

## Background papers Shanghai Triennial Meeting October 2018

### The revision of ISO 999:1996 – A brief progress report

David Green, committee member ISO/TC46 SC9 WG12

#### 1 Development background

ISO standards are reviewed every five years to determine if a revision is required to keep them current and relevant.

The latest edition of ISO 999 was published in 1996. While ISO 999 states it is applicable to ‘all types of index, regardless of whether they are produced manually or by computer-assisted methods’, it has long been felt that the standard needs modernising to reflect advances in technology and business practice. Specifically, the standard needs updating to ensure its recommendations remain relevant to all types of indexes (print and electronic) and to all document formats, including ebooks and web indexing.

To this end, in 2015 a Working Group known as “WG12: Indexes and Indexing” was established under the auspices of ISO Technical Committee 46 (Information and documentation) Subcommittee 9 (Identification and description) to work on this revision.

At present, the Working Group has participation from twelve committee members representing seven countries: United States (5), UK (1), Germany (2), Russian Federation (1), Australia (1), South Africa (1) and Italy (1). Earlier this year, Drahomira Cupar from the Department of Information Science at the University of Zadar in Croatia was voted in as the new convenor of WG12, succeeding Janet Shuter who had been project leader for the completion of the original ISO 999 standard in 1992-3.

Sadly, little significant progress has been made since 2016, due partly to technical issues with the ISO website and difficulties co-opting people with expert non-traditional indexing skills onto the Working Group. Several members have also stepped down in recent months.

However, in February 2018 the project was registered in the TC/SC work programme, and within the next few weeks it is hoped work will resume on preparing a working draft.

Status: ISO 999

Stage	Description	Date
<b>10</b>	<b>New project approved</b>	<b>19.09.2016</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>New project registered in TC/SC work programme</b>	<b>22.02.2018</b>

#### 2 Summary of continuing work

##### 2.1 ISO 5963 and ISO 999

The ISO brief requires WG12 to perform a gap analysis between ISO 5963 and ISO 999 to determine whether the former can be withdrawn and its relevant content absorbed by ISO 999. (Note: ISO 5963 was declared obsolescent in the UK several years ago.)

Both standards derive from BS 370, and for the most part the content of ISO 5963 is already represented in ISO 999.

In December 2015 Janet Shuter presented a discussion document outlining in broad terms how the various parts of ISO 5963 related to ISO 999, and identifying relevant content from ISO 5963 that might usefully be incorporated into ISO 999. Specifically, it was suggested that ISO 999 should be updated to contain new subsections on whole-document indexing and on indexing with a thesaurus, thus effectively incorporating those parts of ISO 5963 Sections 5–7 which are still current.

## 2.2 ISO 25964 and ISO 999

Maintaining and updating a thesaurus is now covered by ISO 25964-1:2011, Thesauri for information retrieval. It is suggested that some definitions used in ISO 999 should follow ISO 25964-1.

## 2.3 Design specification for ISO 999

In December 2015 Janet Shuter circulated a document outlining the scope and objectives of a proposed revision to ISO 999. This was a preliminary document intended only as a starting point for discussion. It envisaged a revised ISO 999 divided into four parts:

1. preliminaries
2. basic principles of indexing [mostly ISO 999 content updated/ improved]
3. form and presentation [different ways of constructing/ displaying indexes, including embedding and hyperlinking]
4. applicability to various kinds of documents/ collections [from print to electronic media, including ebooks, online collections of documents, web indexing, etc.]

A new section covering “criteria for indexing software” was also mooted.

## 3 References

BS 370:1976, Recommendations. The preparation of indexes to books, periodicals and other publications

ISO 999:1996, Guidelines for the content, organization and presentation of indexes

ISO 5963:1985, Methods for examining documents, determining their subjects, and selecting indexing terms

ISO 25964-1:2011, Thesauri for information retrieval

14.09.2018

### ***The Indexer***

The Society of Indexers (SI) has signed a contract with Liverpool University Press (LUP) to publish *The Indexer* from 2019 but will continue to be ultimately responsible for its management, on behalf of the international indexing community. (More information on the outsourcing process is given in the appendix.) The new arrangement covers the production, marketing and subscription management of the journal. The main change subscribers will see will be a change to a more standard journal format and a striking new design, which is currently under development. The journal will continue to be published four times a year (March, June, September and December) in print and online.

