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Title: Initial Draft of Guidelines on Editing Meetings

Date: 2002-05-09

Note: The following topics were discussed at the 2002-05 SC32 Plenary in Seoul. This document is intended to be a starting point for developing guidelines for editing meetings. Future discussions will improve upon and revise this document.

Topic: Agenda

An editing meeting should have an agenda. The agenda should be monitored and maintained for the duration of the editing meeting. The Chair of the editing meeting should "drill down" to details, when appropriate, so that the "big picture" and the immediate focus are maintained.

Agenda items may run in parallel. The Chair should delegate work, as appropriate, to keep the participants reasonably busy. Example: It may be appropriate to delegate/initiate 3-10 tasks at a time, but it is inappropriate to initiate 400 tasks at once.

It may be convenient to provide a "Chair's Corner" via E-mail/web that highlights the current status and the highest priority items.

The Chair should distinguish among the Editor, the Host of the meeting, and the Chair of the meeting (typically, the editor is the Chair).

Topic: Scheduling

Editing meeting should have a well-defined start date-time and end date-time and should have agreement upon what kind of facilities (e.g., FTP, E-mail, web, telecon) will be used and for which purpose. If necessary at the end of the scheduled end date-time of an editing meeting, it is possible that, after consideration, the participants choose to extend the editing meeting, but the editing meeting should have a free-floating end date. Participants should be able to assign work to themselves to minimize the management load of the Chair.

The Chair and the participants of the editing meeting should coordinate the scheduling of the tasks so that both (1) editing tasks can be given proper attention, (2) the editing process ends on time. The Chair and the participants should take note of any special national holidays and seasonal periods that might affect the work level and communication among the participants.

Topic: Making Decisions

The editing meeting should agree on the parameters of decision-making. Some decisions are easy to make: e.g., there is already strong consensus; or the chair can simply move obvious decisions through quickly with default Yes voting ("if there are no objections to X, then we'll proceed to the next item"). Some decisions require some extended discussion and thought: adequate time (e.g., days to weeks), preparation (e.g., written proposals), and planning are necessary -- not to mention the importance of operating within different languages, cultures, and timezones. Some decisions are difficult: they may require telecons, face-to-face meetings, or national body caucusing/ballots -- additional time (e.g., 3-8 weeks), preparation, and planning are likely to be necessary.

The editing meeting should agree on the response time for queries/tasks: e.g., regular, small things need a response within 48 hours; more detailed actions may require responses within 2-5 days.

Topic: Recognizing/Recording Process

The editing meeting should agree upon how it tracks the state of tasks: not yet addressed; work in progress; solution proposed; solution approved; needs more work. The status may be reported via E-mail/web.