"How normal is normalisation?"

On the use of MoReq as starting point for a Dutch standard on "specifications for Records management functionality within software".

by Hans Waalwijk [*]

As one can imagine there are reasons to start working on a standard for your own purpose. In general, main reasons are the diverse players in a certain field that need to be broad together, or, as David Bearman once wrote in the introduction to his view on 'Information Technology Standards and Archives': "standards are designed to overcome boundaries".[1] How to take care of beheading six out of seven hydra's heads, without losing your own. Or to put it different: how to turn Janus' head so, we can face his face.

How to bring RMA-users and RMA-developers (software houses) 'on speaking terms' and how to take care of smooth less exchange of information between different RMA's, maintained by different users (administrations and archival institutions). For sure, there are several possible answers to these questions. One might be: standardisation of specifications for Records management functionality within Software.

In this paper I will explore the reasons for the *Netherlands Institute for Standardisation* (NNI) to develop a standard, a norm, on *specifications for Records management functionality within software*. In doing this, the background on this initiative will serve as a body for the relation with the *Model Requirements for the management of electronic records* (MoReq).

Why again another standard?

In the field of Records management a lot of work has been done by many an institution, being administrations, records and/or archives keeping institutions, as well as software houses and national and international standardisation institution. On several aspects of Records management there exist very good (proposals for) models, norms or standards. All kinds of documents, listing specifications, minimum functionality or containing templates has seen the light over the years. In several cases specific norms developed for a certain goal or within the scope of a certain organisation or type of organisation, were generalised or abstracted to meet the conditions and criteria for models, norms or standards. Though nobody knows exactly what these conditions and criteria are, we presume they are to imbed the multi-focus view on the content of the model, norm or standard. Sure there exist norm for models, norms and standards as they are kept within the official institutions for standardisation, but it seems they are not always generally distributed among the participants in the field.

In a way working on a standard like this, is one of the 10 points for a follow-up to the DLM-Forum as these points were formulated back in 1996 by Eric Ketelaar. [2] What we needed in the Netherlands was not 'just' a model, norm or standard that *partly* met the goals we are heading for, but that met *the* goals. Besides, a model, norm or standard that could be of use within the context of administration, records and archives management, best practice in

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[1] David Bearman, *Electronic Evidence. Strategies for Managing Records in Contemporary Organizations.* (Pittsburgh, 1994), p. 210.

[2] Eric Ketelaar, 'Introduction of the 10 points for a follow-up to the DLM-Forum', in: DLM-Forum, *Proceedings of the DLM-Forum on electronic records. Brussels, 18-20 December 1996.* (Luxembourg, 1997), pp 350-352, p. 351. Referring to point 6 as presented on p. 353, by stating that "[i]t is very essential that archivists […] take their part in the standardization activities."

the Netherlands and taking account of the demands that are formulated upon keeping information in Dutch legislation.

Many models, norms or standards gave specifications on aspects, but none gave the aspects to cope with. Within this Dutch initiative, it is obvious that several different standards, norms and models in the field of Records management needed to be examined, and thus passed in the quest for the right components needed. And those components needed to fit into the goals that we defined:

- Bringing together RMA-users and RMA-developers (software houses);
- Developing a tool for the exchange of information between different RMA's, maintained by different users (administrations and archival institutions);
- Standardising -or at leas harmonising- specifications for RM functionalities in Business-applications and Records management applications.
- Mapping RM-functionalities within the context of Dutch best practice and Dutch legislation, and thus for Dutch organisations, specifically.

It is thus that we need to develop *specifications for Records management functionality within software* for our own. Besides, earlier Dutch initiatives had to be taken into account since record and archives managing organisations were about to drift away from each other while using different specifications for more or less the same goal: implementing a Records Management Application. The *specifications for Records management functionality within software* that will evolve are thus mainly based on a review of two existing Dutch initiatives: *software specifications for Records Management Applications for Dutch public administration*, and *Specifications for Document Management, RMA and Workflow-Management systems.* In both cases the principles and contents of MoReq constituted the basis.