The content of the journal will remain solely in the control of the editor, Mary Coe, who has been working with the retiring editor, Maureen MacGlashan, during 2018, gradually taking over full responsibility. On the editorial side (and as indicated in the proposed changes to the International Agreement), Mary Coe and the SI propose replacing the current International Advisory Board with an Editorial Board that will include an ICRIS representative. ICRIS will be invited to nominate this representative, who will be subject to appointment by the Editor. The purpose of creating the new Board is to involve a range of professional indexers and academics in actively reviewing editorial policy and content. Appointment of an ICRIS representative whose sole purpose will be representing the interests of the international body on the Board will provide ICRIS with an active and purposeful role.

Subscription prices for members of indexing societies will not change, and these will continue to be handled through the SI office, which will liaise closely with LUP. As soon as each issue is available electronically, the information will be posted on the ICRIS list in order for it to be passed on to the members of each society.

### **Appendix: The outsourcing story**

*The Indexer* has been published since 1958, growing from a modest 28-page, biannual newsletter-type publication to the present 48-page A-4 quarterly publication with its wide-ranging content, published by the Society of Indexers (SI) on behalf of the international indexing community. On taking up the editorial role in 2004, Maureen MacGlashan began putting the journal on a much more professional footing, but it has continued to fall behind on marketing and subscription management in particular. Outsourcing has been seen as the only realistic way forward, with production and management handled by a publisher with the resources and expertise lacking amongst indexing societies. Maureen pursued this with vigour, but negotiations in 2005 and again in 2010 failed to reach a satisfactory outcome and she continued to oversee all aspects of the journal's production, in addition to her core editorial role.

With Maureen's retirement on the horizon, in 2016 it was time to revisit the outsourcing option. Online surveys of the readership confirmed the view that the international indexing community appreciates its professional journal and the SI Executive Board agreed that its future must be secured. Initial negotiations moved only slowly and by late 2017 a realistic proposal was not yet on the table. With the journal entering its 60th anniversary year and Mary Coe having been appointed to take over the editorial reins, around a dozen journal publishers were approached. After a time-consuming process involving many phone calls, Skype discussions, email correspondence and, in one case, a face-to-face meeting, three proposals were eventually submitted, and following a last-minute flurry of emails, a contract was signed with Liverpool University Press (LUP). One of the smaller university presses, it is

the UK's third oldest, and has received a number of awards for its innovative and agile approach to publishing. It has a particular strength in working with learned societies and associations, and an initial meeting at the LUP offices confirmed the impression that this will be a great company to work with. We hope that this new publishing partnership, and with a new editor, marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter in the journal's development.

### **Item 7: ICRIS webpage**

While much of the content currently on *The Indexer* website will gradually move to the Liverpool University Press website, SI will continue to host and manage the site and the ICRIS webpage will therefore remain in place for the foreseeable future. ICRIS will be consulted about any significant changes to the webpage going forward. As noted in the proposed revision of the ICRIS Terms of Reference, contact details will need to be updated to reflect changes in personnel in each society.

### **International 'Indexer Locator'**

Indexing is an international activity, with many publishers looking for suitably qualified indexers around the globe. Indexing jobs are allocated to indexers who meet the publishers' specifications on subject knowledge, expertise, speed and price. Location is far less of an issue.

At present, publishers are restricted to the 'Indexer locator' listings (also known as Directory of Professional Indexers, Indexers Available, Register of Indexers Available, etc.) of their country's specific indexing society.

The obvious step to overcome these limitations is to make the individual 'Indexer Locator' listings available internationally. This concept is not new. Max McMaster, of ANZSI, raised this issue at the ICRIS Triennial meeting in Brighton, UK, in 2012. More recently, Katharina Munk, of DNI, proposed a similar idea at the ICRIS Informal Meeting, in Cleveland, Ohio, in April 2018. Katharina suggested improving the ICRIS webpage links so that users are taken directly to the various society directories.

