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| Doc Type: | Working Group Document   |
| Title:    | Recommendation to explore agile working methods between WG2 meetings |
| Source:   | U.S. National Body   |
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| Status:   | National Body Contribution   |
| Action:   | For consideration by JTC1/SC/WG2                                     |
| Date:     | May 11, 2011   |

In the past, WG2 has met regularly more or less twice a year. This was a schedule that worked well for processing CD, FCD, PDAM and FPDAM ballots. With the new JTC1 procedures, we now have to process ballots that have significantly different time requirements:

- Committee drafts (CD, PDAM) require a minimum ballot period of 3 months.
- Enquiry drafts (DIS, DAM) have a ballot period of 5 months; time must also be allowed for ITTF processing.

The longer period required for DIS and DAM ballots is effectively forcing WG2 to adopt a less-frequent meeting schedule: to allow adequate time to process a DIS or DAM ballot, 9 months between meetings must be allowed for.

In the meantime, there are still many proposals to encode new character or scripts that need to be processed within WG2 and to make their way into drafts for review. If WG2 meetings are typically 9 months apart, that will mean, on average, a 50% increase in the number of new proposals to consider at each meeting, and committee drafts (CD, PDAM) will get reviewed on a schedule that's 50% slower. The net effect is that the early, committee-draft stages of our work becomes much less efficient—after a 3-month ballot is complete, work stalls for several months until the next meeting. And, when WG2 meets, the pace of work during the meeting must become more demanding with more documents to process—either that, or the overall pace of working on new proposals just gets much slower.

The slowdown of work described above is what would result if WG2 were to work in the same ways as it has in the past except with less frequent meetings. Yet, there are ways that WG2 could adapt to our new circumstances, becoming more agile in ways that would allow us to retain better efficiency in the early stages of work to encode new characters and scripts. The US would like WG2 to explore options for work to progress between face-to-face meetings and to adopt practices that may be deemed appropriate to allow work to progress during those intervals.

We note that multiple rounds of review and balloting can be used for committee drafts (CDs, PDAMs); of course, this has happened on occasion in the past within WG2. We also note that the JTC1 procedures do not require that there be a face-to-face ballot resolution meeting to resolve comments on committee drafts before subsequent committee drafts can be distributed for balloting. (In fact, the Procedures only

discuss ballot resolution meetings in relation to enquiry (DIS) drafts.) The following is what is specified by the ISO/IEC Procedures for how the results of a committee draft are to be processed:

**2.5.3** No more than 4 weeks after the closing date for submission of replies, the secretariat shall prepare the compilation of comments and arrange for its circulation to all P-members and O-members of the technical committee or subcommittee. When preparing this compilation, the secretariat shall indicate its proposal, made in consultation with the chairman of the technical committee or subcommittee and, if necessary, the project leader, for proceeding with the project, either

- a) to discuss the committee draft and comments at the next meeting, or
- b) to circulate a revised committee draft for consideration, or
- c) to register the committee draft for the enquiry stage (see 2.6).

In the case of b) and c), the secretariat shall indicate in the compilation of comments the action taken on each of the comments received. This shall be made available to all P members, if necessary by the circulation of a revised compilation of comments, no later than in parallel with the submission of a revised CD for consideration by the committee (case b) or simultaneously with the submission of the finalized version of the draft to the office of the CEO for registration for the enquiry stage (case c).

If, within 2 months from the date of dispatch, 2 or more P-members disagree with proposal b) or c) of the secretariat, the committee draft shall be discussed at a meeting (see 4.2.1.3).

Note, then, that the secretariat, the SC2 chair and the project leader are fully empowered to make reasonable decisions on what actions to take in response to NB comments on the CD / PDAM ballot and then to issue a new draft for balloting. This could, if there is sufficient consensus, include progressing to an enquiry draft (DIS, DAM) ballot; but in any case a new committee draft (CD, PDAM) can be prepared and distributed without needing to wait for a WG meeting.

Thus, if there is an interval of 9 months between WG2 meetings, there is opportunity within the procedural constraints for an amendment or new edition to go through two rounds of review and balloting as a committee draft during that interval.

With this in mind, the US sees ways for WG2 to maintain a more efficient pace of work on proposals for new characters and scripts:

- At WG2 meetings, decisions can be taken to initiate a project subdivision; when the resulting SC2 mail ballot succeeds, the editor is then authorized to prepare a CD or PDAM for distribution and balloting. (This is as in the past.)
- After the 3-month ballot on the CD / PDAM, the project editor, in consultation with the SC2 chair and secretariat, prepare a disposition document. This would not, by default, get discussed at a WG2 meeting. In relation to non-controversial comments, the editor (in consultation with the SC2 chair and secretariat) could decide on how to revise the draft. If there are known issues in the draft on which there isn't consensus, the editor might make changes likely to foster

consensus, or might keep those parts of the draft unchanged, leaving more difficult issues to be discussed at the next meeting.

- To facilitate progress at this mid-point between WG2 meetings, the editor could potentially initiate discussion among WG members by email or teleconference as might be helpful in improving the draft. (See clause 4.1.1 of Part 1 of the ISO/IEC Procedures, which states, “Technical committees and subcommittees shall use modern electronic means to carry out their work (for example, e-mail, groupware and teleconferencing) wherever possible.”)
- Another possibility to progress work at that mid-point might be that WG2, at the previous meeting, establish an ad hoc group for the specific purpose of working with the editor to process ballot comments on the first CD / PDAM draft.
- Having evaluated ballot comments on the first CD / PDAM draft, the editor could immediately prepare a new CD / PDAM draft.
- If new character / script proposal documents have been received that are deemed by the editor to be sufficiently mature and that are within the scope of work agreed upon for the given new edition / amendment, the editor could incorporate that new proposal into the draft at this time. If desirable, discussion within the WG by email or teleconference or within an appointed ad hoc group (as mentioned above) could be utilized to provide guidance in these decisions.
- Having prepared a new draft (perhaps with new repertoire added), the editor could submit that to the secretariat for a second CD / PDAM ballot that would be completed before the subsequent WG2 meeting.

Such work between WG2 meetings would generally be used only to make progress on committee-stage drafts: decisions to advance a draft to the enquiry stage could be reserved to be taken only at face-to-face WG2 meetings. (In fact, issuing a DIS or DAM ballot at a point 3 or 4 months prior to the next WG2 meeting would not be particularly useful since the ballot would not be completed before the meeting.)

Alternate ways of working on committee drafts such as the suggestions made above would not reduce the importance of discussion of drafts at that stage during WG2 meetings: there will inevitably be issues that require face-to-face discussion among WG members in order to reach consensus. But it is usually the case that each new edition or amendment has a substantial body of work that is not so controversial in nature. The suggestions above are aimed to allow that work to progress in a way that will be much more efficient than if the work were happening only during WG2 meetings as in the past.

In summary, then, the US recommends that WG2 consider alternate processes for working on committee drafts, specifically including having the editor at liberty to prepare a second CD / PDAM draft for balloting between WG2 meetings, but possibly including other possibilities such as email, teleconferencing or ad hoc groups.