
ISO/TC 97 SPECIAL GROUP ON FUNCTIONAL STANDARDIZATION

Minutes of the meeting held in Eindhoven on 11 March 1987

1. Opening of the meeting

Messrs. Sessler and Becker were unable to attend. Mr. D. Willetts (UK-chairman of TC97/SC20) joined the meeting for the day. After having worked in two separate "task forces" on the previous day, the group resumed its plenary meeting on this third day of the conference.

2. Report of the meetings held on the previous days

Consideration of the reports of the first and second day (i.e. documents TC97/SG/1, 2 and 3) was the first item of the day's agenda.

2a. Report of the first day's meeting

This report was approved with minor corrections.

2b. Report of Working Group 1 on the definition of the concepts of functional standard and functional standardization

The convenor of this group, Mr. Purton, presented the contents of document TC97/SG/3, pointing out that the definitions had expressly been kept short in order to make them understandable for initiates and non-initiates alike. This, however, meant that they should be accompanied by a number of explanatory texts on what exactly is meant by such terms as application and function, which appear in the definitions. These texts had not yet been written because of lack of time and the fact that some of them are closely connected with the work of Group 2, which was done simultaneously but separately.

Mr. Naemura considered ^{Contribution} Annex 15 (= Berlin document 13) a useful explanatory text. Mr. Reuss remarked that the SG-work has no monopoly on functionality - traditional standards are (and should be) functional as well.

In the course of the afternoon session on this subject of definitions the following decisions were unanimously agreed upon:

Definition of an International Standardized Profile (ISP): An internationally harmonized document which identifies a group of standards together with the appropriate options and parameters necessary to accomplish a function or set of functions.

Concerning the definition of the concept of functional standardization, the delegates were of the opinion that document TC97/SG 2 gives a good and sufficient description of what this concept will mean in practise.

They considered the Berlin requirement to be fulfilled by this description, the formal definition of the concept being made superfluous thereby.

2c. Report of Working Group 2 - functions and tasks

Mr. Jones presented the results of this group (see document TC97/SG/2), which were, on the whole, acceptable to the delegates. Concerning the timing of the ISP processing Mr. Harrop proposed that the original document supplied by the feeder organization shall, together with the "Explanatory Report", be distributed (by the SG Secretariat) to all parties involved, especially the national members of ISO/TC97. This proposal, which was unanimously adopted, gives these parties in effect 6 months to review the (technical) quality and consequences of the proposal, which brings this period on a par with the 6 months' period used for a fast track (D) IS.

Mr. Brodbeck was of the opinion that the DISP after having passed the review phase may be expected to have the quality level of a DIS.

At this stage the delegates agreed upon the designations of the ISP-precursors along the procedural route:

- When the originator (= feeder organization) submits a proposal to the SG Secretariat, the proposal thereby automatically becomes a PDISP = Proposed Draft International Standardized Profile.
- When the PDISP has passed the review test, i.e. has been accepted by the reviewer(s), it becomes a DISP = Draft International Standardized Profile.
- When the DISP has been accepted in the ISO-members Ballot, it thereby becomes an ISP = International Standardized Profile, which the SG offers to the JTC1 (or ISO 97), who in their turn are expected to forward it to ISO/IEC (or ISO) for publication.

UK delegates were concerned about the work load involved. Most delegates expected an initial flow of some 10 or 15 proposals during the first few months, leveling off to e.g. 5 to 10 serious proposals on a yearly basis.

The general feeling was that the procedure proposed is the best compromise between speed and quality that can be offered.

3. Resolutions of the meeting

It was decided to elect a drafting committee to write the draft resolutions (or recommendations) of the meeting. Members were Messrs. Jones, Gibson and Purton. Subjects to be covered were, amongst others:

- A new type of document is needed in the TC97 standardization field: ISP.

- The description of the proposed processing of an ISP.
- The definitions called for in the Berlin resolutions.
- A provisional listing of requirements (prerequisites) to be met by a DISP proposed by a feeder organization.
- A listing of future work to be done by the group.
- Any other important results to be achieved during the remainder of the meeting.

This drafting committee presented document TC97/SG/4, which after lunch became the subject of further discussions.

AT this point of time the main issues yet to be considered were listed:

- The general principles of the list(s) of requirements to be fulfilled by proposed DISP's.
- The general principles of a taxonomy (classified list) of worthwhile ISP's and the writing/editing of this taxonomy. (This subject is very closely allied to the planning of the Group's work).
- The scope and terms of reference of the Group, taking into account the definitions already accepted.
- The infrastructure of the Special Group and the rules of work.

It was decided to begin with the first of these four subjects.