This is an admirable idea, however realistically most publishers are unlikely to access the ICRIS webpage, so limiting their opportunity to find the links to the various society directories. To overcome this difficulty, the following three-step strategy is proposed.

#### **Step 1**

As an initial step in developing an international 'Indexer Locator', each society should provide links from their own 'Index Locator' web page to the 'Index locator' web pages of its sister societies. This would entail adding seven or eight links together with wording along the following lines: "For additional indexer options, consider the subject skills of indexers from our sister societies around the world". This would be fair for all members listed, but more importantly, would provide publishers with the opportunity to find indexers from outside their immediate catchment area.

The major advantage of this strategy for each society is that apart from adding links to each sister society's 'Indexer Locator', no other work is required. It is assumed that members who

meet each society's criteria for inclusion on their 'Index Locator' list have the appropriate indexing skills and specific subject knowledge to warrant the listing.

### **Step 2**

At present, the level of information available on each 'Locator' list varies. This is particularly true for individual members' profiles. Ideally, there should be global consensus on a standard list of information fields and a standard list of subjects, so that a publisher searching on one 'Locator' list could implement the same search on another list. Although attaining consensus on fields and categories would take time, there are considerable benefits in doing so.

### **Step 3**

Consolidating each society's 'Locator' list into a larger database is the ultimate aim. However, this will be harder to achieve. Although one society or ICRIS could host the database, developing a strategy to maintain and update records will be the most difficult issue to overcome.

### **Recommendation**

Implementing Step 1 is both an achievable and desirable outcome that will give members of indexing societies around the world a presence in the global market, while also allowing publishers to select from a broader range of suitable indexers.

Max McMaster  
August, 2018

## **Institute of Certified Indexers (ICI)**

### **About ICI**

The Institute of Certified Indexers (ICI) was founded in 2010. From their website:

Bringing standards to the field of indexing, the Institute of Certified Indexers offers indexers the opportunity to gain professional certification. When hiring an indexer with certification from ICI, a client can be assured that the certified indexer has (1) demonstrated a significant level of skill, familiarity with indexing techniques, and ability to produce high-quality indexes; and (2) continued to stay current in the field by a commitment to ongoing learning.

The company maintains offices in Lewes, DE and is incorporated in the state of Virginia.

#### **Founders:**

Enid Zafran, Managing Founder  
Fred Leise, Associate Founder  
Kate Mertes, Associate Founder  
Pilar Wyman, Associate Founder

ICI is an independent standards organization not affiliated in any way with any indexing membership organization in the US or elsewhere.

## **Work of ICI**

ICI has a stringent certification process for indexers. It also requires members to be recertified every three years.

Since 2014 it has run the annual Purple Pen Contest. “The award is open to new indexers who completed an indexing course in the last five years and submit an index done for payment (not a practice or pro bono index)”. Each application is assessed against their *Indexing best practices* ([http://www.certifiedindexers.com/indexing\\_best\\_practices.pdf](http://www.certifiedindexers.com/indexing_best_practices.pdf)).

The Institute of Certified Indexers (ICI) actively promotes standards in indexing in a non-commercial environment.

## **Ability to join ICRIS**

At the 2016 Triennial meeting in York:

The issue of whether there was any restriction on having more than one indexing-related Society from a country represented on ICRIS at a future date was raised. The emphatic answer was no.

(<https://www.theindexer.org/files/minutes/icris-1509.pdf> Item 10A)

## **Recommendation**

As a professional organisation promoting indexing standards, it is recommended that ICI be invited to join ICRIS.

Mary Russell, August 2018

## **Society Reports**

The following reports were presented:

### **Report from the American Society for Indexing for the ICRIS meeting October 2018**

#### **Key Developments over the last three years:**

- ASI has held several successful conferences, including the joint-conference with ISC/SCI in Chicago (2016), and annual conferences in Portland, Maine (2017) and Cleveland, OH (2018). Chapters and SIGs have also held multiple events, including both in-person and virtual meetings.
- We revised our by-laws and our policies and procedures.
- We have had a positive turnaround in our finances, due in large part to our new management company. Our financial position is good.
- Membership remains steady with a slight decline in some years. We would like to see more growth of new members and more retention of members.
- In 2016 we conducted a salary survey. We try to do one every five years or so.
- We presented multiple webinars on topics including biographies, names, and various indexing tools and software. We also presented in-depth online courses on index structure, medical indexing, and getting started in indexing.
- The ASI indexing course continues to train new indexers.

