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Coded Character Sets
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Liaison report

In the JTC 1/SC 2 Plenary in Athens in September 2000 it was decided that responsibility for the OCR standards ISO 1073 "Alphanumeric character set for optical recognition" (part I font OCR-A, part II font OCR-B) and ISO 1831 "Printing specifications for optical character recognition" should be transferred to SC 31, as previously discussed between the two SCs (Athens resolution M10.21). The editor for the discontinued SC 2 revision of ISO 1073 part II was designated as the SC 2 liaison to SC 31 in connection with the transfer, and the SC 31 Secretariat was informed of these SC 2 decisions.

The transfer was consequently on the agenda for the SC 31 Plenary in Edinburgh May 15/16 2001. Preceding the Plenary, and based on e-mail discussions, a working meeting was held on May 14 by SC 31 experts and the SC 2 editor, with the intention of drafting a detailed line of action to be proposed in the Plenary.

Although no outstanding actions on the standards exist within ISO/IEC at present, work is in progress in CEN/TC304 to produce an EN based on the ISO 1073 part II extended by the Euro sign (normatively) and some European-language letters (informatively). The various possibilities for cooperation between TC304 and SC 31 in this matter were discussed in the working meeting. It was concluded, however, that SC 31 should at present only assume responsibility for the existing standards, and not engage in the TC304 activities. After the EN is finalized, SC 31 should review the new situation, and decide if any ISO/IEC work should be started in the matter, e.g. a "fast-tracking" of the CEN EN into an ISO/IEC revision of the OCR-B standard. A draft for an SC 31 resolution along these lines was produced following the experts' meeting.

The Plenary was attended by delegates from 15 National Bodies and four organizations in liaison. The OCR situation was presented on May 15 by the SC 31 WG 1 convener and the SC 2 editor. The resolution draft was presented to the Plenary on May 16, and was adopted after some modifications as follows:

Resolution 19. Transfer of projects from JTC 1/SC 2 to JTC 1/SC 31

SC 31 agrees to accept the transfer of JTC 1/SC 2's OCR standards, ISO 1073 (Part 1: OCR-A, part 2: OCR-B) and ISO 1831 Printing Specifications, providing that the following conditions are met:

- a) The transfer of the original reference drawing material and associated intellectual property rights to the SC 31 Secretariat occurs in a complete and error free manner. SC 31 welcomes the assistance of Mr. K.I. Larsson in assuring that the transfer is effected in an error free and complete manner.
- b) Historic (existing at this time) documents will not be modified
- c) SC 31 understands that ISO 1831 has been recently confirmed and that the intended revision of ISO 1073 Part 2 has been cancelled, and consequently there is no outstanding need for work on these standards.
- d) As in the case of other projects, it is intended that the transfer of these projects will be cost neutral to the SC 31 Secretariat. Any future request for work will have to be considered in this context.

SC 31 further notes that the production of a CEN EN based on ISO 1073 part 2 with some extensions is in progress within CEN/TC304, and accepts the offer of Mr. K.I. Larsson to report to CEN/TC304 the SC 31 decisions and activities in the matter.

SC 31 further notes the request in SC 31 N 08442 (reference SC2 N 3492) regarding the need, in any future SC 31-initiated revision of ISO 1073, to consider cultural adaptability matters in consultation with SC2.