Examined and evaluated existing norms.
The reasons we were not able find a whole standard that met our goals were diverse and varies between the general or the specific scope of the examined standards and models. ISO 15489 for example, lays down the general policies and procedures for records management and the related ISO 23081, guides implementing and using metadata. The Universities of Pittsburgh and British Columbia initiatives give templates and specification on evidence in recordkeeping and integrity of electronic records. [3] How interesting and useful though, that was not what we wanted. The 1997 and 2002 standards of the United States Department of Defence's *Design Criteria Standard for Electronic Records management Software Applications* (DoD 5015.2-STD) [4] are too 'American' to be useful, and besides in our view focussed too much on software applications and on electronic records only. German *DOMEA-Konzept* [5] that partly meets the general functional requirements for electronic record keeping but also gives guidelines for organising workflow, was too general and too specific at the same time. Last but not least MoReq leaves too much open space on legal matters on the

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[3] Functional Requirements for Evidence in Recordkeeping (Pittsburgh); The preservation of the integrity of Electronic records (British Columbia)

[4] In 1997 US Department of Defence (DoD) published her Design Criteria Standard for Electronic Records Management Software Applications (DoD 5015.2-STD). The standard is revised in 2002. Unfortunately the name was not changed and a concordance was not incorporated. Since many software is certificated upon this standard, despite the fact that it is written for the United States in general and the Department of Defence specially, the standard had (and has) to be taken into consideration. See http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/50152std_061902/p50152s.pdf for the 2002 release.

[5] DOMEA is an acronym for *Dokumentenmanagement und elektronische Archivierung im IT-gestützten Geschäftsgang*. (Records management and electronic archiving within an IT-supported workflow). DOMEA-Konzept is to be found at http://www.kbst.bund.de/Anlage304093/pdf_datei.pdf See Andrea Wettmann's contribution to the conference.

one hand and sometimes gives strict software and general application guidance on the other hand.

Specifications for RM-software versus specifications for RM-functionality.

The real world is sometimes slightly different from records and archives managing Utopia. Focussing on specifications for Records management software leads to the thought that only specific software for records management can be used. As we all know, in many cases organisations tend to focus on complete applications. Applications, which incorporate (aspects of) work-flow, document management and/or records management. Besides, many organisations rather incorporate or embed Record management functionalities in business-applications, than buying or building a specific application for Records management.

It is because of this that the new Dutch norm will not focus on Records management applications, not on Records management software but on Records management functionality within software. So, for example, the Dutch initiative will not contain not-specific Records management specifications as they are present in MoReq, among other standards and models. The proposed Dutch *specifications for Record management functionality within software* will be more general in scope, partly due to imbedding these Records management functionalities in business-applications. It will thus contain specifications for the dedicated application as well as embedded functionality.

In this way the *specifications on Records management functionality in software*, can meet a fundamental principle of ISO 15489. In that standard it is mentioned to design and implement systems "in ways that meet the operational needs of the organization and that accord with the regulatory environment".[6] Although the system in ISO 15489 is a record system and a record system is defined as a certain information system, i.e. "The combination of information, technology, processes and people brought together to support a given business objective"[7], this paragraph also applies to Records management and therefore for Records management functionality in software. It is thus compatible with ISO 15489 as this compatibility is one of the general principles of the draft international standard ISO/DIS 22310 "requirements for records/documents management in standards". [8]

The background of ReMANO and the *Core model*.

Every initiative has its backgrounds. In the euphoria of implementing ISO 15489, i.e. the 2001 Dutch translation of this standard, Dutch *ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations* wanted to obtain *Functional Requirements for Records management*. Functional requirements based on ISO 15489 that mend to be a concrete tool for operational level. *Archiefschool* and *Twynstra Work Innovation* were to develop this tool. Main goal was, besides functioning as tool for operational level, formulating the demands that records and archives management had to meet within the context of mentioned ISO 15489 and Dutch archival legislation, i.e. legislation on information, records and archives.

While reviewing the functional requirements for records and archives management, the awareness arose that we also needed to elaborate specifications for automated records and archives management within an application. Specifications that were to observe legal demands on records, archives and information, Dutch best practice and methods, techniques and terminology used in the Netherlands, as well as existing models and standards. Within this context *software specifications for Records Management Applications for Dutch Public*

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[6] ISO 15489-1:2001(En) Information and documentation - Records management – part 1: general, § 8.1

[7] ISO 5127: 2001 (En). Information and documentation – Vocabulary.

[8] Draft ISO/DIS 22310 Information and documentation – Requirements for records/documents in standards, "Requirements for systems with responsibility for making and keeping records" as one of the "Types or requirements that may be specified in other standards an that should reference ISO 15489", pp. 10, 11.

