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| INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION | | | | **Joint Coordination Activity   On Conformance and Interoperability Testing** | |
| **TELECOMMUNICATION STANDARDIZATION SECTOR**  STUDY PERIOD 2013-2016 | | | | JCA-CIT-I-026 | |
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| **Title:** | LS/i/r on Conformance and Interoperability (reply to COM15-LS72) [from ITU-T SG11] | | | | |
| **LIAISON STATEMENT** | | | | | |
| **For action to:** | | | - | | |
| **For comment to:** | | | - | | |
| **For information to:** | | | ITU-T SG15; JCA-CIT | | |
| **Approval:** | | | ITU-T WP4/11 meeting (14-20 November 2013) | | |
| **Deadline:** | | | - | | |
| **Contact:** | | Martin Brand  Chairman WP4/11 | | | Email: [martin.brand@a1telekom.at](mailto:martin.brand@a1telekom.at) |
| **Contact:** | | Dmitry Tarasov  Rapporteur Q11/11 | | | Email: [tarasov@zniis.ru](mailto:tarasov@zniis.ru) |
| **Contact:** | | Sebastien Jobert | | | Email: [sebastien@iometrix.com](mailto:sebastien@iometrix.com) |

Study Group 11 thanks Study Group 15 for the liaison on the Conformity and Interoperability programme. SG11 has reviewed the content of this liaison during the SG11 WP4 Plenary meeting in November 2013, and would like to provide the following clarifications. SG11 appreciates the collaboration with SG15, and is looking forward to continuing this effort.

1. Regarding the rational to create and maintain a living list of key technologies suitable for Conformity and Interoperability testing, it was already explained in SG11-LS13 as following:

WTSA-12 Res 76 *resolves*, inter alia:

*1 that ITU-T SGs ‘develop the necessary conformance testing Recommendations for telecommunication equipment as soon as possible’*

*5 Conformance and interoperability testing requirements shall provide for verification of the parameters defined in the current and future ITU-T Recommendations as determined by the study groups developing the Recommendations, and for interoperability testing to ensure interoperability taking into account user need and in consideration of the market demand, as appropriate.*

And it *instructs the study groups*

*1 to identify as soon as possible existing and future ITU-T Recommendations that would be candidates for conformance and interoperability testing, taking into account the needs of the membership (e.g. interoperability of next generation network (NGN) and future network (FN) equipment, terminals, audio/video codecs, access and transport network, other key technologies), that are capable of providing end-to-end interoperable services on a global scale, adding to their content, if necessary, specific requirements within their scope;*

*2 to prepare those ITU-T Recommendations, identified in instructs the study groups 1 above, with a view to conducting conformance and interoperability tests as appropriate;*

*3 to cooperate, as appropriate, with interested stakeholders to optimize studies to prepare test specifications especially for those technologies in instructs the study groups 1 above, taking into account user needs and in consideration of the market demand for a conformity assessment programme,*

The [SG11 Action Plan](http://www.itu.int/md/T13-SG11-130225-TD-GEN-0070/en) for ITU C&I Programme implementation, based on decisions approved by the Council-12 (see [C12/48](http://www.itu.int/md/S12-CL-C-0048/en) and [C12/91](http://www.itu.int/md/S12-CL-C-0091/en)), plans to collect such information so that SG11 can coordinate possible pilot projects for conformity assessment programme. It is important that the SGs provide inputs to SG11 so that this list be kept up-to-date.

SG11 has been informed that the list of Recs from SG15 may not be fully up-to-date, due to significant achievement of SG15 in its recent Recs approval. Hence, SG11 kindly asks SG15 to provide any relevant update.

Regarding your question on consequences drawn out of this list, SG11 would like to clarify that the C&I Action Plan does not necessarily require that additional work be all performed by other ITU-T SGs. Indeed the revised scope of Q11/11 (see TD16/TSAG) has made clear that:

“ITU-T [WTSA] Resolution 76 – Studies related to conformance and interoperability testing, assistance to developing countries, and a possible future ITU Mark programme – resolves that ITU-T Study Group 11 coordinates the sector’s activities related to the ITU Conformance and Interoperability (C&I) programme across all study groups and reviews the recommendations in the Conformance and Interoperability Business Plan for the long term implementation of the C&I programme.

