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UN/EDIFACT

REPORT
FROM THE UN/EDIFACT STEERING GROUP (ESG) MEETING*

Concord, 27-31 January 1997

SOURCE: THE ESG CHAIRMAN
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* With amended Annex C

REPORT
UN/EDIFACT STEERING GROUP (ESG) MEETING
1997, 27-31 January
CONCORD

Members Present:

Ray Walker, Chairman (RW)
Raul Colcher (RC)
Jim Sykes (JS)
Rory Power (RP)
Virginia Cram-Martos (VCM)
Kenji Itoh (KI)
Harvey Bates (HB) (via telephone)

Invited Participants:

Klaus-Dieter Naujok (K-DN)
François Vuilleumier (FV)

INTRODUCTORY NOTE:

1. The UN/EDIFACT Steering Group (ESG) is responsible for management of the process for developing UN/EDIFACT standards. The ESG makes recommendations to the Working Party on the Facilitation of International Trade Procedures (WP.4) and its Groups of Experts on what should be done to produce better UN/EDIFACT standards, in as effective a manner as is possible. Thus the ESG group only makes recommendations about <u>what</u> could be done. It does, however, make management decisions on <u>how</u> to accomplish what has already been decided.

2. To encourage the greatest possible openness in the process and input into its recommendations, the ESG encourages wide circulation of its reports.

3. As PAEB Vice-Rapporteur, Mr. J. Sykes participated with the Rapporteur, Mr. R. Colcher. The officers of GE.1 invited Mr. K-D Naujok to participate in his capacities as convener of AC.1 and as Standards Liaison Rapporteur and they invited Mr. F. Vuilleumier as a member of the BSR management committee.

DEVELOPMENT OF CEFACT MANDATES AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

4. The ESG decided to concentrate its efforts during this meeting on developing draft mandates and providing guidelines & suggestions for the terms of reference. Drafting of the detailed terms of reference would be left to the new JRT procedures group in consultation with the JRT.

5. **Regional Review:** It was then decided to draft mandates for two groups covering the work of the JRT, these being the UN/EDIFACT Directory Maintenance and Development (DMD) group and the UN/EDIFACT Technical and Administrative Support (TAS) group. Copies of the draft mandates developed for DMD and TAS are in Annex A as well as some recommendations for their procedures. Regions were asked to review Annex A in order to provide input to the procedures group meeting at the Singapore JRT.

6. The ESG then looked at what groups might be needed to support the joint/common activities between UN/EDIFACT and other areas of trade facilitation. Based on their discussions, they developed draft mandates, for presentation to GE.1/CEFACT, of two additional groups: the "Techniques and Methodologies for Facilitation (TMF) group and the Process Analysis and Design (PAD) group. Copies of the draft mandates developed for TMF and PAD are in Annex B as well as some recommendations for the organization to be included in their procedures.

7. A matrix indicating where the ESG saw existing groups fitting into the new structure was developed and is included in Annex C .

8. An important issue was the role of regional secretariats and associated structures such as TAGs and regional message development groups which the ESG agreed were still needed for ensuring local input (from a wider range of participants than just those able to attend JRTs) , as well as the processing and initial evaluation of DMRs. Another issue is that of Regional Rapporteurs and what their role should be under CEFACT. In the past Regional Rapporteurs had been essential for the development of a regional structure, promotion and, especially, for encouraging new countries or sectors (at a regional level) to participate, thus one suggestion was that CEFACT would find it useful to have Regional Rapporteurs for representational and promotional purposes.

9. Among the procedural issues identified were the need to ensure a review of the business requirements in DMRs by business experts as opposed to only having a technical review and the need to have official representatives from all JM groups in JTAG meetings.

