

# ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 32 N 1985

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REPLACES: --

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 32</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Data Management and Interchange</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Secretariat: United States of America (ANSI)</b> <b>Administered by Farance Inc. on behalf of ANSI</b></p>
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**Canada's Position to Kunming 2010 JTC1/SC32 Opening Plenary**  
**Ref: Canada's concerns on SQL/MM Part 7**

Canada is concerned about the current state of Quality of Standards with reference to the progression of ISO/IEC FCD 13249-7 SQL Multimedia and Application Packages – Part 7: History.

While Canada has every reason to believe that the standards being progressed in ISO/IEC JTC1/SC32 generally conform to the requirements and objectives set out in the ISO/IEC JTC1 directives, it is possible that some progression paths may have become lax in the development process. This appears to be visibly so in the (normative) text of the ISO/IEC 13249-7 SQL/MM History standard being currently progressed.

Items of concern with reference to the development of ISO/IEC 13249-7 SQL/MM History standard, and the status of the contents of its current document, include:

- 1) Severe restrictions on the applicability of this FCD document since it makes several assumptions that we believe severely limits its market success. These include:
  - (a) Inability to perform any schema changes, including any unrelated changes to the tracked columns or primary key;  
Comment: Schema changes do occur as part of operations in real life.
  - (b) Insistence of the requirement for a Primary Key;  
Comment: Not every database has a primary key.
  - (c) No clear description of the impact of SQL privileges on the defined methods, functions and procedures, and essentially, inability to handle any security or privileges;  
Comment: privileges exist in the real world based on span of control, i.e. a manager can only see information on the persons working under that manager.
  - (d) Several technical problems including defining the precision for begin and end history attributes, which may cause serious errors in implementation;  
Comment: default precision is usually taken which will cause errors.
  - (e) Lack of a complete specification which makes the specification inadequate for standardization e.g. no clear description of the impact of SQL isolation level;  
Comment: Again default isolation levels are usually the norm.
  - (f) Specification being defined in SQL code without adequate supporting documentation stating the functionality of code snippets. It is not clear that this included code has been tested and proven (i.e. compiled and executed). In other words, what is the guarantee that the hundreds of lines of SQL code as stated is not error prone? It is a well known fact that human beings are not good compilers! It is to be noted that the SQL code is used in the form of a formal specification language (untested) and not given as an implementation mechanism.  
Comment: The largest black hole existing today in industry is undocumented code.
- 2) Major Technical issues are being relegated to the backbench by re-defining and paring down the scope of the proposed standard so that it has become quite narrow, to the extent that the proposed standard loses its general-usability

- 3) More importantly, para 2) above, may perhaps indicate that SQL/MM History as a standard may not be viable in its own right. Further, one needs to recognize that the Part 7 History functionality, like the other Parts of ISO/IEC 13249, needs to be integral within ISO/IEC 9075 Database Language SQL.
- 4) Since Part 7 reached the ballot stage in the standard development process, Canada has submitted over 60 comments at CD and over 35 comments at FCD. It is unfortunate that several of our comments have largely been ignored, or not taken into account, or applied incorrectly, or not applied, or bypassed by changing the scope of SQL/MM---with mainly editorial comments and a few minor technical comments being applied. It is noted that all ballot comments must be addressed and resolved, particularly those of a technical nature.

In conclusion, Canada is of the opinion that there are serious concerns in progressing FCD 13249-7. Key technical comments are not addressed. A response of changing or narrowing the scope of the standard in response to (technical) ballot comments is not an approach which ensures a quality standard, nor will such an approach result in a standard capable of supporting industrial strength implementation requirements.

Therefore, Canada requests JTC1/SC32 NBs to re-visit the positioning and applicability of SQL/MM History, vis-à-vis the versioning feature being progressed in ISO/IEC 9075.