ECMA

Standardizing Information and Communication Systems

Minutes of the 5th meeting of TC39

held in Nice, France, on 16th - 17th September 1997

Chairman: Mr. G. Robinson (Sun)

Vice-Chairmen: Mr. C. Cargill (Netscape), Mr. S. Wiltamuth (Microsoft)

Secretary: Mr. J. van den Beld (SG ECMA)

Attending: Mr. Cowlishaw (IBM), Mr. Ksar (HP), Mr. Lewis (Netscape), Ms Nguyen (Netscape), Mr. Noorda (Nombas)

Excused: Mr. Urquhart, Mr. Willingmyre

1   Opening

Mr. Robinson, Chairman of TC39, opened the meeting.

2   Adoption of the agenda (97/38)

The agenda was adopted, without changes.

3   Approval of the minutes of the 4th meeting (97/30)

The minutes were approved.

4   Matters arising from the minutes not covered elsewhere

4.1   Mr. Robinson reported on the JTC 1 Plenary meeting held recently in Ottawa:

– The re-engineering activities have been completed: new technical directions have been defined, four SCs and SG FS have been disbanded, two new SCs will be created.

– A co-operation agreement between W3C and JTC 1 is under development. SC24 (computer graphics) is the main driver at the JTC 1 side.

– It was agreed to make several standards, in particular on character sets (10646, 8859) available on the Web.

– The JTC 1 business team seeks increased participation.

– IrDA has been recognized as PAS submitter. The recognition of Sun Microsystems is still under (formal) discussion.

Mr. Robinson summarized shortly the development of ECMA-262. The draft was approved by the GA in June, together with a list of final changes. It took some time to resolve all issues, some of which were not trivial. The editor, **Mr. Guy Steele**, could release the complete Standard on 10th September 1997.

Very few issues, requiring work by TC39, are left. **Mr. van den Beld** presented the course of affairs for the fast-track processing by JTC 1:

– Immediately after the CC meeting on 23rd - 24th September 1997 the ECMA Secretariat will send ECMA-262 to ITTF (the IT Task Force of ISO/IEC) to initiate the fast-track procedure.

- Very likely the 6-month fast-track ballot by the 27 National Bodies of JTC 1 will start in October 1997. The 'guiding' Subcommittee in JTC 1 is SC22 "Programming languages and their environment".

- In addition to the votes the NBs can send in comments. A-liaisons like ECMA can send in comments, e.g. to correct errors.

- To facilitate the ballot ECMA usually offers help, e.g. by organizing an open workshop to assist the processing by JTC 1. ECMA TC39 shall collect all - internal - comments, and submit these in time before the termination of the ballot.

- Within two months after the termination of the ballot the comments and voting results have to be resolved, usually by a single-event working group meeting. If only trivial comments are received the editor can resolve the comments.

- The resolution of comments includes the preparation of the camera-ready text of the ISO/IEC standard.

- If substantial comments have been received, and resolved, usually a second edition of the ECMA Standard is published to keep both documents completely aligned.

- It is useful to organize a TC39 meeting at the end of April 1998 to pre-assess the ballot results prior to the ballot resolution working group meeting.

- The text of ECMA-262 is frozen since 11th September 1997. This text is used for publication on the 3rd ECMA CD-ROM, and for submission to the fast-track ballot. Usually a document is not distributed without the TC's review and approval, but time constraints in TC39 have made it difficult to follow strictly this 'golden rule' for ECMA-262.

5   Title of the Standard / Name of the language

The names JavaScript and LiveScript are not available.

In meeting no. 3 TC39 had agreed on the following title:

<name> : A general purpose, cross-platform programming language.

With respect to <name> three possibilities were considered by TC39;

1) -
2) RDScript
3) ECMAScript

TC39 agreed unanimously to use ECMAScript for <name>, resulting in the following title:

'ECMAScript: A general purpose, cross-platform programming language'

The 'Brief History' will refer to JavaScript™ and JScript™ as originating technologies for ECMA-262.

Netscape will provide information, via a Web reference, on the conditions under which the name JavaScript can be used.

6   Comments reflector for ECMA-262

Mr. Lewis presented a proposal to set up a reflector for dealing with :

- technical comments / bug reports
- other sorts of comments / feedback forum for implementors.

Some comments will not need responses, but tracking of comments requiring solutions is needed. TC39 will have the access rights to the responses.

An electronic change form / template will be made available. Action: **Mr. Lewis/ECMA Secretariat**. The comments/ responses will be controlled by the TC39 editing group.

7 Future work

The Millennium problem (see item 9 in last meeting's minutes, 97/30) is an action item for the next editing group meeting.

There are no proposals yet (from NIST) about test assertions (see item 10 in 97/30).

Version 2 of the Standard will allow that a script written in accordance with the current Version 1 will run under Version 2 (backward compatibility). Two editing group meetings will be held before the tentative TC39 meeting in November 1997: **Mr. Clinick / Mr. Wiltamuth** will organize these meetings, to deal with all existing proposals and incoming further comments. Straightforward comments will be brought into the fast-track process. Amendments/ extensions will go into Version 2 of ECMA-262.

TC39 agrees that ECMA-262 is referenced by OMG in their CORBScripting language specification.

Mr. Guy Steele will continue his role as editor (confirmed by Sun).

8 Date and place of next meetings

No. 6 : Seattle (USA), 19th November 1997, on kind invitation by Microsoft

No. 7 : West Coast (USA), 27th - 28th January 1998

No. 8 : Amsterdam (The Netherlands), or East Coast (USA), 29th - 30th April 1998.