#### **Future Plans**

We will be holding a strategic planning session this October to help us better prepare for the next 3-5 years. The main topics of discussion will be how to best serve our Chapters and SIGs, how to improve our educational offerings, the management of ASI publications, and exploration of ASI's role in the publishing industry. From this session we hope to have a clearer vision of how we can support our mission to promote excellence in indexing and to serve the needs of indexers.

Devon Thomas  
President, American Society for Indexing  
20 September 2018

## **Report from the Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers, for the ICRIS meeting October 2018**

A very significant achievement for ANZSI in the past year was the National Indexing Day (NID) promotion. Celebrated on 29 March 2018, in line with the Society of Indexers' and Indexing Society of Canada / Société canadienne d'indexation events, NID involved coordination by Council and great deal of work by a few volunteers. Promotion of the event included a Twitter campaign (using the international #indexday hashtag and specific local tags); Facebook posts; press releases posted to editor's and librarians' e-lists; paid advertisements in appropriate magazines; and activities organised by local ANZSI groups. The President, Madeleine Davis, was interviewed on national radio (Australian Broadcasting Corporation), and a writer member of ANZSI, Denise Sutherland, was interviewed on a writers blog. Mary Coe and Madeleine Davis gave a joint presentation to students at the School of Information Studies, Charles Sturt University, with discussion covered the different types of indexing, both back-of-book and online, metadata, resources available and career paths in our profession. It's been clear from correspondence to Council since NID that it raised the profile of indexers among editors', writers' and librarians' groups. We will repeat the exercise in 2019, building on our experience this year.

Another significant achievement was the completion and publication of the index to the first 20 years of the Australian Society of Indexers/Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers *Newsletter* (1973–1992). This project was carried out by the Melbourne Indexers group of ANZSI, coordinated by Mary Russell. It was a volunteer project of some magnitude and complexity which now gives us systematic subject and name access to the early issues of the newsletter. It has already proved its value in preparation of background and historical papers. Melbourne Indexers, with other volunteers, are now engaged in indexing issues post-1992.

ANZSI acknowledges the wonderful contribution made by Maureen MacGlashan in editing *The Indexer* for many years, and is proud to know that ANZSI member and former president Mary Coe will be succeeding Maureen as Editor later in 2018.

The biennial John Simkin Medal awards for excellence in indexing are being offered again in 2018, with an announcement of results due in late 2018.

The ANZSI newsletter is published six times per year. The Newsletter, the website ([www.anzsi.org](http://www.anzsi.org)) and mass emails to members are the main vehicles for communication from Council and among ANZSI membership.

Local ANZSI groups in Canberra (ACT region), NSW, South Australia, Melbourne (Victoria) and Aotearoa/New Zealand organise a range of activities, networking and professional development opportunities for members.

ANZSI is a small organisation run by volunteers. Streamlining of administration and assistance to volunteer office-bearers have been achieved in 2018 by the employment of an administrative officer and a bookkeeper. Council continues to review policies and procedures as necessary. The website commerce system, which manages membership subscriptions and other payments, has been replaced with a more stable, robust and easy-to-manage system.



One face-to-face indexing workshop has been presented by ANZSI in 2018 – in Canberra, on annual report indexing. Further face-to-face training is planned for 2019, after NID 2019 publicity. Some ANZSI members have participated in conferences and webinars presented by sister indexing societies.

Future activities and priorities for ANZSI Council include promotion of indexing and indexers as opportunities arise; National Indexing Day 2019; promoting membership of ANZSI (including a project, just started, to identify reasons for non-renewal of membership); systematic organisation of our digital archives; and promotion of the Accredited Indexer scheme.

### **Further information**

National Indexing Day: *ANZSI Newsletter*, vol 14, no 2, April 2018, p. 4–9.

