



**Economic and Social  
Council**

Distr.  
GENERAL

TRADE/CEFACT/2004/16  
8 March 2004

Original: ENGLISH

---

**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND  
ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT)

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

Tenth session, 17-19 May 2004

**TECHNIQUES AND METHODOLOGIES GROUP (TMG)**

**TMG CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE PLENARY**

Submitted by the Chairman of the UN/CEFACT Techniques and Methodologies (TMG) \*

\* The present document is submitted by the Techniques and Methodologies Group (TMG) and is for distribution to the UN/CEFACT Plenary and the UN/CEFACT Steering Group (CSG). It is submitted in the form in which it was received by the secretariat and is **for information**.

## Introduction

1. This report outlines key activities by UN/CEFACT's Techniques and Methodology Group as they relate to its work programme key priorities, as well as their relationship to the work of other UN/CEFACT Groups.

### General

2. Since the last UN/CEFACT plenary, TMG has continued to work on its Business Collaboration Frame (BCF) work that is based on UN/CEFACT Modelling Methodology (UMM) utilizing the Unified Modelling language (UML), Core Components and e-Business Architecture. This work has taken into account the feedback received from public reviews under UN/CEFACT's Open Development Process (ODP) and Forum participants.

3. TMG has met twice before filing this report, and will meet once more before the CEFACT plenary in March. Our interim meeting schedule for July 2003 in Taipei was cancelled due to SARS. TMG will continue to hold four meetings per year, one per quarter. This report highlights key TMG activities for our meeting as part of the Forum in Seoul (September 2003) and interim meeting held in Waidhofen, Austria (December 2003). Detailed meeting reports of all meetings are available via the TMG Web Site.

### TMG Working Group's activities

4. The **Business Process Working Group (BPWG)** advanced the development of N090 BCF Introduction Guide, N092 UMM Meta-Model Reference Guide and N093 UMM User Guide. Discussions took place regarding the UMM worksheets, within the released version of the User Guide, to determine possible future changes based on feedback by current users. The team reviewed and revised its BCF project roadmap as part of its Programme of Work.

5. The Unified Business Agreements and Contract (UBAC) team (a joint effort with the Legal Group (LG)) progressed its requirements and scope gathering by restructuring its requirements document. The team is reaching into new domains of expertise within contract management organizations and the legal community. It rescheduled the target date for the end of the requirements phase to end of February 2004.

6. Joint discussions between the BPWG and the e-Business Working Group, centering on a report based on the Zachman Framework to illustrate how the TMG projects and UN/CEFACT Groups' programmes relate to each other, resulted in the agreement that such comparisons are helpful in progressing not only TMG projects but also that of all UN/CEFACT groups. It was agreed to invite reports from other Architectural Framework communities to help provide guidance for future project management.

7. The **Core Components Working Group (CCWG)** advanced the development of the Core Component Technical Specification (CCTS) and Core Component User Guide. The group started to progress comments against the CCTS V2.01 received from TBG17 (Harmonization), OpenXchange, UBL, OAG, SWIFT and SAP. Most of the comments are minor suggestions for changes, such as bug fixes and further clarifications. The changes will be reflected in the next version (2.1) of the CCTS.

8. The **e-Business Working Group (ebWG)** progressed its work on the e-Business Glossary taking into account new terms from the UMM User Guide. The newly created version is scheduled for an internal TMG review in the first quarter of 2004.

9. TMG created three new Project Proposals since the last CEFACT Plenary:

- Business Collaboration Schema Specification V1.0
- ebXML Business Process Specification Schema V2.0
- Core Component Technical Specification V2.1

10. In addition, the e-Business Architecture Project was modified. Work on this document started with the creation of the eBTWG in 2001. It completed the public review cycles last year without any comments being received, a fate that has followed the specification since its start. However, an issue arose shortly after the completion of the worldwide review calling the specification to be published only after having undergone a verification phase. The argument against such verification was that doing so would require creating all the technical specifications covered by the specification in order to prove the architecture is correct. This would take a number of years to complete and therefore seemed unreasonable. A compromise was reached by the FCT consisting of the creation of a special verification review team, with one representative from each UN/CEFACT Group on it, to review the document to ensure it covered the complete e-Business work programme, and could serve as the foundation for the work of all groups. Little progress was made regarding such a review. Instead, TMG recognized during its December meeting that the current version required additional work since it evolved from the ebXML Architecture specification and did not take into consideration the current UN/CEFACT e-Business Vision that includes UN/EDIFACT, I-EDI, ebXML (CCTS and BPSS) and the UMM (BCF). TMG also recognized that to ensure that the project would be successful in creating an architecture specification that would serve all groups, the membership of this team must include active participation from representatives from all groups. Therefore, TMG withdrew the current version of the e-Business Architecture Technical Specification and, taking into account all comments, created a modified project proposal.

11. All four Project Proposals were approved by the FCT. The project proposals are available from the TMG web site: [www.untmg.org](http://www.untmg.org).

