
International Standard



3901

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Documentation — International Standard Recording Code (ISRC)

Documentation — Code international normalisé des enregistrements (ISRC)

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work.

Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for approval before their acceptance as International Standards by the ISO Council. They are approved in accordance with ISO procedures requiring at least 75 % approval by the member bodies voting.

International Standard ISO 3901 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 46, *Documentation*.

Users should note that all International Standards undergo revision from time to time and that any reference made herein to any other International Standard implies its latest edition, unless otherwise stated.

Documentation — International Standard Recording Code (ISRC)

0 Introduction

The International Standard Recording Code (ISRC) has been prepared to provide a means of identifying audio, video or audio-visual recordings internationally. It is not to be used for the numbering of audio, video and audio-visual carriers.

An ISRC identifies the recording throughout its life and is intended for use by producers of audio, video and audio-visual recordings as well as by copyright organizations, broadcasting organizations, media libraries/archives, libraries etc.

1 Scope and field of application

The purpose of this International Standard is to define and promote the use of a standard code (ISRC) for the unique identification of recordings or parts of a recording. Guidelines for the use of the ISRC are given in the annex.

2 Reference

ISO 3166, *Codes for the representation of names of countries*.

3 Definitions

For the purpose of this International Standard the following definitions apply.

3.1 country code: The code that identifies the country of residence of the first owner of the recording (see 3.2).

3.2 first owner: The producer of the recording.

NOTE — If the producer of the recording has sold the recording, with all rights, before coding, the acquirer should be nominated as the first owner.

3.3 year of recording: The year in which the recording process (session) is completed.

3.4 recording: The result of a recording process independent of the type and number of audio, video or audio-visual carriers and technology used (see 3.5).

3.5 recording item: A part of a recording (see 3.4) which may be used as a separate unit.

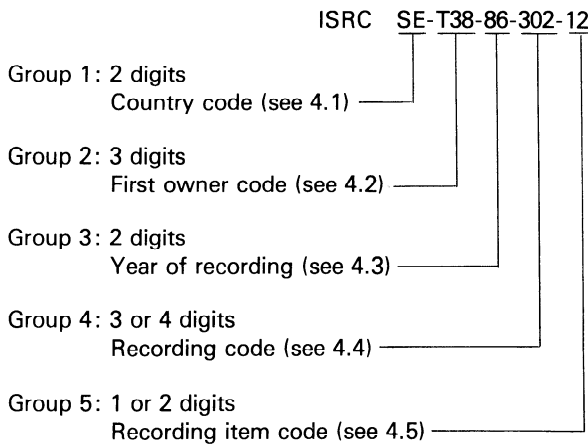
4 Structure of ISRC

As the ISRC is likely to be used in the same context as other codes, it shall be clearly distinguished. For visual presentation an ISRC code should always be preceded by "ISRC".

An ISRC consists of 12 characters and is alphanumeric, using digits (arabic numerals 0 to 9) and letters of the Roman alphabet. It is divided into five elements separated by dashes. They appear in the following order:

- 1) country;
- 2) first owner;
- 3) year of recording;
- 4) recording;
- 5) recording item.

Example:



4.1 Country code

The country code consists of two letters as specified in ISO 3166 for the ISO Alpha-2 code.

4.2 First owner code

The first owner code is alphanumeric and consists of 3 characters. It is assigned by appointed agencies (see clause 5).

4.3 Year-of-recording code

The year-of-recording code consists of the last 2 digits of the year, for example 86 for 1986, and is assigned by the first owner.

4.4 Recording code

The recording code consists of 3 or 4 digits, assigned by the first owner. Numbers for the recording code are assigned sequentially and may not be reassigned within the year of recording.

Four digits from the range given below are used for recordings consisting of less than 10 recording items. Three digits from the range given below are used for recordings consisting of more than nine recording items.

4-digit numbers: 0000 to 2999 (less than 10 recording items)

3-digit numbers: 300 to 999 (more than nine recording items)

4.5 Recording-item code

The recording-item code consists of 1 digit (0-9) if the recording code has a length of 4 digits; it consists of 2 digits (00-99) if the recording code has a length of 3 digits.

5 Administration

The ISRC system will be administered by established international and other appropriate agencies.

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Annex

ISRC (International Standard Recording Code) — Guidelines for the use of ISRC

(This annex forms part of the standard.)

A.1 General principles for the allocation of ISRC

The ISRC has been developed in order to facilitate the exchange of information on recordings and simplify administration. Each recording or recording item should have its own ISRC. The ISRC should be included in all relevant documentation concerning a recording.

Any new or changed recording should be provided with a new ISRC.

Reuse of an ISRC that has already been allocated for another recording is not permitted in order to guarantee the unique and unambiguous identification provided by an ISRC.

Being an identification code, the ISRC should not be used for classification purposes. If such classification is necessary, this should be carried out by use of additional descriptive data elements.

The first owner may use already existing code systems for the coding of recordings and recording items on condition that they are purely numeric and do not exceed 5 digits. In any case it should be ensured that the total number of digits shall be 12. "Missing" digits should be replaced by zeros.