AusSI/ANZSI Newsletter 1973–1992 indexing project: *ANZSI Newsletter*, vol 14 no 1, February 2018, p. 2–7 and vol 14, no 2, April 2018, p. 11–12.

‘Council News’ regular column in the *ANZSI Newsletter*.

Sherrey Quinn  
ANZSI Secretary  
8 September 2018

Endorsed by ANZSI Council  
10 September 2018

**Report to  
International Committee of Representatives of Indexing Societies (ICRIS)  
7th Triennial Meeting, October 17 to 19, 2018, Fudan University, Shanghai, China**

**Key Developments over Past Three Years**

1. Created a Vision Statement in 2016: “Accessible information; informed people”

2. The Ewart-Daveluy Award for Indexing Excellence

The award is presented each year to an individual who has created an index that demonstrates outstanding expertise, ability to analyze complex text and ability to design an index that significantly enhances reader use of the text. The award consists of a framed certificate accompanied by a letter. It was inaugurated in 2015.

- 2015: François Trahan. *Ancient Pathways, Ancestral Knowledge* by Nancy J. Turner (McGill- Queen’s University Press)
- 2016: Mary Newberry. *The Letterbooks of John Evelyn* edited by Douglas D.C. Chambers and David Galbaith (University of Toronto Pr.)
- 2017: Judy Dunlop. *One Child Reading: My Autobiography* by Margaret Mackey (University of Alberta Pr.)
- 2018: Audrey McClellan. *Churchill and Fisher: Titans at the Admiralty* by Barry Gough (Seaforth Publishing)

3. The Mary Newberry Mentorship Program

The ad hoc committee presented its proposal to the executive committee in Spring 2018. The program is scheduled to start in January 2019 with the following guidelines:

- Mentorship will be available to all ISC members, regardless of level of indexing experience.
- The focus of mentorship will be driven by the specific needs of those seeking mentorship. We want to help indexers expand their skills and business from whatever stage they are at.
- Mentorship will take place in two-month blocks, with the option for renewal.
- A nominal fee will be charged, most of which will be an honorarium for the mentor.

4. Website Renewal,

The new website was launched in October 2017 with a video highlighting the new features.

## 5. Constitution Revised, 2017

The ISC/SCI Constitution was reworded to remove ambiguities, updated and restructured. The Constitution itself, which must be voted on and approved by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast at an AGM, was separated from policies, which are maintained and revised as needed by the executive.

## 6. Conferences

2015, Vancouver

2016, Chicago in conjunction with ASI

2017, Montréal

2018, Winnipeg

2019, Ottawa

## **Key Future Developments**

### 1. Participate in International Indexing Day

### 2. Development of new Policies and Procedures for the Bulletin which is undergoing a change in production and is being given a new look.

### 3. A new communications plan is being developed for coordinating and expanding efforts

### 4. Special Projects:

The special project committee was struck to examine and recommend suggestions for worthwhile projects that would benefit the members and the association. Among the suggestions being considered are bursaries for various specific populations and online subscriptions.

## **Report to ICRIS 2018 from Society of Indexers**

**(with apologies for the length but I felt it was important to highlight the main issues that concern us in running the Society, issues that may resonate with other societies)**

**Marketing and publicity.** Raising the profile of indexing is vital both in making potential members aware of our existence and in ensuring that potential clients use our members to index their publications. Like all the societies, our website is our public face and in 2016 we took the long-overdue decision to commission a completely new website from a professional website design business, to give a more professional and contemporary look. This proved to be a bigger undertaking than originally envisaged, especially in connection with the new Directory of Professional Indexers that replaces the old Indexers Available. But autumn 2017 finally saw the site go live, together with a new forum system for member discussions.

As well as the website, social media of course play a key role in publicising both indexing in general and SI in particular. 2017 saw the first National Indexing Day, conducted entirely on social media; building on this success, for NID 2018 we held an event in London for publishers. With a series of presentations focusing on current indexing practices, evaluating good and bad indexes, and digital developments regarding embedded and linked indexes for ebooks, participants went away very much better informed and appreciative of what we do. We plan to run a similar event next year, and also continue our successful in-house workshops for publishers. In addition, encouraging more members to get involved in publicity activities through local events is a long-term aim, perhaps through local groups.