Administration were drafted during 2002 and 2003 and published in March 2004. Software specifications that were meant to be an answer to the 1997 and 2002 versions of US- DoD 5015.2-STD, but were modelled upon the MoReq. The answer to DoD 5015.2-STD was needed since many an application that was and is (to be) used in the Netherlands, is certified to this standard, although –with respect- this standard does not meet the special requirements needed for records and archives management in the Netherlands. Basing the specifications on MoReq was at first a demand of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. A demand that met our expectations, despite the different view we have on the scope of MoReq. I'll come to that later. Why MoReq one may ask. Well, MoReq was chosen to be primary starting point not because it was seen as the best initiative in this field at that moment only, but because it could be expected that software developers might use MoReq as reference in developing applications for the EU-marked. What helped was that MoReq explicitly calls itself 'generic' so "user communities can add to it additional functionality specific to their own business requirements." [9]

In the same time *Archiefschool* developed the software specifications, during the process baptised "ReMANO" (acronym for the title of that document in Dutch [10]), so called *InterLab* came into existence. Initiated by another office (*sic*) than the one that initiated the above mentioned Functional requirements, the Dutch *Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations* as well as the *Ministry Health, Welfare and Sport* started working on the project. Several other ministries joint the *InterLAB* initiative[11]. The *InterLAB* initiative, based upon co-operation between the mentioned participants in the field of digital document management in general and digital document systems, i.e. Document management systems (DMS), Records management systems (RMS) and Workflow management systems (WfMS), specifically, led in 2003 to a *Core model of functionalities* [12], published in December 2004. The main goal of the *Core model* is to serve as a tool by selecting or choosing the right DMS, RMS or WfMS within the context of the organisation that needs to choose. A broader perspective thus than ReMANO, which focussed on Records management applications only. Interesting though is that the *Core model* incorporated many specifications from ReMANO, though from a 2002 draft version of those specifications. Besides it consists of demands formulated by the participating ministries. So in the end, also the *Core model* is based on out-lines mentioned in MoReq.

ReMANO and the *Core model*, versus MoReq.

No models are alike, every model is unique in its form and scope. Between ReMANO and the *Core model* on the one hand between both initiatives and MoReq on the other, several differences occur. The main differences between ReMANO and the *Core model* have to do with the scope of both documents. As noted above, ReMANO focuses on Records Management Applications only and the *Core model* also on Document management and Workflow management systems. Besides, ReMANO was meant to be for all kinds of public organisations, where the *Core model* has more detailed requirements for ministries only.

Both Dutch initiatives compared to MoReq, also differ in scope. Whereas MoReq is created explicitly for the <u>management of electronic records</u>, as the title and name of the model

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[9] *MoReq. Model requirements for the management of electronic records. Moreq specifications*, (Luxembourg, 2002), p. 7.

[10] *Software specifications for Records Management Applications for Dutch Public Administration* in Dutch: "*Software specificaties voor **R**ecords **M**anagement **A**pplicaties voor de **N**ederlandse **O**verheid*", ReMANO. ReMANO is to be found at http://www.archiefschool.nl/docs/ReMANO_2004.pdf (July 27, 2005)

[11] In 2003 these were Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Housing, Spatial planning and the Environment. All other ministries participated by means of examining the final product, as well as several external experts did.

[12] *Core model of functionalities*, in Dutch: *Functionaliteiten Kernmodel*. This document can be found at http://www.digitaleduurzaamheid.nl/bibliotheek/docs/Kernmodel_v1.0.doc (July 27, 2005).

even implies; both Dutch initiatives focus on the <u>electronic management of records</u>. And this is not just modelling words in a certain order, as it is not just a slight difference either. In the Dutch view all records need to be managed, regardless of the form or the information carrier; from clay tablets to data warehouses and from signs, numbers and letters to bits and bites. Despite the developments in the global and technologised world, the (future) hegemony of only electronic records, seems to be as an *idée fixe* as the move to a paperless office obviously proved to be. [13] Focussing thus on non-electronic *and* electronic records and archives -hybrid archives-, it can be expected that harmonised management for records and archives in different forms and on different information carriers remains, and remains a goal for records and archives managers and managing systems. Management of records is thus, due to modern techniques and developments, at this moment best served by software, by applications. Even though best served is weakly expressed. Since many records are electronic, there is no way of managing those without a tool; software or an application. One could say that capturing and maintaining electronic records by an administration or an archival institution can only be done while using a Records Management Application -RMA. Even if it only is, to store, register and keep the metadata of records and archives that need to be stored, registered and kept, this statement can be applied. But, since keeping metadata is not a matter of interest for electronic records and data only, broadening the work sphere of the software or the application to non-electronic data seems feasible. Besides, as it seems, keeping metadata of records is as old as keeping records themselves. [14] It thus goes without saying that the scope matter had its reflection on the acceptance and adopting of requirements in both Dutch initiatives that are suggested in MoReq. Many requirements in MoReq specifically referring to electronic records were abstracted to requirements for records regardless of the form or the information carrier, or even left out of both Dutch initiatives.