A.2 Function and structure of ISRC

A.2.1 Function of ISRC

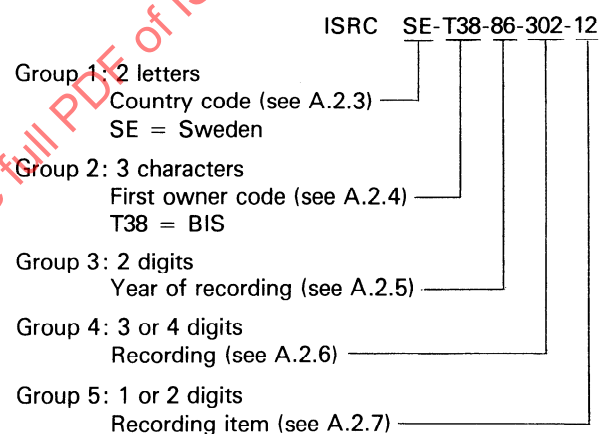
The ISRC is an unambiguous and unique characteristic identifying each audio, video and audio-visual recording.

In order to decentralize the allocation of code numbers for recordings, the 12-digit ISRC has been divided into five groups, separated by a hyphen.

The allocation of each of the five groups is dealt with in clause A.5.

A.2.2 Structure of ISRC

The structure of the ISRC is shown in the following example:



A.2.3 Country code

Representation: two letters according to ISO 3166.

Example: SE = Sweden

A.2.4 First owner code

Representation: 3 alphanumeric characters from A01-99Z, thus providing a coding capacity of 24 480 first owners per country. The coding capacity may be increased by allocating entirely numeric or alphabetic codes such as (001-999 and AAA-ZZZ).

Example : T38 = BIS

A.2.5 Year of recording

Representation: 2 numerical digits, for example 86 = 1986.

A.2.6 Recording

Representation: a 3 or 4 numerical digit number which when completed with the 1 or 2 digits of the recording item, (see 3.5) adds up to 5 digits in total. When recordings are divided into more than 9 to a maximum of 99 different recording items, they should be numbered 300 to 999. Recordings which are divided into a maximum of 9 recording items or which cannot be split up, are numbered 0001 to 2999.

A.2.7 Recording item

Representation: a 1 or 2 numerical digit number. The number of digits depends on the recording (see 3.4). Separate items of a recording are identified by the digits 1 to 9 respectively 01 to 99. A complete recording is identified by a 0 respectively 00 in group 5 "recording item".

A.3 Application of ISRC

The following are examples of the application of an ISRC.

Example 1:

Recording project: Live recording of a pop festival

Artists: Various

ISRC for project:	ISRC NL-B23-84-887-00
Country: Netherlands	NL
First owner: Pop live music	B23
Year of recording: 1984	84
Recording:	887-00

Recording items:	
The Hits: Parade Song	ISRC NL-B23-84-887-01
Playing time: 6 min 33 s	
Topsingers: Festival Song	ISRC NL-B23-84-887-02
Playing time: 7 min 30 s	
The Hits: Parade Song (single version)	ISRC NL-B23-84-887-22
Playing time: 3 min 18 s	

Any item from the recording project indicated by ISRC NL-B23-84-887-00 will be provided with a sequential recording item number, thus becoming an individual ISRC.

Example 2:

Recording Project: Mozart piano concertos

Piano: Classical artist

Orchestra: Chamber Musicians

ISRC for project:	ISRC NL-C01-84-1326-0
Country: Netherlands	NL
First owner: Recording Classics Mgt.	C01
Year of recording: 1984	84
Recording:	1326-0

Recording items:	
Piano concerto in E flat, K.271 "Jeune homme"	ISRC NL-C01-84-1326-1
Piano concerto in C, K.415	ISRC NL-C01-84-1326-2
Piano concerto in C, K.503	ISRC NL-C01-84-1326-5

Should only a part of one of the piano concertos be used, this part will be provided with the next sequential recording item code, thus becoming an individual ISRC.

A.4 Allocation of ISRC

Any changes in sound or image of a recording which affects the rights involved requires the allocation of a new ISRC.

A.5 Administration

A.5.1 International ISRC agencies

To implement and control the ISRC system an International Agency representing the users will be established. This agency will confirm the appointed agencies and will keep and distribute a list of appointed agencies.

A.5.2 Appointed agencies

The administration of ISRC within countries or other suitable groupings is delegated to appointed agencies. They allocate country codes and first owner codes to anyone acting as the first owner and requesting such a code.

The appointed ISRC Agency is responsible for the preparation of the following two listings (in alphanumeric sequence) :

a) country code	first owner code	first owner (name and address)	department or person to be contacted (if necessary)
b) first owner (name and address)	country code	first owner code	department or person to be contacted (if necessary)

A.5.3 International Agency for the maintenance of country codes

For the maintenance of country codes according to ISO 3166 an International Agency has been established and is responsible for the allocation of a country code to the appointed ISRC Agencies.

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 ISO 3166 MAS
 Burggrafenstrasse 4-10
 D-1000 BERLIN 30
 Tel : (030) 2601 362

A.5.4 First owner

The first owner should be responsible for the administration of the following data:

- year of recording;
- recording;
- recording item.