### Project Activity Highlights

Project	Definition	Status
BPSS V1.1	ebXML Business Process Specification Schema Technical Specification. This is a maintenance release fixing implementation issues found in the original ebXML release (May 2001),	Released September 18, 2003
CCTS V2.01	Core Component Technical Specification – Part 8 of the ebXML Framework This is the 1 <sup>st</sup> release of the technical Specification.	Released November 23, 2003
CC User Guide	Primer for the CCTS using examples for describing how to rediscover CC.	Final Version to be released 1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 2004.
EBA V1.0	e-Business Architecture Technical Specification	Project Proposal has been modified to refocus the work
EBG V1.0	e-Business Glossary	1 <sup>st</sup> Working Draft out for review
UMM Meta Model	UN/CEFACT Modelling Methodology – Meta Model (UML Profile)	Completed - Stable (Version 12)
UMM User Guide	UN/CEFACT Modelling Methodology –User Guide Step by step Guide on how to develop Business Collaboration models using UMM and UML. Targeted for Business Experts and Facilitators within TBG	Released September 22, 2003

Project	Definition	Status
UBAC V1.0	Unified Business Agreement and Contracts Technical Specification	Requirements phase to be completed 1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 2004

#### Business Collaboration Framework (BCF) Workshop Tours

12. In response to the concern expressed by TMG in its last report to the plenary regarding the lack of public promotion of the work of UN/CEFACT's Groups, specifically its e-Business Strategy that has, as its goal, harmonization and alignment with other standards organizations in order to provide a single e-Business Solution, the CSG supported the TMG request for a promotional tour to explain how UN/CEFACT is organized and how its Business Collaboration Framework (BCF) delivers an e-Business driven technology solution.

13. The first BCF Workshop Tour started at the APEC meeting in Chinese Taipei (September 1 and 2), followed by presentations in Singapore (September 3 and 4), Kuala Lumpur (September 5 to 8), Hong Kong SAR (September 9 and 10), Tokyo (September 11 and 12), Seoul (September 15 and 16) and a final keynote at the IEEE Enterprise Distributed Object Computing (EDOC) Conference in Brisbane, Australia (September 18). The UN/CEFACT BCF team met leaders in government, industry, and academia who are developing e-Business and trade facilitation standards for Asia. The workshops were very successful in creating new interest in the work of UN/CEFACT and its groups, as well as AFACT creating two BCF projects. In addition, a number of new members from Malaysia, Korea and Taiwan joined the work of TMG.

14. Following the highly successful Asian Tour, a second workshop tour is scheduled for Europe from 23 January to 6 February. Cities where BCF introductory workshops aimed at government, industry & commerce, and academia will be held including Amsterdam, Barcelona, Brussels, Essen, Geneva, London, Stockholm and Vienna.

#### Issues

##### **French Head of Delegation's BCF concerns**

15. In a letter dated 7 November, the French HoD expressed concern that "The wording 'Business Collaboration Framework Project', or anything similar to this, appeared nowhere in the minutes, and hoped that everyone could agree that there was a difference between a vision and a project." In addition the following actions were suggested in the letter:

- A statement should be made on the exact status of the BCF project, how it interleaves with all previous investments and when it is envisaged to be finalized and, more importantly, documented.
- No UN/CEFACT resources should be given to any promotion on this subject until such a time as the principles are agreed.

16. As TMG chair, I offer the following response for clarification:

As a start, a quote from an email by the CSG Chair (Ray Walker) to the French HoD sent on this subject before the official letter was sent to the CEFACT Chair:

*"I'm surprised that you are questioning whether or not the BCF is an official project of UN/CEFACT. All I can say is that if you look at the Plenary approved papers from 1997 onwards, there has been a consistent line of approval for the direction of development that the BCF represents. Admittedly, in its former guise of UMM, its potential was shrouded in a more technical cloak, but the change of name, which I find most helpful, was approved by the CSG and reported to the Plenary at its last meeting."*

17. In addition, I present the text of my request as TMG Chair to the last Plenary regarding UN/CEFACT moving closer to Web Services community:

*“Chairmen, as mentioned yesterday by Mr. Walker, in 1999, your predecessor, supported by the Plenary, directed the CSG to move closer to the Internet. That produced ebXML, which today is a foundation of much activity.*

*Subsequently, new developments have emerged and in order to keep pace with the current UN/CEFACT vision of a general Business Collaboration Framework (BCF), I recommend that it is now appropriate for the plenary to direct the CSG and the appropriate empowered group(s) (e.g., TMG) to move closer to Web Services.*

*Request: In order to keep pace with the current UN/CEFACT vision of a general Business Collaboration Framework (BCF) I recommend that it is now appropriate for the plenary to direct the CSG and the appropriate empowered group(s) (e.g., TMG) to move closer to Web Services.”*

18. As can be seen, the BCF was at the center of the request. I also reported during that same Plenary that the BCF is no more than a name for the packaging of a number of standing (approved) TMG work items related to the UMM set of deliverables. **The BCF is not in itself a deliverable but a publicly friendly representative branding of a number of approved TMG deliverables and the result of UN/CEFACT users’ requests to correct the problem of an over used term "UMM".** It is similar to the term UN/EDIFACT covering all EDIFACT specifications such as directories, syntax and design rules, or ebXML being the brand name for a number of different technical specifications, each deliverable having its own approval process.