A 'versus' does not always imply differences. Also shared or common features can be brought under this term. This means that I could simply conclude by stating that almost all requirements of MoReq -except for the above mentioned- are incorporated into ReMANO as well as the *Core model*. Almost all, since some requirements needed to be adjusted so they could fit in the Dutch best practice and demands based on Dutch legislation. Examples of this can be found in requirements/specifications on appraisal, selection and destruction of documents. For the same reason some additions were made. And on several points, mostly where MoReq refers to ISO-norms, changes had to be made since not all ISO-norms are supported by *Netherlands Institute for Standardisation* (NNI) or because MoReq does not refer to standards where NNI did have some reference.

This all means that ReMANO and the *Core model* are no more or less translations or editions of MoReq. Therefore too many components were taken over from other models, like when MoReq itself was created as was told at the DLM 2002 forum. [15] Norms and standards

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[13] There are many (doom) scenarios on paper as remaining and disappearing information carrier for records and archives. An interesting conclusion is drawn by Sellen and Harper, who argue that administration in the (near) future will not use less paper, but will keep less paper. Cf. Abigail J. Sellen, Richard H.P. Harper, *The Myth of the Paperless Office.* (Cambridge Mass., London, 2002), p. 209. Though, from archival point of view many has to do with the legal possibilities of digitising original paper documents by heading on destruction of the originals after digitising them on the one hand, and acceptance of original digital documents form legal and administrative perspective.

[14] As for example Adrian Cunningham wrote "metadata is simply a new term for information that has been around for a very long time. […] Traditional archival finding aids, index cards, file covers, file registers, the headers and footers of paper documents – all of these things contain metadata and all of them have their computerised equivalents that may or may not look different, but which nevertheless fulfil the same functions." Cf. Adrian Cunningham, 'Six degrees of separation', in: Peter Horsman, Eric Ketelaar, Theo Thomassen (ed.), *Archival Science. International Journal on Recorded Information,* Vol 1, No. 3, 2001, pp. 271-283, p. 274.

[15] Paul E. Murphy, 'Metadata standards and model requirements for electronic documents and records management', in: DLM-Forum, *Proceedings of the DLM-Forum 2002. @ccess and preservation of electronic information: best practices and solutions. Barcelona, 6-8 May 2002*, (Luxembourg, 2002), pp 64-78, p. 64.; Marc Freska, 'MoReq metadata – beyond Europe?, in: *ibidem*, pp. 465-477.

used for ReMANO and the *Core model* like American DoD 5015.2-STD, German *DOMEA-Konzept*, the General *International Standard on Archival Description* (ISAD-G)[16] en models delivered by the *International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic Systems*, better known under the name InterPares.[17]. Besides, addition, and thus incorporation, of Dutch best practice and last but not least at all, Dutch legislation on information and archives [18] make the two initiatives unique as they are. Sometimes though, MoReq requirements were only partly taken over. For example MoReq requirement 3.2.6 on the support of class and file-naming notes compliancy with ISO standards. Reason for only partly taking over this kind of requirements is that the ISO standards mentioned are not supported by the *Netherlands Institute for Standardisation* (NNI).

To conclude, ReMANO and the *Core model* were created upon above mentioned standards, norms and requirements, especially to meet the requirements within the Dutch context of records management. As Matthias Weber writes in his review of ReMANO, initiatives like these help to strengthen the position of archives and records management with the software industry and help to avoid making wrong choices in buying software. But, they also help the software industry to focus on the needs of archives and records managers.[19]

Contents of NEN 2082 *specifications for Records management functionality within software*.

Like marmalade or peanut butter, standards, norms and requirements have a longevity that expires. Though both ReMANO and the *Core model* are not that old yet. Nevertheless there were several reasons to start developing a revised standard. The main reasons were the integration of the two Dutch initiatives and, perhaps even more important, the change of focus from specification for Records Management Applications to Records Management Functionality.

