



## **International Standard Music Number, ISO 10957**

### **ISMN Update on the year 2015 for the IAML Website**

#### **Membership**

There are now 58 ISMN agencies, the newest members being Malta, Myanmar and Montenegro.

Due to financial problems the ISMN agency in the Netherlands unfortunately had to cancel its membership. The agency, based at the company Donemus, agreed to provisionally continue with allocation of ISMNs until a successor is found. We did our best to find a suitable institution, but so far without success. Despite of all the promotional efforts our colleague Davo van Peursen at Donemus undertook, and unlike other European countries, there is not much interest in ISMN. We would be very grateful for any advice from IAML on how to improve the situation and find a new agency, since the country would be the only main music producing country in Europe that does not take part in the system.

There will probably be a new agency in Spain, too. The current ISMN agency is with the Centro de Documentación de Música y Danza at the Instituto Nacional de las Artes Escénicas y de la Música. They belong to the ministry of culture and indicated that they would prefer to transfer the agency to AEDEM, a Spanish music publishers association. Negotiations are underway.

Interest in membership was shown from Albania, Algeria, Bolivia, Botswana, Cambodia, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Mongolia, Nigeria, Palestine, Rwanda, the South Pacific region, and Vietnam.

Many of these countries are rather small with a small music production. But, as always, we would like to stress the fact that for smaller countries the use of ISMNs is of great importance. The ISMN offers many advantages for music publishers from big as well as from small countries:

It allows ALL music publications of a country

- to be captured in a standardised international system and
- to be registered in national bibliographies and trade directories and
- to be retrieved simply by the identifier and
- to be made accessible for ordering and distribution by "opening up of export markets since the publications become compatible on a global scale" (quote from ISO Focus+, Vol 4, No 2, February 2013).

So even if there are only, for example, 100 items of notated music in a country, it takes only a small effort to allocate ISMNs to them, but one will gain the great advantage that they are easy to detect, to retrieve and to order from all over the world. And this is as quick, efficient and cost-saving as with books ...

At this point we would like to thank our kind IAML colleagues, President Barbara Mackenzie and Secretary General Pia Shekhter, for their generous support in raising the profile of the ISMN in several countries.

## **Annual General Meeting**

The AGM took place in Kuta, Bali, Indonesia in September 2015. It had been perfectly organised by the National Library of Indonesia. The meeting assembled 28 participants who all enjoyed not only fruitful discussions but also the spectacular music and dance programme our hosts kindly offered.

ISMN board elections were due and the old board was re-elected for another 3-year term: Dr Hartmut Walravens as Chair, Dr Joachim Jaenecke as Vice Chair, Dr Bettina von Seyfried as Treasurer.

The guest speaker was the representative of the Indonesian music publishers association, who reported on its ISMN activities and the benefits of the standard number. A paper by Bettina von Seyfried was read about the German-Russian composer Walter Spies who had lived on Bali and had had a great impact on Balinese music. Paul Jessop spoke about the importance of metadata.

The next ISMN meeting will take place in September 2016 in Vienna, Austria, by invitation of the German music publishers association which is responsible for the ISMN agency for Germany, Austria and Switzerland.

For the sixth time we aligned our meeting with that of the International ISBN Agency, and since this brings synergies on both sides we intend to continue with this arrangement.

## **ISMN Standard**

ISO 10957 had come up for systematic review and was discussed at the Beijing ISO TC46 meeting. It was decided that a revision of the standard was currently not necessary.

## **Publications**

### **ISMN Users' Manual**

Since the standard does not have to be revised we only made a few corrections in January 2016. So the fifth, revised edition follows the ISMN Standard ISO 10957 from 2009 and takes into account some new wording in ISO standards in general. The content has been updated and enriched in only a very few aspects, e.g. the term 'publisher' has been replaced by the wider term 'registrant', there are a few more 'terms and definitions' and there is now a reference to the ISNI (International Standard Name Identifier).

In order to improve the text according to the needs of ISMN users the manual will be constantly updated. The manual will no longer be printed but the most-up-to-date edition will always be made available on the Website of the International ISMN Agency at [http://ismn-international.org/manual\\_intro.html](http://ismn-international.org/manual_intro.html)

### **ISMN Newsletter**

As of No. 25 (November 2015) the ISMN Newsletter will only be available on the ISMN Website. As usual it provides information on the latest AGM.

## **Conferences**

In 2015 the International ISMN Agency was represented at an ISBN board meeting in London, the ISBN Balkan regional meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria, the ISO TC46 meeting in Beijing, China, and the ISBN annual meeting in Kuta, Bali.

## **Commitments**

The International ISMN Agency joined the Linked Contents Coalition as of 2015 to help to enhance the interoperability of the publication standard identifiers.

The International ISMN Agency cooperates with the working group on the revision of the ISBN standard.

### **Amazon and other big traders**

In our report of last year we mentioned a problem we had had with Amazon and other big traders. We hope that the problems with Amazon refusing the ISMN and insisting on ISBN for musical works are now solved, since GS1 updated their GTIN guide and mentions ISMN in several places there and the US GS1 branch even included a special section on the ISMN. We have not heard of any complaints in recent months.

Nevertheless, there is still a problem with the distribution of music items in the UK. There were complaints that bookstores did not receive metadata for ISMN items from their usual service providers like Nielsen Book Data. It seemed to be not a problem with ISMN as such, rather one of packaging metadata for customers and the financial side of it. The issue is a challenge for the new management of the British Music Publishers Association which was already aware of it. We would like to thank the International ISBN Agency in London which has been kind enough to support and help in various ways in clearing the situation, as this would have been difficult from abroad.

### **Board and management**

Chairman: Dr. Hartmut Walravens

Vice Chairman: Dr. Joachim Jaenecke

Treasurer: Dr. Bettina von Seyfried

The daily business is run by Carolin Unger.

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