution (Smithsonian Folkways 3, National Anthropological Archives 1), and the Government Printing Office (2). The tour took about one and three-quarters hours. The meeting included lunch at the conference table and ran about two hours.

There was enthusiasm for the proposed standards-and-guidelines activity. Several in the group (NARA, Smithsonian, LC) have already embarked on audio-visual reformatting or born-digital acquisition activities. NLM and NAL do some reformatting audio-visual collections at this time, but their target is physical media (e.g., DigiBeta videotape and audio compact disks). They expect to begin using computer files as a target format in the foreseeable future. GPO is engaged in video and animation production on behalf of clients like the U.S. Army and expressed interest in understanding issues that pertained to preserving their newly created work.

During the round robin, when the representatives told their stories, several indicated that more explicit, consensus-based guidelines would be welcome. As far as current practices go, confidence was higher regarding recorded sound than video. Very little was said regarding the digital reformatting of motion picture film, although the M/B/RS tour included the film-scanning room, where the Kinetta paper-print-and-film scanner is set up. An interest in born digital turned up at least twice in the conversation: from the LC Veterans History Project, where the team has had to ingest a variety of audio and video formats, and from the GPO team.

What next? How might we structure the continuing work and, perhaps, the documents that result? We looked a draft table of content for possible guidelines documents, based on the structure of the 2004 NARA still-imaging guidelines. The elements included (1) background and overview discussion, (2) workflow (at a high level), (3) classes/ types/categories of original, (4) objectives by class, (5) recommended specifications by class, (6) metadata, (7) file naming and management, and (8) quality control. There was agreement that these made a good starting point, and also agreement that we should identify and evaluate relevant guidelines and standards already in existence or use.