4. Requirements to be met by a proposal from a feeder organization

Several types of requirements can be distinguished:

- Procedural ones, e.g. the openness of the procedure practised by the originator of the proposal.
 - Quality criteria (including editorial requirements).
 - Suitability of the type of material/technical content.
- The review phase is included in order to check whether these requirements are met by a proposal.

4a. Openness and harmonization

After a thorough discussion of the question how to define the measure of openness required in the originator's procedure, the following requisites were agreed upon.

The group considered the procedure sufficiently open if

- any party interested in the contents of the profile and able to contribute to it, is allowed to take part in the work and in the voting on the results of the work;
- any party interested in the discussions and decisions as to which profiles are going to be developed, is allowed to take part in this planning stage of the work and in the voting on the results of the planning.

These requisites guarantee a measure of consensus in the planning and development stages of the originator's process. Moreover, the delegates unanimously endorsed a proposition made by Mr. Hathway,

to the effect that an organization that considers the originator's procedure not sufficiently open (in other words: that considers itself more or less excluded from it), should be offered the procedural opportunity to lodge an appeal with the SG-FS.

Another matter of considerable importance in this respect is the measure of (preferably worldwide) harmonization in the originator's procedure.

The regional workshop mechanism as exemplified in the so-called NBS workshop and as prepared for Europe in Annex 2 was considered an excellent starting point, preferably to be extended by co-operation with other regional workshop working on a similar level and with similar subjects. This large-scale harmonization (see fig. 1), achieved either by means of set assignments or peer-to-peer discussions, gives the assurance that the feeder document is not open to (too) many technical objections.

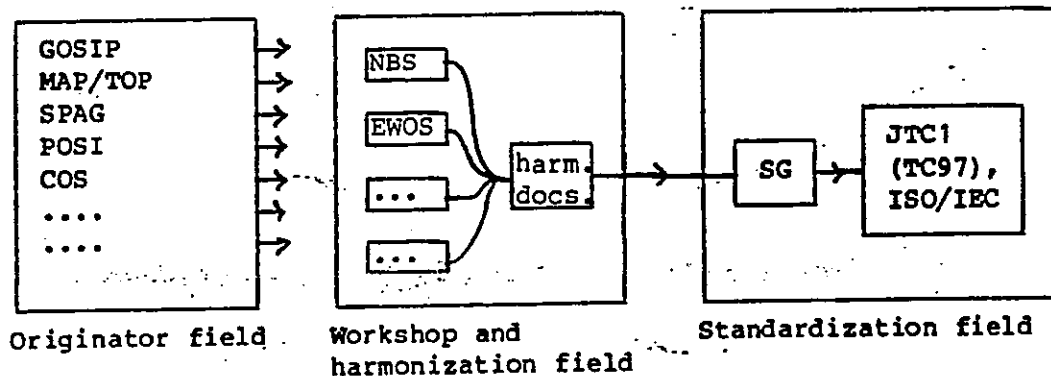


Fig. 1.

Obviously there are more requirements to be defined in this sphere. However, it would take too much time to do so in the present plenary meeting.

All delegates are aware of the difficulty of combining a speedy procedure with the measure of quality and stability required of the resulting ISPs (in other words the requirements of preserving the integrity of the standardization work done).

Mrs. Sabev, UK delegates and Messrs. Nahas and Holka in particular were pointing out that feeder documents preferably should use only material laid down in accepted international (ISO and IEC) standards and CCITT recommendations (no drafts!). All delegates were in agreement on this point, however, the majority opinion was that such a requirement may in cases be irreconcilable with the measure of "timeliness" needed of ISPs.

The most fundamental and generally applicable requirements having been discussed, the consideration of other criteria of quality and suitability was left to future plenary and/or working group meetings.

5. The general principles of a taxonomy (classified list) of ISPs

The writing/editing of a taxonomy was considered a task for a future working group meeting. Three general principles proposed by Mr. De Blasi were unanimously accepted:

- This "taxonomy group" should include representatives of the prospective feeder organizations;
- Let us ask the TC97 SCs and other TCs working in the "ISP field" to pay attention to possible contributions to ISPs and also the taxonomy to be made. (Mr. Dureau expressed the wish that TC184 will be informed of the "Taxonomy meeting", because industrial automation experts may make valuable contributions to this work);
- The taxonomy should take the form of a TC97 (or JTC1) technical report, which is regularly updated (e.g. on a 6 months basis) and should be distributed among the various parties concerned (both within and outside ISO).

Existing papers such as ITSTC's M-IT-02 (Annex 16), NBS agreements and Annex 3 were considered important tools for the taxonomy work to be done.

The question remained who can be the rapporteur of the Taxonomy Group - a question that had to be answered before the meeting is concluded.

The exact wording of the resolutions and other important issues enumerated in the second paragraph of page 3 of these minutes have to be left to the following day of the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned until the following morning, 9.00 h.

The secretary: Mr. H. Gosthoek