19. The assumption that our Groups must put in front of the Plenary all their work items for official approval puts in question the principle of empowerment and all the work done by our groups over the last few years. Currently all of the groups deliverables are approved either via the Open Development Process or other internal group processes as defined in their approved procedures. None are presented to the Plenary for discussion or final approval. Is it suggested to change this?

20. Regarding the request for “A statement should be made on the exact status of the BCF project, how it interleaves with all previous investments and when it is envisaged to be finalized and, more importantly, documented”. The BCF and its included projects are one of the most documented concepts within UN/CEFACT. It has its own dedicated Web Site ([www.unbcf.org](http://www.unbcf.org)) just for the purpose of such communication. In TMG’s Programme of Work, presented to the Plenary at each meeting, each project’s current status and projected completion date are provided. As mentioned by the CSG Chair, not only was the CSG informed about the BCF over the last years, but also CSG reports made available to the plenary contained information about the BCF’s purpose and its scope. During my TMG report at the May 2003 Plenary, I invited the Plenary members to attend the subsequent "International Forum on Trade Facilitation - Technical Workshop", to receive a more general introduction on the BCF, as a follow up to my short outline of the BCF. I also informed the Plenary about a detailed paper on that subject submitted to the Forum. In the short time given to Group Chairs in presenting their group's work during a plenary meeting, every effort was made to communicate as much as possible. If there is an issue, it is that of not enough time allowed for each Group Chair to provide full details to the Plenary.

21. In summary, **the BCF is neither a project nor a deliverable that falls under the ODP.** It is a "label" assigned to a number of UMM and Business Process projects approved and communicated a number of times to the Plenary. To have the Plenary approve the use of that term seems rather odd as, for the last 15 years (as part of WP.4 and now UN/CEFACT), many technical terms and concepts have been created by the participants of the technical teams without such a necessary step. Even

today, in other UN/CEFACT groups, new technical terms and concepts are being developed without the Plenary's knowledge, other than through the work programmes of the groups.

22. As to the request that "*No UN/CEFACT resources should be given to any promotion on this subject until such a time as the principles are agreed.*" I am not sure what UN/CEFACT resources are being referred to. If it is in reference to the UNECE, it should be noted that no such resources have been used in the past nor are envisioned by TMG. If the reference is to group resources, the point should be made that those are provided by the participants on a volunteer basis, and as such are not under the control of the CEFACT Plenary. The BCF workshop tour is an example of UN/CEFACT's participants volunteering their time and efforts to promote the work they have been participating in for over 8 years now. The issue was raised at the last CEFACT plenary, which had no comment other than to note the report. A plan was presented to the CSG, which did not require any UNECE resources, to address in a timely manner, with the support of the Communications and Promotions Group, the issue of actively promoting the work of UN/CEFACT's TMG UMM & BP work (labelled as BCF). This work had not only been previously approved by the plenary, but forms the basis for the process-centric approach of UN/CEFACT's vision. If the proposal is to have all "promotions" approved first by the plenary (who only meets once a year for 2 days), why do we have a Communications and Promotions Group? In addition, how will we ever be able to react to the need to schedule our group's work in a timely manner because of market conditions changing unexpectedly?

23. In closing, there seems to be a lot of miscommunication that triggered the letter from the French HoD. It is not due to the lack of availability of information. The opposite is true. Since these issues were first raised during the last Forum, clarification was provided a number of times, not only by TMG group members involved, but also CSG members, to all Forum participants.

### **Service Support Provider**

24. TMG continues to express the urgent need for a professional UN/CEFACT Service Support Provider. Unless a SSP is soon appointed, TMG does not see how resources such as professional modellers/ facilitators, UMM artifact libraries, and development tools can be provided to support the work of all UN/CEFACT groups. The failure will result in participants joining activities outside UN/CEFACT that do provide the required support to advance their interests in standardization in this area.

### **Intellectual Properties Rights Policy**

25. TMG members are encouraging the UN/CEFACT plenary to approve the CSG provisional IPR Policy which seems to have WIPO support. Failure to do so will put in jeopardy any major contributions towards the current TMG work, especially in the area of Business Collaboration and Unified Business Agreement and Contracts. TMG member companies have made it very clear that they support the current provisional IPR and see it as a breakthrough by protecting not only the IPR of the submitters but also ensuring implementations without payment of royalties. Any departure from the principle concepts contained within the current provisional IPR Policy will result in a large number of major contributors to the TMG work stopping their participation.

---