10. It was agreed to emphasize to the JRT procedures group and CEFACT that the ESG believes groups mandated to perform technical work will function only if they are based on participation by experts and not by representatives "defending" the official views of individual countries or organizations. They further believed that the best way to move to a new structure and balance this with the need for input from CEFACT members was to allow heads of delegation to either designate the experts to working groups themselves or to delegate this task to one or more organizations which could be national, regional or international (at the discretion of the head of delegation). For example, countries could continue to support their existing regional structure or they could choose to become independent contributors. However, if the latter were the case, then a way would need to be found to allow the DMR process to continue. One concept discussed was the development of a "global" TAG which would replace the need for regional TAGs. However, this would require the DMR process to be automated and, in any case, would take time to implement. The resource issue would also need to be considered. A proposal for the designation of experts is contained in the draft mandates in Annex A under "Functional Expertise of Membership." This proposal will be supplemented by an explanatory paper to the Singapore JRT.

11. The ESG believed that potential concerns about organizations trying to influence decisions by sending a disproportionate numbers of experts to a meeting could be effectively met through procedures based on "craq" (**c**onsensus, **r**equirements for attendance, **a**ppeal procedures and **q**ualified majorities). Supporting recommendations can be found in Annex A under the sections on procedures.

OTHER GE.1 and CEFACT RELATED MATTERS

12. The ESG agreed to recommend to GE.1 that it recommend to CEFACT the following addition to its programme of work:

> *" To undertake reviews of and consider, in the context of CEFACT's objectives, developments in electronic commerce and edi such as:*
>
> - *the use of UN/EDIFACT over the Internet;*
> - *related encryption and security issues;*
> - *their impact on business procedures and, in particular, those of SMEs;*
> - *related legal requirements and constraints;*
> - *their introduction in transition and newly industrialized economies.*
>
> *Based on these reviews, identify relevant issues and recommend appropriate strategies."*

13. The ESG agreed that it might be useful for CEFACT to develop objective criteria for deciding if items should be included in the work programme. It was further suggested that the criteria used by some ISO groups might serve as models of how this is done.

14. Information:
The CEFACT March '97 session's meeting agenda will be as follows;

	10:00-13:00	15:00-18:00
Mar.17(mon)	CEFACT Plenary	CEFACT Plenary
Mar.18(tue)	CEFACT Plenary	GE.2
Mar.19(wed)	GE.2	CEFACT Report/GE.1
Mar.20(thu)	GE.1	GE.1/Legal
Mar.21(fri)	Steering Group	GE.1/GE.2 Reports

STRATEGY

15. It was agreed to develop an introductory paper on a forward strategy for EDI development in CEFACT by the end of March, for review by the ESG in Singapore.

ECE/ISO/IEC MoU

16. The ESG agreed that a management structure was needed on the ECE side to be responsible for the ECE/ISO/IEC MoU.

17. The ESG was very pleased to learn that the ISO Technical Board had decided that it wished to continue the MoU, with updating, for at least 5 more years.

18. The secretariat was asked to have the ISO/IEC/ECE MoU on the agenda for the first CEFACT Steering Group meeting.

TRADE/WP.4/R.1023/Rev.4
(UN/EDIFACT Rules for Presentation of Standardized Message and Directories Documentation

19. The ESG supported the solution for cross-referencing put forward by the Directory Audit Team in order to provide as much information as possible to users. They further suggested that this version 4 be implemented in the D.97B directory and available for approval at the September 1997 session of GE.1. (TRADE/WP.4/R.1023/Rev.3, being published for the March CEFACT meeting, reflected the layout that had requested in the GE.1 minutes of September 1996 and as used in the D.97A directory). This recommendation would be included in the ESG report to GE.1.

SINGAPORE JRT

20. It was agreed to present CEFACT and the draft mandates developed during this meeting to the Singapore JRT during the opening plenary in order to allow the maximum time for review and the provision of comments to the procedures group

21. To facilitate the handling of resolutions during the JRT, it was agreed that the ESG would review them from 19:00 to 20:30 the JRT Thursday evening and would discuss resolutions with JRT groups, as necessary, the Friday morning from 10:00 to 11:30.

