

Standards Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

October 1, 1997

Attending: Belinda Collins of OSS/TS (presiding), Ellyn Beary, CSTL (for William Koch), Howard Bloom, MEL, John Mayo-Wells, EEEL, Al Parr, PL, George Quinn, MSEL, Shirley Radack, ITL (for Mike Hogan and Carroll Croarkin, Joel Zingesser, BFRL, Peter Heydemann, TS, **OSS Staff:** Christine DeVaux, Subhas Malghan, JoAnne Overman, Joan Tyler. **SAC members absent:** Stephen Carpenter, OIAA, Lance Felker, OQP, Cita Furlani, ATP, Roger Kilmer, MEP, and Rex Pelto, Program Office.

After introductions, Belinda Collins made the announcement that several handouts were available for attendees. Handouts included: 1) Agenda 2) Memo to SAC members on the subject of Strategic Standards Planning at NIST 3) Pages 1-5 of the Administrative Manual on Standards and Professional Committees 4) SAC Charter, dated April, 1995 5) The ABC's of the U.S. Conformity Assessment System.

Strategic Standards Management at NIST (Belinda Collins)

The management of standards is one of the things we do here at NIST. What is going on in your OU's in this regard? Who are the people involved in Standards, and are they the right people? How are we using our resources? Are there old activities that should be terminated? Are we capturing *all* of the information? Do we have the necessary funding allocations? Sometimes it appears that good communications between staff and management is *not* taking place. Do standards activities get the attention deserved? Do participants get the moral support for their efforts in standards-related activities? Is the information reflected in the SAMI database correctly?

These are questions which lead us to ask "does our current Standards Policy need updating?" Standards Management is a subject that our current director, Robert Hebner, is very interested in, and that he has concerns that there are Standards activities that NIST may *not* dealing with.

John Mayo-Wells pointed out that the OU must fulfill its mission. At times you may have to seek the most effective route, sometimes standards will work then sometimes not. Standards activities must always be justified.

Howard Bloom stated that his lab is developing a roadmap for standards activities. He talked about how McDonnell Douglas had a very impressive standards strategy with a high level of support, one with a chair, with defined activities and with commitment. He also suggested that an index of standards, with simple access, be developed with keywords and subject searches. He mentioned that the Index created by Kevin Brady was a good example.

Shirley Radack says her lab is trying to handle standards strategically. She suggested that OU's share more information which would help in identifying overlap.

SAC members suggested that standards activities for each OU be available on the WWW, that an Access database be created to contain information related to technical standards with links to tables of standards committees. This would enable managers to review standards activities.

Joel Zingesser suggested a tool survey. A uniform approach across OU's is necessary. Would OU directors feel annoyed by this?

Peter Heydemann (Director of Technology Services) stated that "he felt that OU directors are now beginning to understand how standards are related to trade activities" and this is important to our industrial partners.

Joel also pointed out that we need to define what we are talking about. This work will open up issues, policies, question of roles, coordination of roles, introduction is serious and critical.

Belinda pointed out that the OMB Circular (A-119) will be out soon, it is now with OMB attorneys. The document will provide some uniform guidance for agencies on many of these issues.

John Mayo-Wells said that the strategic plan was not linked to the international activity. It was suggested that Stephen Carpenter should be contacted about this issue. It was also mentioned that the current international plan does not directly relate to standards. A linkage should be made to SPIRE.

Peter Heydemann stated that work on international activities is different from OU-to-OU, and maybe it might be best to let each OU handle their own technical activity. Perhaps a page is needed from each OU to report on the international activity.

Report on Conference: "Using Standards in the Federal Government", held at NIST on September 8, 1997 (Joan Tyler)

Statistics were reported as follows: 207 people attended the conference, 19 federal agencies were represented (DOD, USDA, DOL, EPA, GSA, FDA, U.S. Treasury, U.S. Customs, Federal Communications, DOE, NASA, FHA, U.S. Postal Service, HUD, DOT, HHS, FBI, National Archives, Consumer Product Safety Commission). There were 61 attendees from private industry and 8 standards development organizations. There were 36 NIST employees registered.

In general, feedback from the conference has been very positive. Overall, the conference fostered better understanding among federal agencies of the private sector standardization process and paved the way for increased future collaborative efforts.

Standards Information Program (JoAnne Overman)

It was announced that work on the SAMI annual report is underway. A request was made for each OU to examine data, review and update information. Plans are underway to put the publication on-line and make it easily accessible. JoAnne also stated that she would be happy to talk with Kevin Brady about his work on Indexing. JoAnne talked about the possibility of an open house in the Standards Library in the very near future.