**The Indexer.** Negotiations to outsource production of *The Indexer* have occupied many hours over the last year, but as reported separately, these eventually reached a successful conclusion with the signing of a contract with Liverpool University Press. The new arrangement coincides with Mary Coe taking over the helm following the retirement of Maureen MacGlashan after 13 years as editor.

**Conferences.** For our scattered community of freelance indexers, conferences are an important event in the calendar and the only opportunity for face-to-face training. Our 2016 conference was held in a quirky central-Birmingham venue with a one-day non-residential format that proved popular with attendees, many of whom arrived the night before to meet up with colleagues. In 2017 our one-day diamond anniversary conference in Oxford was timed to immediately precede the Book Index Symposium at the Bodleian, giving an opportunity to interact with academics with an interest in the history of indexes, and to bring the perspective of modern indexers to them.

Although successful, one-day conferences can seem rather hectic, with insufficient networking time; this year we built in an extra afternoon and also held the conference alongside that of the Society for Editors and Proofreaders (SfEP) at Lancaster University, with a joint gala dinner and plenary session. Feedback suggests that this arrangement worked well – we have many issues of mutual concern – but parallel conferences should only take place every now and then. Looking ahead, we are currently conducting surveys to establish what sort of conferences members prefer and why fewer than normal attended this year. Whether a clear pattern will emerge is doubtful – our members are a diverse lot – but there is certainly some enthusiasm for the traditional two-day format, with a more relaxed timetable that enables members to justify the travel time and costs. Perhaps the real conclusion is that varying the format from year to year accommodates the needs of different members.

**Membership issues.** During the last few years numbers have been declining, the inevitable result of an ageing membership, but now seem to be levelling off, with a small but steady influx of new members, who generally join to enrol on the training course and work towards a new career, rather than simply having an interest in indexing. A close relationship with the SfEP not only helps to raise the profile of indexing amongst editors and proofreaders, but also encourages them to consider joining us and adding indexing to their skills portfolio, especially if they may have already done some indexing. But other than SfEP members, we have no strategies for identifying and attracting potential new members, including those already working as indexers. Anecdotal evidence would suggest, however, that many non-member indexers are actually the authors themselves.

Retaining members depends in part on providing worthwhile benefits, both tangible and intangible. A change in our membership structure means that all professionally qualified members are now entitled to a free entry in the directory and we also have a dedicated website forum where jobs can be advertised to qualified members. Overall, the new website forum system has been received positively and statistics show that the level of communication between members has increased. The forums also enable members to air concerns about SI activities. Mutual support through the forums, and through local groups and conferences, is one of those membership benefits that can't be expressed in monetary terms but is very much valued. On the networking front, local group meetings of SI and SfEP are now open to all members of both societies. In addition, we have recently negotiated a range of member benefits in the form of discounts on a range of related products and services.

**Training and professional development.** One of our most important activities, especially for new members, is running the training course, supplemented by a range of online workshops and face-to-face workshops at conferences. The training course and online workshops are continually being developed and improved, to take account of new techniques, especially in relation to embedded indexing and the digital revolution. In terms of encouraging professional development, the existing Fellowship application process has been suspended due to poor take-up in recent years and the whole future of a higher-level qualification is under consideration.

**The role of volunteers.** With one paid member of staff (our office manager), we depend on the commitment and dedication of those members willing to give their time and energy to running the Society, often with little financial reward. With a falling membership, the pool of potential volunteers is limited, leading to problems in succession planning, but a pleasing trend over the last couple of years has been the willingness of several mid-career members, and some at an earlier stage, to respond positively to suggestions that they might play a larger role. I am writing this report having just retired as chair (for the second time!) and feel the future of the Society is in good hands.

**Postscript.** 2017 has in one way been the end of an era, with the death of our remaining founder member, Elizabeth Wallis, a key figure in the Society for a great many years, most notably as Registrar, and someone who was always very encouraging to new members as they were establishing their indexing careers.

*Ann Kingdom*  
(Chair, Society of Indexers, 2015–18)