22. The ESG agreed to the BIM presentation, previously discussed in December, on case tools for modelling and on designing messages using models. AC.1 would also present its "easy guide" for understanding its work during the JRT. The request for a presentation on Bolero was not accepted because of the large number of new presentations requested and the fact that Bolero had just made a presentation at the last JRT.

SECRETARIAT

23. The secretariat was requested to make ESG Reports available via the Internet WWW.

AC.1

24. AC.1 hoped to have the guide promised during the Helsinki JRT available in Singapore.
AC.1 depends on the participation of 10 people and this is not enough to do the work assigned to it, which would be greatly expedited if some sub-groups could be set up to work simultaneously. In order to try to attract more participants, AC.1 was planning to distribute its issues list in advance to JRT participants and then to have an open forum in Singapore where JRT participant's could come to discuss those issues.

OTHER BUSINESS

25. The ESG agreed to recommend to GE.1/CEFACT in its report to the March session the development of two matrices: one to show the relationship between various empowered groups and another to show the relationship between work programme items as recommended by UKCEDIS in its letter to the ESG Chairman of 23 January 1997.

DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

26. It was agreed to hold further ESG meetings during the 17 March CEFACT week, during the JRT in Singapore and, provisionally, in Geneva, during the week of 19 May 1997.

ANNEX A

In order to become empowered under CEFACT (the Centre for Facilitation of Procedures and Practices for Administration, Commerce, and Transport) a group must have the following approved: a mandate, its resource requirements and terms of reference. In addition, within 6 months of its mandate being approved, a group must submit its procedures.

In order to advance this process for those groups working on UN/EDIFACT and related areas, the UN/EDIFACT Steering Committee (ESG) has created the following draft mandates for review by JRT participants and the JRT procedures group. The ESG has also included recommendations for procedures, and as part of that, the organization of each group.

The ESG has developed a matrix showing, where it believes, existing groups should be located and in some cases integrated under CEFACT (the Centre for Facilitation of Procedures and Practices for Administration, Commerce, and Transport). This matrix is included as Annex C.

In order to fully understand this paper the reader should be familiar with the UN/ECE document TRADE/R.650, "Recommendations for the establishment of CEFACT". This document outlines the specific documentation for a group to be empowered under the Centre. Specific terminology is used which may, or may not, correspond to how the same terminology is used in other organizations (for example, "mandate" and "terms of reference" have a slightly different meaning in every organization that uses them). Therefore, it is important: 1) to concentrate on the content, rather than the terminology and 2) to be sure that the information provided covers the requirements set out by CEFACT for empowerment.

To provide some guidance on the requirements set out by CEFACT, following are the paragraphs from TRADE/R.650 which outline the contents of the mandate and terms of reference. For details, however, the reader should refer back to the original document.

<u>Mandate</u>

56. The mandate for empowerment of a Working Group may be prepared by an existing group, the Steering Group, or the Plenary. All mandates must specify:

- the overall objectives of the work (scope and purpose);
- the key deliverables;
- the geographical focus, i.e. global, regional or national;
- the functional expertise for membership;
- any request for delegated responsibilities.

The mandate must be accompanied by a statement of resource requirements.

Terms of Reference

60. Within 6 months of approval of its mandate, a Working Group shall submit its terms of reference to the Steering Group for endorsement.

61. Terms of Reference must include a business plan which shall cover the following:

- a definition of the specific technical issue(s) to be addressed;
- a detailed description of the proposed deliverables;
- the proposed membership;
- the administrative team structure of the Group;
- a time schedule and milestones for completion of its function(s);
- proposals for liaison with other Working Groups and any external organizations.

I. UN/EDIFACT DIRECTORY MAINTENANCE AND DEVELOPMENT (DMD)

Clearly, DMD and TAS (UN/EDIFACT Technical and Administrative Support group) will need to work closely together, consult and coordinate on a wide range of issues. This needs to be reflected in their final mandates, terms of reference and procedures.

