

Ecma text copyright policy – Version 1 (approved in June 2009 and updated in December 2011)

What is the Ecma text copyright license?

Since 2009 Ecma International is using the following copyright license:

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Where does this copyright text come from?

This is a typical copyright text that standardization organizations use, similar to those used by ISO, ITU, OASIS etc. When drafting this text it has been slightly adapted to Ecma’s requirements. This copyright notice has been included into every new Ecma standard and Technical report since 2009. However, we have not retrospectively inserted this copyright notice in the older standards. But in practice the same principle also applies to them.

How much income generates Ecma from its copyrights?

Zero. Ecma International is a not-for-profit organization registered in Switzerland (since 1961). As such its income comes exclusively from membership fees. Also from the very beginning members have felt that the free of charge distribution of Ecma deliverables is an excellent promotion for its Standards and Technical Reports and allows better market penetration of its standards.

What is the main objective of the Ecma text copyright policy (and the copyright notice)?

It is especially important for Ecma that the standard remains stable, and there should be no forking of its content (i.e. changing it by a third party in a way that makes it believe that after the change it is still an Ecma standard). In the copyright notice we have listed the most important permissible use cases we have seen so far, but it is possible that some other cases that are not listed are permissible too. So called "fair use" cases are not listed, e.g. if someone is reproducing some text from the standard and uses the Ecma Source in his/her work while correctly acknowledging and referencing the original Ecma source. In case of doubt, the best is to contact the Ecma Secretariat and ask for guidance.

Where can I get an Ecma Standard or Technical Report?

You can get them free of charge at the Ecma Website.

Can I republish the Ecma deliverables?

Yes, but it is required that they are published unchanged, and up to date. However, in practice Ecma prefers if the Ecma standards are downloaded, free of charge, from the Ecma website. That is always the authentic copy of the standard, and the download figures help Ecma to follow how many standards were downloaded and where from.

Does Ecma store any information on those who download Ecma standards?

No. Privacy of the users of the Ecma standard is very important to Ecma. The only statistics we are getting – with the help of Google Analytics – are about how often has a Standard or Technical Report been downloaded and from which country or region. This allows Ecma to get a kind of feedback about how many Ecma standards are downloaded (so e.g. how popular they are) and where these requests come from.

Can I copy text from an Ecma International standard and put in as "comment" in my software implementation?

Yes, you can. Ecma regards this as "fair use", though it understands that "fair use" might be understood differently in different countries. In such case you just insert the text unchanged and you reference the precise source (where this text has been taken from, e.g., Standard reference or number, version, URL.). Note that when appropriate, the copyright page of recent Ecma standards also includes a BSD software license that covers all parts of the standard that are software source

code or pseudo-code. Those portions of such standards may be copied under the terms of that license, just like any other BSD licensed software.

Can I copy text from an Ecma International standard and put e.g. in a book on the history of a certain standardization?

Yes, you can. Ecma regards this as also as a “fair use” case, though it understands that “fair use” might be understood differently in different countries. There might be many other “faire use” cases, not covered here. In case of doubt, it is best to ask the Ecma Secretariat.

Does Ecma International lose its copyrights on an Ecma Standard if it submits it to another SDO for approval (such as “fast-track to ISO/IEC JTC 1)?

No. In such a case Ecma does not lose its copyright while the other SDO establishes its copyright: the copyright is not transferred to the other SDO..In such a case Ecma keeps its own copyright, but permits the other SDO to establish its own copyright on the submitted and approved standard as well. In order to avoid any confusion in the market, when maintaining or further developing the standard, both standards (the Ecma one and the SDO one) have to be kept in synchronization. This is the general practice, and happens very frequently.

Does a contributor to an Ecma standard lose its copyrights if its contribution gets fully or partly incorporated into an Ecma Standard?

No. In such a case, in a manner similar to the case above, the contributor does not lose its copyright while Ecma establishes its own copyright: the copyright is not transferred to Ecma. In such a case the original contributor keeps its own copyright (and can do whatever else it wants to do with his contribution), but permits Ecma to use the contribution in the standardization process and eventually also in the approved standard, where Ecma establishes its own copyright to the Standard as a whole.

My question was not answered (fully or partly) by this FAQ. Where can I get more information?

It is best to contact the Ecma Secretariat:
Ecma International
Rue du Rhone 114
Ch-1204 Geneva
Switzerland

Email: helpdesk@ecma-international.org

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