ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 2
Coded Character Sets
Secretariat: Japan (JISC)

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BUSINESS PLAN FOR JTC 1/SC 2

PERIOD COVERED: October 1997 - April 1998

SUBMITTED BY: Kohji Shibano (SC 2 Chairman) and Toshiko Kimura (SC 2 Secretariat)

1. MANAGEMENT SUMMARY:

1.1 JTC 1 SC 2 STATEMENT OF SCOPE

Title: Coded Character Set

Scope: Standardization of graphic character sets and their characteristics, associated control functions, their coded representation for information interchange and code extension techniques. Excluded: audio and picture coding.

1.2 PROJECT REPORT

Number of Projects:
SC 2 has 65 projects/subprojects.

New subprojects:
During this reporting period, SC 2 approved the following new subprojects at the 8th plenary meeting held in March 1998. SC 2 has submitted a modification proposal to SC 2 POW to JTC 1 for endorsement.

- 10646-1/Amd 23: Bopomofo and Various characters
- 10646-1/Amd 24: Thaana script
- 10646-1/Amd 25: Khmer Script
- 10646-1/Amd 26: Burmese Script
- 10646-1/Amd 27: Syriac script
- 10646-1/Amd 28: Ideographic Description Sequences

Suspended Projects: None

Reactivated Projects:

- 8859-11: Latin-Thai

Planned withdrawals: None.

1.3 COOPERATION AND COMPETITION

SC 2 is playing the key role in the area of coded character set standardization.

Discussions with ISO/TC 46 on the transfer of their coded character set standards to SC 2 are still underway.

SC 2 has been very successful in cooperation with SC 18, SC 21, SC 22, SC 31.

SC 2 has also been successful in cooperation with external standard organizations, such as

ITU-T, CEN/TC 304, and with industry consortia, such as Unicode Inc. and GSE (Guide Share Europe).

For SC 2/WG 2/IRG (Ideographic Rapporteur Group) work, TCA (Taiwan) and HKITF (Hong Kong) provided important contributions. For Mongolian script extension of ISO/IEC 10646-1, UNU (United Nations University) provided an important contribution.

2.0 PERIOD REVIEW

2.1 MARKET REQUIREMENTS,

Increased new supports of ISO/IEC 10646-1 can be found. Especially, important international requirements can be found in the area of the Internet. Java language is based on ISO/IEC 10646-1 (Unicode). XML and HTML 4.0 now support ISO/IEC 10646-1. Partial information relating to ISO/IEC 10646-1 can be obtained through Unicode Inc. on the Internet but not from SC 2.

Widespread use of the Internet technologies, such as WWW, even an ordinal person now faces with and has to use ISO standard such as 8859 series of standards and 10646.

Therefore, easy access to SC 2 standards is crucial to avoid confusions between users and implementators.

Since coded character set is a basis of all information technologies. Increased connections from developing countries to the Internet require support for new coded characters for these countries. New requirements came from Asian scripts, such as Taana, Khmer, Burmese, Syriac. For new European currency, Euro, requires a new code point. At its last plenary, basic agreement for the treatment of Euro symbol in SC 2 standards has been reached.

2.2 ACHIEVEMENTS,

The following progress has been made during this period.

Published projects:

- ISO/IEC 10646-1/Amd 6. Tibetan (Published: 1997-11-15)
- ISO/IEC 10646-1/Amd. 7 33 additional Characters (Published: 1997-11-15)
- ISO/IEC 10646-1/Amd. 8 (Published: 1997-12-15)
- ISO/IEC 10646-1/Amd. 9 Identifiers for Characters (Published: 1997-12-15)
- ISO/IEC 8859-1: Latin 1 (Published: 1998-04-15)

Projects progressed from DIS to IS: 4

- 10646-1/Amd 5: Hangul
- 10646-1/Cor.2
- 8859-4: Latin alphabet No. 4
- 8859-10: Latin alphabet No. 5

Projects progressed from FCD to FDIS: 8

- 10646-1/Amd.10: Ethopic
- 10646-1/Amd 11: Unified Canadian Aboriginal syllabics
- 10646-1/Amd.12: Cherokee

- 10646-1/Amd 13: CJK Unified ideopraphs with supplementary Source
- 10646-1/Amd 16: Braille Patters
- 10646-1/Amd.19: Runic
- 10646-1/Amd.20: Ogham
- 8859-15: Latin 9

