**ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 2/WG 3
7-bit and 8-bit codes and their extension
SECRETARIAT : ELOT**

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Swedish views on ISO/IEC 8859 document layout

Background

In 1993 work was started to editorially revise parts 1–10 of ISO/IEC 8859. At that time the texts of the different parts were not harmonized typographically and layout-wise. Also some differences in textual contents existed. The main purpose of the revision was to achieve uniformity in these respects.

Such uniformity is important. The different parts of ISO/IEC 8859 are, together with the ISO/IEC 10646, probably the most frequently consulted of all ISO/IEC IT standards, being used extensively in daily work in IT system development and programming. Ease of use of the ISO/IEC 8859 is therefore essential, and typography and general layout take on special importance.

The editors for the revision devoted large amounts of work to reach uniformity. Several editorial comments were also received from NBs during the CD and DIS processing of the parts. Contents and shape of the parts now published is therefore firmly based on user needs.

Layout used for present parts

The layout of the revised ISO/IEC 8859 was originally founded on the ISO/IEC Directives Part 3 current at the time, and also on the ITTF "Notes on the presentation of International Standards", as interpreted by the editors in consultations with ITTF. The revision required considerable time, and during that period the Directives were issued in a new edition. Also some of the ITTF drafting principles were in practice changed by the introduction of Word templates for standards.

It was however decided by ITTF that the original layout could be kept for the drafts which were then at CD and DIS stages. Parts 1–6 and 8–10 were therefore published in 1998 with layouts conforming to the original rules. The same general layout was also used for the new parts 13, 14 and 15, published in 1998 and 1999.

The paper size problem

A factor of special importance for standards layout is paper format.

Although the ISO/IEC directives prescribe A4 format this has been noted as problematic in JTC 1/SC 2, especially during CD and DIS processing, when print-outs from electronic distributions are frequent. SC2/WG 3 therefore in its 1998 meeting unanimously adopted the following resolution:

"With reference to JTC 1 guidelines in document SC 2 N3041 [= JTC 1 N5180], WG 3 is of the opinion that all standards within WG 3 and SC 2 responsibility shall be prepared for a combined A4 / North American Letter Size format, and that consequently the ITTF Rules / Templates for Project Editors should be harmonized accordingly."

In line with this resolution a document format as illustrated on the following page was used in the preparation of the ISO/IEC 8859 revisions.

Need for SC 2/WG 3 resolution

Unfortunately the revision of the Latin/Greek part, ISO/IEC 8859-7, has been delayed, as well as the introduction of the decided new Latin/Thai part, ISO/IEC 8859-11. If those parts are finalized according to the present Directives Part 3, and with the use of the present standards templates, they will differ considerably from the already published twelve parts, thereby invalidating the original uniformity purpose of the revision. It will also certainly delay their further processing.

It is therefore the opinion of the Swedish NB that WG 3 in its Athens meeting should discuss this problem. If it is then decided by WG 3 that the same layout for the two not yet finalized parts as for the previous ones is desirable – in particular a combined A4 / Letter Size format – a resolution should be adopted, requesting the SC 2 Secretariat to apply to ITTF for an exception from the present standards drafting rules for ISO/IEC 8859 parts 7 and 11.

Document layout used for revised parts of ISO/IEC 8859

15 mm

14 mm

234 mm

Text area

Text area

20 mm

85 mm

10 mm

85 mm

10 mm

10 mm

North American letter size paper (90% scale)

24 mm

A4 size paper (90% scale)