Under the guidance of the *Commission on Information- and archives management* of NNI, the work started in the first months of 2005. Again, goal was and is to bring clearness in the dark woods of standards and initiatives on the one hand, but also to serve Dutch institutions and organisations with a norm that fits on their special demands. By NNI the new initiative was numbered NEN 2082.[20] I have mentioned the goals of the NEN 2082 above. Here I'll go into the separate ones more in detail.

Bringing together RMA-users and RMA-developers (software houses);

During the 1996 DLM-forum, Torbjörn Hörnfeldt summarized his experience on standards in an archival context, by stating that archivists generally were not prepared to deal with ICT matters and had little knowledge with standardisation issues; that system developers and programmers often lack knowledge of archival issues; that middle managers often neglect planning for long-term preservation of archives and that top management leave this issue to lower levels in the hierarchy.[21] Almost nine years later the world has changed, so has the archival world; at least in the Netherlands. Although I do not want to portray things as better

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[16] See: http://www.ica.org/biblio.php?pdocid=1
[17] Initiated by the University of British Columbia in 1999, archivists and IT-professionals deliver input the project for International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic Systems, INTERPARES. See www.interpares.org. Especially the reference models for long term preservation were of interest for ReMANO.
[18] Especially the legal rules that focus on appraisal, retention schedules, selection, destruction. But also on concepts like authorisation (for example via electronic signatures), and 'emergency destruction', i.e. destruction of information in case of war or other nation threatening situations.
[19] Matthias Weber, 'ReMANO – ein Anforderungskatalog für Schriftgutprogramme in der niederländische Verwaltung", *Der Archivar* 58, July 2005, p. 212-213.
[20] The abbreviation NEN stands for Netherlands Norm.
[21] Torbjörn Hörnfeldt, 'European and international standards in an archival context', in: DLM-Forum, *Proceedings of the DLM-Forum on electronic records. Brussels, 18-20 December 1996.* (Luxembourg, 1997), pp 311-314, p. 313.

than they are or to keep the appearance of good management, I observe that more and more archivists do care about ICT matters, or at least seem to do that, and that more and more system developers and programmers (here narrowed to RMA-developers) tend to get more grip on archival matters by listening careful and by manifesting themselves in the archival world. As it seems though, the managerial habit as outlined by Hörnfeldt is still a matter of concern. Recent inspection reports show that archival issues are still hardly on the political agenda. And the incorporation of archival matters on this political agenda remain a matter of concern. Why is it that in many cases ICT matters are not interwoven with records and archives management issues and vice versa. The supposed dusty character of the archives still seems to rule. This standard will not change this, unless top managers are committed to (find a way to) interweave records and archives management with ICT developments, audit trailing and workflow and administration. We'll see what the future will bring us on this point.

Despite these problems, bringing together RMA-users and RMA-developers is a goal since it is proved that speaking the same language is hard enough. All of us know that both disciples use similar words, or even the same words, but mean something else. Is a record within the context of ICT the same record we are focussed on within records and archives management?

How then we try to bring both groups together with this norm, one may ask. Well, mainly by not giving specifications for applications or software, but by focussing on functionality within software. Does it matter to us, records managers and archivists, how or what the software does? We are interested, without doubt, that we can do our work within in the context of our methods, goals, legislation or organisational demands. The application and the software is nothing but a tool for us, at least, that should be a clear statement. We also do not want the ICT-manager to interfere in our work, do we? We have the knowledge on the archival functions and functionalities. The RMA-developers have the knowledge of systems, no matter if these are dedicated RMA's or RMA-functionalities incorporated in compete systems or business-systems as I explained earlier.

Developing a tool for the exchange of information between different RMA's, maintained by different users (administrations and archival institutions).

Despite the fact that in our view records and archives management is to be seen within the records continuum, aspects of the document life cycle have to be taken into account as well. Here it is the exchange of information and data between different applications. Still the moment of exchange of records fall together with the moments we happen to know from the document life cycle model; dynamic, semi-static and static phases. Several scenarios occur. On the one hand the exchange of information between applications that takes care of the creation or capture of records to applications that manage the records. On the other hand the exchange of records between applications of different departments within an organisation or between different organisations (for example a record creating body to an archive) has to be taken care of.

