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ISO/IEC JTC 1/SGFS
Title: ISO/IEC JTC 1 Special Group on Functional Standardization

Secretariat: NNI (Netherlands)

Title : U.S. Response to ISO/IEC JTC1/SGFS N383, Request for SGFS Member Comment on Standardization of Profile Test Specifications

Source : U.S.A.

Status : U.S. National Body Response

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INTRODUCTION

Note: This paper deals with conformance testing of OSI protocols and OSI profiles. Consideration of conformance testing for other topics is for further study.

ISO 9646 states that an Abstract Test Suite for a protocol shall contain a test case for every conformance requirement of that protocol. This implies that the ATS will provide complete coverage for the base standard protocol.

A particular profile will implement either all of a given protocol, or some conforming subset of that protocol. Therefore, the tests needed to validate the protocol requirements that are applicable for a profile should be a subset of the tests defined for the full, base standard protocol.

(Note: Additional conformance requirements, beyond those specified for a single protocol, may need to be specified when multi-protocol considerations are evaluated. One manner in which these additional conformance requirements are currently being documented is via "Application Context" definitions, containing a Conformance clause. The additional tests - or, perhaps modification of existing tests - that will be required in this situation is a subject being studied by SC21/WG1 Conformance.)

RESPONSE TO SGFS N383

The questions raised in SGFS N383 imply that a Profile Test Specification will be a set of tests that are distinct from the ATS for the base standard protocol. The US feels that this must be strongly discouraged.

Two scenarios are possible:

1. An ATS for the base protocol standard exists (at some level of standardization) when work on specifying the profile tests begin; or
2. No ATS for the base protocol standard exists.

In scenario 1, it is likely that no new tests need to be specified for profile testing, except possibly as discussed in the previous note on multi-protocol considerations. The "selection expressions" defined for the ATS (as required by ISO 9646-3) will indicate which tests from the ATS form the appropriate subset for each profile. (Note: This is based on the understanding that the PICS proforma for a base protocol sufficiently identifies a profile when the PICS is filled in.) All profile test efforts should use the existing ATS as a basis.

In scenario 2, the tests defined for a profile should be contributed to the ISO group having responsibility for the corresponding ATS(s), as an incremental approach to defining the complete set of tests that are applicable for each base protocol. This then raises a question of progression: should the profile tests be allowed to become standardized separately from the base protocol ATS? This question is currently being studied by SC21/WG1 Conformance. However, the current ISO 9646 methodology precludes standardizing a subset of the full pro-

protocol conformance requirements. For this reason, and also to maintain consistency with the approach discussed in scenario 1, the US feels that the profile tests would not become a standard of their own, but would be defined in terms of the ATS for the base protocol.