Gathering Success Stories of Standards Development at NIST

OSS plans to collect success stories from each OU for publication in a NIST-wide internal report. It was agreed that lessons could be learned from failures as well as successes. Joan Tyler will be the focus point for this activity.

Peter Heydemann expressed a desire to have a publication similar to a previous NIST publication called “dimensions”. This new publication could be a kind of vehicle to cover history and recognition of standards and be somewhat broader than Update which does not cover longer reports.

John Mayo-wells noted that with everything moving toward electronic media, is there a need for hardcopy, who are the targets and why?

Peter pointed out that we do not currently have a way to showcase standards activities in a general way, that hardcopy is needed with a table of contents so people know what to look for. This type of publication is especially important for our foreign constituents. This would not preclude electronic publication. Peter offered to talk with Matt Heyman about recreating something like “dimensions”.

Howard noted that if NIST was able to put out a prestigious publication reflecting the standards in the OU's, employees would have a venue for publishing their accomplishments. He said he would like to see OSS take a proactive role in this activity. He said that MEL is writing a book on STEP from a NIST viewpoint, tracing the standard from its beginning to its present state.

It was also stated that the new publication should “not just cover measurements but standards”.

Launching a Standards Program for States (Belinda Collins)

As part of the ongoing efforts to implement the NTTAA, NIST will begin efforts to look at how states are using and strategically managing their standards processes. Joan Tyler talked about her activities in reaching out to various organizations in an attempt to gather input to determine the best approach to work with the states. She said she would be seeking input from OU's who have worked with states.

Belinda noted that our intent was *not* to give states the impression that they must identify any new regulations. She said the first thing the states need is information.

JoAnne Overman talked about a study conducted by a private contractor who reviewed various trade journals and gazettees to identify any technical barriers to trade. So far none has been identified.

Recent standards activities or standards issues in the OU's:

EEEL - expressed gratitude to Heydemann for supporting their lab in international comparisons. They are looking at test methods for optical, electrical and others. Has interest in the EU/US MRA.

CSTL - has technical and international activities looking at international comparisons and chemical traceability comparison.

ITL - Recently announced an Advanced Incription Standard. In the September issue of ACM's publication called the "Standard View", Mike Hogan's activity in information technology is featured.

Physics Lab - concerned with the issue of "dues". Al Parr stated that he is opposed to having to continuously beg for membership dues. In favor of establishing a method across OU's for coordinating one fee, one time - develop a systematic approach to the problem.

"Dues" will be a topic for discussion at the next SAC meeting.

MSEL - Reported that Dale Hall is still acting. A strategic plan has been developed. Polymers has signed an MOU with NIH and NIST (SRM) to get work done.

MEL - Supports strategic plan. Supports the notion of a special publication on standards work, it will be a vehicle to help employees get more recognition for their contributions. On the issue of "fees", MEL is now more involved in areas that requires "big bucks" for membership (OMG for example). They are using organizations to move preliminary standards along then move them to a more formal process at the right time. Formal support for IGES/PDES has been terminated, but the Secretariat for SC4 is still maintained.

BFRL - Steering Committee meeting will be held on international practices on building codes and standards. Meetings to be held with Saudia Arabia. Future meetings with Puerto Rico, Caribbean and South America. There is also interest from Turkey and Egypt. They are streamlining their building, regulatory process with models for federal agencies, states and locals. A major activity is the six product/performance standards systems for housing. Activity was started in 1996 and will continue pending MOU with the international code council (ICC).

Action Items :

TS/OSS staff assignments:

Heydemann

- contact Matt Heyman about reviving the idea of a monthly or bi-monthly NIST publication highlighting standards activities (replacing “Dimensions”)

Overman

- put Access database (standards participation?) on-line. Estimated completion 1/98.
- put NIST Form 83 on-line
- hold NIST-wide open house to demonstrate NCSCI
- contact Keven Brady to find out if updates to NIST employee participation in SDO’s can be made electronically, ideally under NTTAA homepage (this will be the directory required under the NTTAA)

Tyler

- distribute proceedings from September 8th conference
- contact PAD about journals for comparison to Heydemann’s “Dimension’s idea
- contact each OU/SAC member about their work with States or get state contacts
- try to get Carpenter to address the next SAC meeting about the questions of

international standards activities

- establish a regular monthly/bi-monthly meeting schedule for 1998
- develop a list of 6 or 7 items stating why NIST employees should be involved in standards development
- develop and publish success stories (or failures) about standards development as a NIST-IR

OU Assignments:

- Put standards-related activities on home pages
- Review and update SAMI information

The next SAC meeting is scheduled for November 17th, time and place to be determined.