By focussing on records management functionality instead of records management applications, we think we can better zoom in, in the problems and demands that need to be taken care of by this transfer. Again, we are actually not interested in the application or the software that is used, as long as the records management and archival functionality is supported in the context of (best) practice and organisational and/or legal demands.

Standardising -or at leas harmonising- specifications for RM functionalities in Business-applications and Records management applications.

Since it seems that more and more business-applications serve as complete applications, the reasons for specifying demands on applications or software drift over.

Harmonised specifications are within the context of this goal very important since hardly any organisation uses the same software or the same applications. The diversity of software and applications, even within one organisation, is one of the reasons the let go the focus on Records Management Applications itself. Besides, (different) ICT-managers are held responsible for the different systems they have to take care of, so application demands are not very useful for them. They need to know what minimum specifications for records management functionality are to aim at to serve the organisation demands on business administration. Records management is not a goal in itself, it serves, or needs to serve, the corporate mission and goals.

Mapping RM-functionalities within the context of Dutch best practice and Dutch legislation, and thus for Dutch organisations, specifically.

One of the missions of the NEN 2082 is to give specifications that lead to integer and authentic management of records so its rights, demands and functions can be fulfilled. To meet this mission we combined the specification from ReMANO and the *Core model*, re-ordered and reshuffled them, deleted the general specifications for applications and software (like those that had to do with user-friendliness, general accepted minimum needs etc.), added specifications that were missed in the former initiatives and so on. This all resulted in a list of functionalities that were scheduled in four main categories:

- Objects
- Records Management Instruments
- Records and archiving processes
- Documenting.

The category 'objects' focuses in at the forms and shapes of aggregates and formats, as well as electronic signatures, watermarks and encryption. 'Instruments' that were being seen as important within this context, are the metadata scheme's, and encoding scheme's, classification and word systems as well as overview of data to be registered or listed, retention schedules and access control scheme's. The 'records and archiving processes' are the common known processes: from capture and appraisal, via description and classifying to (re)presentation. Documenting the system, and the records and archiving processes, as well es the archiving work-flow, meta-data management etcetera, but also the security levels and parameters and support of Records Management Instruments, are focussed upon in the 'documenting' category.

No application or general software demands were added. Focussing only at the functionality, not at the applications or software at all.

Concluding remarks.

Incorporation of RM functionality in existing and new applications or software that are being used within organisations seems more feasible than staying on the island of Records Management solely and waiting for Friday. There are reasons enough to do this, but mainly it is, as Timothy Slavin calls it while working on the Delaware Public Archives project, to share the functional knowledge of archivists and records managers across the enterprise. [22] What then is left over from MoReq? As I have shown above MoReq served as a body, and more than that, for ReMANO. ReMANO served as one of the bodies for the *Core model,* and both these initiatives were the bases for the NEN 2082 norm on *specifications for Records*

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[22] Timothy A. Slavin, 'Implementing Requirements for Recordkeeping: Moving from Theory to Practice', in: Bruce W. Dearstyne (Ed.), *Effective Approaches for managing Electronic Records and Archives* pp 35-51, p. 49.

management functionality within software. Need I say more? MoReq was and is the starting point and the core of the NEN 2082, although it will partly not anymore be recognised as such. Remaining question is, what will be left over from MoReq as soon as it is re-shuffled, re-written and re-published as MoReq II? Will NEN 2082 serve as an example for MoReq II?

Another question keeps us busy anyway; can an international norm or standard be implemented on national level? In our view the answer is no, not necessarily. Unless of course the standard, norm or set of requirements leaves space open for national additions without incorporation requirements or specifications that may conflict with national (i.e. legal) demands.

So, now to answer the question I posed in the title of this paper: how normal is normalisation. Yes, it is normal to do so if you are in need of having specifications or functional requirements that need to meet with the goals you're heading at. Or, as the draft ISO standard on Requirements for records/documents management in standards puts it own scope; that draft standard "can be used by non-ISO standards development organizations at the international, regional or national level that are considering or are in the process of developing records management requirements in standards and/or comparable documents". [23] This thus makes the freeway of standardisation a 'free way' for national initiatives in this field. E.g. it is absolutely normal to do so, even if the imitative kind of cross-reflects on a matter of interest by other institutions, like DLM-Forum or official international, regional or national standardisation institutions.

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[23] Draft ISO/DIS 22310 Information and documentation – Requirements for records/documents in standards, p. 6.