Proposed addition to Principles and Procedures
Guidelines for handling requests to add to FDAM
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Background

The purpose of UCS is to provide a common base for the various user communities for the processing and interchange of text. UCS already contains the scripts needed for most of the languages and text applications of the world.

Newer requirements entertained by WG2 include large collections addressing the needs of minority and historical languages, or specialized application areas. The requirements have also been as small sets of additions to already encoded scripts in the standard. WG2 also entertains requests affecting the architecture or for clarifications of the text in the standard.

WG2 also has the objective to have the repertoire and encoding in the different revisions or amendments to ISO/IEC 10646 in synch with corresponding versions of the Unicode Standard in cooperation with the Unicode Consortium.

WG2 must be able meet the various requirements in a timely fashion.

Steps that WG2 follows in making decisions on changes to the standard.

i. When a requirement for addition of characters or request for textual change to the standard is received, WG2 evaluates it with due diligence and either accepts or rejects it.

ii. If accepted, we ensure a sound and stable technical solution is prepared.

iii. The solutions are introduced into the standard by starting a PDAM (allowing the full two ballot cycles of national body review), and progressing to FPDAM and then to FDAM addressing ballot comments at each stage, following JTC1 procedures.

If the solution is considered to be technically mature, and the next available mechanism to introduce it is an FPDAM, WG2 can do so by consensus, permitting one less ballot cycle. However, this is done only after an assessment of the risk of accepting one less cycle of review.

This means a requirement is satisfied in the earlier of one or two ballot cycles, averaging about 6 months per cycle, before the final Amendment (FDAM) ballot starts.

How to deal with requirements for shorter turn around of solutions?

WG2 has encountered requests indicating that the solution be introduced into the standard faster than the above ballot cycles permit us to do. This is usually in the form of requests included in FPDAM ballot responses or as separate contributions to WG2.

Some recent examples are:
a. The request to add Uralicist characters to complete the set of UPA characters to enable the publication of linguistic data on the web in a UCS-compliant manner.
b. Addition of characters to be in synchronization with the planned next version of the Unicode Standard, including addition of characters to be able to meet the Case Stability policy in support of International Domain Naming requirements.

The Problem
The normal steps taken by WG2 to provide a solution would have entailed at least one cycle (FPDAM) process before FDAM stage. To be able to meet requirements for solutions earlier

than this, under exceptional conditions, WG2 needs to adopt an additional guideline to its procedure. The following is proposed as an additional guideline.

> *Guideline to deal with requests for direct addition to an FDAM being generated.*

> If:
> - the request for additions is for a small set of characters to be added to an already standardized script or collection, or consists of a technical change with minor impact
> - the proposal is sound and stable after exercising due diligence
> - the proposal does not introduce potential difficulties for existing implementations
> - the request is received at a meeting when an FDAM would be generated, and
> - the normal processing time of at least one ballot cycle (FPDAM balloting) is demonstrated to be unacceptable for the user requirement from timeliness point of view

> then, with the consensus of the experts at the meeting, WG2 may elect to include the mature solution directly in the FDAM.

> In all other cases the normal steps will be followed.