ITU T is producing a large number of Recommendations. To achieve interoperability and conformity, one of the important aspects of the ITU C&I Programme concerns the development and maintenance of testing frameworks and methodologies.

It is essential that conformance and interoperability testing methodologies used by all study groups engaged in testing are aligned and consistent with each other. To achieve interoperability on a global scale, the ITU-T Recommendations must be developed and maintained with conformance and interoperability in mind according to the relevant methodology.

The objective of conformance testing is to determine how completely and correctly the requirements stated in the Recommendation have been met by the implementation. On the contrary, in interoperability testing, the objective is to determine if two or more implementations of the same Recommendation communicate and correctly exchange information with each other. It is generally assumed that the conformity of an implementation have been tested prior to perform an interoperability testing assessment.

Methodology experts from this Question will interact with experts from other study groups engaged in developing test specifications in their respective areas of responsibility. ”

SG11 fully understands that the workload is already high in SG15, and offer our help for consideration of SG15 to develop necessary test suites as part of the SG11 activity. Obviously, SG15 would be involved to review the final documents.

It should be noted that SG11 is interested in receiving information about ongoing testing activities led by SG15 jointly with other organisations, as encouraged by ‘*instructs the study groups 3*’ of WTSA Res 76.. SG11 also kindly asks SG15 to provide any relevant information on this item.

It should be noted that a pilot project on M.3170 is started (pending WP4/11 decision) with collaboration of SG11 and SG2, and this example may indeed prove to be an appropriate process allowing to pursue the C&I objectives without impacting the SG15 meetings agenda.

1. Use of “conformity assessment” vs “conformance”

According to Oxford Dictionary, the definition of ‘conformity’ is ‘compliance with standards, rules, or laws.’ the definition of ‘conformance’ is ‘another term for conformity’. ISO website says ‘Conformity assessment is the process used to show that a product, service or system meets specified requirements.’

Although several documents within and outside ITU the terms ‘conformity’ and ‘conformance’ are used interchangeably, and the term “conformity” does not imply any of the legally binding declarations. For example, in PP-10 Resolution 177, ‘conformity’ appeared 10 times whereas ‘conformance’ only appeared in the title of this Resolution. It’s should also be noted that Pillar 1 of ITU C&I Programme as endorsed by PP-10 Resolution 177 is called ‘conformity assessment’.

In WTSA-12 Res 76, ‘conformity’ appeared 4 times in the phrase of ‘conformity assessment’, where is defined as:

*b) that conformity assessment is the accepted way of demonstrating that a product adheres to an international standard and is increasingly important in the context of WTO-TBT;*

‘conformance’ appeared 22 times in the phrases either of ‘conformance testing’ or ‘conformance and interoperability’.

Other examples include R&TTE directive, international standard ISO/IEC 17000, IEEE, many other industry forums, ITU councils and meetings WTSA-08, WTDC-10, PP-10 Resolution 177 and ITU Council decisions 2009, 2010 and 2011).

Although SG11 is open to discussions on these terminology if further rational could be received from SG15, decision needs to be taken by rather high ITU decision making body.

1. ITU-T database and Rec. G.8265.1

It is worth clarifying that the ITU database aims at listing products compliant to ITU Rec., and not which Rec. are candidates for the C&I programme. For your information, as of today, the ITU database contains no entries, G.8265.1 or any other Recommendation. Hence, G.8265.1 does not need to be removed from any database.

It should be noted that the IEEE Conformity Assessment Program (ICAP) has announced a voluntary conformity assessment program covering IEEE 1588 and G.8265.1, in which many SG15/Q13 experts have been involved.

Again, it should be mentioned that test plans developed outside ITU to test conformance to ITU Rec. are encouraged by ‘*instructs the study groups 3*’ of WTSA Res 76.

1. Speed testing for DSL access networks and interoperability

SG11 appreciates the support from SG15 for this speed testing activity. SG11 would like to clarify that the ITU C&I Programme endorsed by PP-10 Resolution 177 includes both Conformity Assessment (pillar 1) and Interoperability (pillar 2) aspects, and is hence not limited only to interoperability aspects.

SG11 is looking forward to receiving proposals from SG15 to help supporting this initiative.

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