



# IPTC Mirror

IPTC - INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FOR NEWS

## Content and Coding

**The 2003 Autumn Meeting included productive sessions dealing with metadata (including the IPTC Subject Reference System) and with programs for handling various types of structured content - including a new project on Weather Data.**

### News Metadata

When the IPTC Subject Reference System (SRS) was originally put together it included a number of terms which did not have explanations (which were not specifically required at the time). Working Party Chairman John Minting (UPI) told delegates that a substantial effort to provide appropriate explanations has been made by UPI, with their proposals having been circulated to members for consideration prior to the meeting.

After a brief discussion the proposals were accepted with the exception of the *metal goods and engineering* Subject Matter and Subject Detail entries under the *economy, business and finance* subject. This was because the products concerned are not necessarily made of metal, and a paper will be prepared to deal with this.

Some problems had been encountered in processing SRS explanations that were longer than 255 characters. Where appropriate, revised - shorter - explanations had been proposed (again by UPI) and these were also approved.

Members were informed that a number of additions to the SRS had been made under the "Fast Track" procedure, while some further proposals were under consideration. This process is now complete and all the changes have been taken into a new release of the SRS (Version 11).

### Scene TopicSet

A new IPTC TopicSet, initially called ContentCharacteristics, was proposed to provide standard names (with descriptions) for images - for example *headshot, half-length, group, and interior view*. Entries are identified by numeric codes, as with some SRS TopicSets, to allow identification if the names and descriptions are translated into

other languages than the original English.

Provision has been made for extension of the TopicSet to cover other media types, which can be identified by the first two digits of the numeric code. Following discussions the numeric code was extended to allow for the possibility of further details being dealt with. There was general agreement that this TopicSet would prove useful and it was approved under the name "Scene".

A number of additions to the CharacteristicsProperty TopicSet were also considered and approved.

### SRS Guidelines

Some detail changes had been made to the draft revision of the Subject Reference System Guidelines to take in points raised at previous Meetings - mainly relating to the procedures for making additions - and these were agreed.

The proposed changes include a section that describes the conditions under which similar terms may appear under different Subjects or Subject Matters. Although the need for this practice was recognised the need to minimise such occurrences was stressed to avoid possible problems when codes are applied.

### TopicSets

The relationship between the SRS and other TopicSets was looked at, as there appear to be some inconsistencies in the relationships between them, with the MediaType, NewsItem Type and Genre TopicSets being treated as part of the SRS. It was explained that this was because these sets had been developed when the SRS was primarily intended for use with the IIM (Information Interchange Model), while the other TopicSets had been developed for use with NewsML. The IIM is still a widely used standard so the metadata structure has to remain compatible.

Some changes have been made in conjunction with redevelopment of the IPTC web sites which have a specific area dealing with TopicSets ([www.iptc.org/metadata](http://www.iptc.org/metadata)). This includes an overview and brief explanations, along with forms for submitting proposed changes and additions. The information is now held in a database with any modifications being directly reflected in the displayed information. TopicSets are available for download - as NewsML instances - from the IPTC site.

### Translations

A Georgian translation of the SRS had been supplied to IPTC by a non-member and while the effort that had been made was appreciated, consideration of this offering raised a number of significant points. For example, input from non-IPTC members has to be sponsored by a member and would need to be properly authenticated before it could be accepted.

Similarly there would also need to be a

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*This PDF version of the IPTC Mirror has active links to both the content and to external web sites. Clicking on the red links - Metadata - will take you to the appropriate page, while the blue links - [www.iptc.org](http://www.iptc.org) - will attempt to open your browser and connect to the appropriate site.*