Projects progressed to a combined PDAM registration and consideration ballot: 6

- 10646-1/Amd 14: Yi Syllables and Yi radicals
- 10646-1/Amd 22: Keyborad Symbols
- 10646-1/Amd 24: Thaana script
- 10646-1/Amd 25: Khmer Script
- 10646-1/Amd 26: Burmese Script
- 10646-1/Amd 27: Syriac script

Projects progressed to a combined PDAM registration and FPDAM consideration ballot: 3

- 10646-1/Amd 17: CJK Unified Ideographs Extension
- 10646-1/Amd 18: Symbols and Others
- 10646-1/Amd 21: Sinhala

Project progressed from NP to WD: 2

- 10646-1/Amd. 23: Bopomofo and Various characters
- 10646-2: UCS Part 2: CJK Unified, Supplementary plane, General Scripts and Symbols Plane, General Purpose Plane

2.3 RESOURCES

SC 2 should be considered as one of the largest SCs in JTC 1 in terms of membership. The number of current P-member National Bodies is 37 and O-member National Bodies is eight. All WGs and all developing projects have assigned officials. In this sense, SC 2 has sufficient resources.

3.0 FOCUS NEXT WORK PERIOD

3.1 DELIVERABLES:

The following projects are expected to be published during the next reporting period.

ISO/IEC 10646
10646-1/Cor. 2
10646-1/Amd 5: Hangul
10646-1/Amd 10: Ethiopic script
10646-1/Amd 11: Canadian Aboriginal Syllabics script
10646-1/Amd 12: Cherokee script
10646-1/Amd 13: CJK unified ideopraphs with supplementary sources

8859 Series
Revision of ISO 8859-2: 1987, Latin alphabet No. 2
Revision of ISO 8859-3: 1988, Latin alphabet No. 3
Revision of ISO 8859-4: 1988, Latin alphabet No. 4

Revision of ISO 8859-5: 1988, Latin/Cyrillic alphabet
Revision of ISO 8859-6: 1987, Latin/Arabic alphabet
Revision of ISO 8859-7: 1987, Latin/Greek alphabet
Revision of ISO 8859-8: 1988, Latin/Hebrew alphabet
Revision of ISO 8859-9: 1989, Latin alphabet No. 5
Revision of ISO/IEC 8859-10: 1992, Latin alphabet No. 6
8859 Part 13: Latin alphabet No.7
8859 Part 14: Latin alphabet No.8 (Celtic)
8859 Part 15: Latin 9

Others
TR 15907 TR Type 2, Alphanumeric character sets for optical recognition -- Part 2: Character set OCR-B -- Shapes and dimensions of the printed image (changed from ISO 1073-2 Revision)

TR 15285 TR Type 3, An Operational Model for Characters and Glyphs

3.2 STRATEGIES:

In response to JTC 1 CAW recommendations, SC 2 recommends to JTC 1 that the proposed Technical Direction consist of a single SC with a scope reflecting cultural adaptability requirements. (see JTC 1 N 5305)

SC 2 should focus on the following three areas;

(1) Provide easy access to SC 2 standards,

(2) Support for new character coding requirements from developing countries,

(3) Clarification of character coding schemes.

3.2.1 RISKS

Most of the information concerning SC 2's standards can be obtained through the Internet but official standard itself can not be obtained through the Internet. Without availability of definitive information, that is SC 2 standards, through the Internet, it may cause a confusion of user communities and implementors.

Delay of SC 2 standard development may cause to cease new entries from developing countries to global information arena.

In the past, Latin coding has been regarded as obvious. However, there remain some ambiguities. Basically, SC 2 concepts of graphic characters are based on type writer technology not on real printing technology. Thus some people consider that Latin-1 can not support proper French and Polish. Therefore, we have to clarify these points.

3.2.2 OPPORTUNITIES

SC 2 standards are and have been really effective for information interchange. However, as for internal processing codes, implementators' private coded character sets have been widely used.

Growing interests and requirements for real global information processing, there is an

opportunities for SC 2 standards not only for information interchange but for information processing including internationalized software portabilities.

3.3 WORK PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Enhancement of ISO/IEC 10646-1 is still the highest priority. Revision and enhancement of 8859 series of standards are also important.

Revision of ISO/IEC 10646-1 and 10646-2 will be important.