Title   : EWOS Liaison to ISO/IEC JTC1/SGFS on SGFS N100 - Its role and its status

Source   : EWOS

Status   : for discussion during the SGFS Plenary Meeting, June 15 - 19, 1992, Washington DC, USA

Note   : Document SGFS N534 has been updated by EWOS based on recent discussions within the EWOS/TA

Title: **Liaison statement to ISO/IEC JTC1/SGFS**

Source: **European Workshop for Open Systems**

Subject: **SGFS N100 - Its role and its status**

Date: **13 May 1992**

The recent re-issue of SGFS N100 Rev 4 has given rise to some concern in EWOS about this document, and EWOS would like an opportunity at the June 1992 SGFS meeting, under agenda item 11, to review its role and the procedures required to maintain its contents in an accurate state.

In summary, EWOS believes that there should be improved procedures for making available status information obtained within the workshop community, recording proposed and approved taxonomy changes should continue, but severe curtailment of the descriptive summaries is recommended.

1.   Content.

1.1   Status tables

There is little purpose served now by Status "R" (Positively recognised by authoized body) - recognition effectively occurs when a profile is entered into the taxonomy (apart from a few historical entries which have not progressed); the important starting status is "C" when a commitment (not just an intent to contribute) is made by the S-liaisons in a joint planning operation in RWS-CC.

Some of the information in these tables badly needs updating, and it should be an objective of the procedures that this happens effectively.

1.2   Combinations

It is understood that some work is being proposed on the provision of information on joint use of A/B and F-profiles and also other aspects of combinatorial use; however, if it is found that no significant information is forthcoming, the relevant section and references should be omitted.

1.3   Summary Descriptions

As with the Status tables, these are only of use if they
are provided promptly at the planning stage, and duly
updated on profile publication. There is also an issue
regarding the level and detail of information which is
included. N100 has never explicitly mandated a particular
level of detail, but the precedent originally established
in the European M-IT-02 have generally been followed,
extracting relevant text from clause 1 of the ISP.

EWOS proposes (in the light of comments below about
audience) that this material ? should be reduced to a
shorter, standardised description of the function .

1.4   Taxonomy changes

EWOS believes that to be of any use, the text of accepted
Taxonomy change proposals should be included in N100; the
original N-numbered documents may be available to SGFS
members (but after time, tend to become less
accessible!); but N100 is targeted on outside readers (as
well) to whom N-numbered documents are inaccessible. It
is suggested that the table could include a short entry,
as at present, when a proposal is submitted for review
(with the review date added), and when approved, the text
should be annexed until TR 10000-2 is revised.

2.   Audience

2.1   Within the FS process

Provided the status information is up to date and
accurate, the contributing bodies and the secretariats of
active national bodies can obtain valuable information on
what stages have been reached for each ISP, and what
activity to expect. There is also a requirement for such
information within the testing community, to assist in
planning the availability of test suites and test
systems. However, the workshop community tends to
maintain its own more detailed planning targets,
disseminated through RWS-CC, and by direct contact, and
makes little explicit use of N100. (This would appear to
be borne out by the apparent lack of urgency in
maintaining the present document).

There seems to be little need for the summary description
material in this area of use; knowledge of the purpose
and content of the profiles is generally available
internally.

2.2 FS Users

Those urgently needing profiles for procurement purposes could gain some benefit from regular use of N100, but the quarterly (at best) publication cycle may be too slow for them. Implementors probably gain their information from direct contact with workshops and national standards bodies.

As with the FS process, there is probably significant knowledge of profile content amongst those sufficiently concerned to be looking for early information - e.g. the major governmental procurement agencies.

2.3 Other standardisers

It is unlikely that those involved in PDISP quality check or review group work would make any use of the document - they would tend to react to specific notifications and direct information on content.

2,4 The General (IT) Public

Difficult to see any knowledge or interest in the topic!

3. Procedures

3.1 Status submissions and updates

The recent RWS-CC meeting noted its concern about the problems in operating the update procedures; RWS-CC collects planning targets twice a year at present, and publishes the results among the workshops, sometimes these also reach SGFS members, but since RWS-CC is not a formal body, let alone not an S-liaison, and has no permanent secretariat, this is not a viable update path.

EWOS has undertaken to explore the possibility of acting in some capacity with reference to the other workshops and towards the SGFS secretariat, in order to find a way of maintaining this data.

3.2 Summary description submissions and updates

The procedures for submission should be strengthened to encourage the provision of either original or update material in a timely fashion.

3.3 Taxonomy change submissions and updates

These are too new to form any opinion of success in the process; however, since it is merely a matter of the SGFS secretariat publishing information it receives, there should be no problem in providing a useful service in keeping the published taxonomy up to date in a fast moving environment.

3.4 Distribution

There is not much evidence that the existing N100 gets any significant distribution outside the FS community - or at least, very little feedback comes in from those who do get it. Why should an ITTF publication fare any better?