A. Draft Mandate

The UN/EDIFACT Directory Maintenance and Development group (DMD) is empowered by CEFACT to perform the continuous maintenance and development of the UN/EDIFACT messages and their supporting directories. The directories include: the UN/EDIFACT batch and interactive messages, segment, composite data element, data element, and code directories.

1. Key Deliverable

The key deliverable of the DMD is the production of UN/EDIFACT messages and their supporting directories for audit.

2. Functional Expertise of Membership

The DMD is a group made up of experts in the areas of UN/EDIFACT, business processes, and associated technical tools necessary to produce the key deliverable. Each CEFACT head of delegation may designate one or more experts to the DMD. In doing so, they may delegate this task to one or more organisation(s) which may be national, regional or international. Experts, once designated, are expected to contribute to the work based solely on their expertise.

3. Geographical Focus

The focus is global; the responsibility of the experts within the DMD is to produce the UN/EDIFACT directories which are applicable to business practices globally, without bias towards any single country or business sector.

4. Delegated Responsibilities

It is proposed that the DMD be empowered:

- to establish sub-groups and supporting teams as required;

- to issue, publish and present, according to agreed upon procedures, and after confirmation by the Directory Audit Team (DAT) that procedures have been followed, UN/EDIFACT interactive and batch messages together with their supporting directories;

- to co-operate and establish liaisons with other groups and organisations as required.

B. Recommendations for the Procedures

The ESG believes that participation in the process should be open to any individual or organisation interested in the furtherance of the UN/EDIFACT EDI standards.

The following are recommendations that the ESG developed regarding the decision making process with the objective of keeping the process as open as possible while still allowing decisions to be made when it is not possible to reach a consensus:

- *No limit of experts (members) that attend any meeting.*
- *Consensus is preferred method. If vote is required, 2/3 of the votes cast is required for approval.*
- *All members in attendance may vote subject to attendance requirements.*
- *Appeals process must be included to address the issue of when a member feels that the vote was weighted.*
- *Attendance requirements for voting, e.g. cannot vote unless member has attended 2 of last three meetings.*
- *No ballots; all decisions made at meeting.*

In a preliminary review of the group's organization, the ESG would recommend that at least the following be included:

a) Steering Committee
b) Message Design Groups (MDG)
c) Technical Assessment Group (TAG)

II. UN/EDIFACT TECHNICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT (TAS)

Clearly, TAS and DMD (UN/EDIFACT Directory Maintenance and Development group) will need to work closely together, consult and coordinate on a wide range of issues. This needs to be reflected in their final mandates, terms of reference and procedures.

A. Draft Mandate

The UN/EDIFACT Technical and Administrative Support group (TAS) is empowered by CEFACT to provide the technical tools and administrative support necessary for the development of UN/EDIFACT. These include: syntax development, message design rules, and directory audit.

1. Key Deliverables

The key deliverables include the development and maintenance of the UN/EDIFACT syntax and message design rules, auditing the UN/EDIFACT messages and their supporting directories, and creating the audit report for submission to the CEFACT Steering Group .

2. Functional Expertise of Membership

The TAS is a group made up of experts in the areas of UN/EDIFACT and associated technical tools and administrative tasks as necessary for the development of this group's deliverables. Each CEFACT head of delegation may designate one or more experts to the TAS. In doing so, they may delegate this task to one or more organisation(s) which may be national, regional or international. Experts, once designated, are expected to contribute to the work based solely on their expertise.

3. Geographical Focus

The focus is global, without bias towards any single country or business sector.

4. Delegated Responsibilities

It is proposed that the TAS be empowered:

- to establish sub-groups and supporting teams as required;
- to co-operate and establish liaisons with other groups and organisations as required;
- to issue, publish and present, according to agreed upon procedures:
  - the UN/EDIFACT Syntax (ISO 9735),
  - the UN/EDIFACT message design guidelines,
  - recommendations related to multi-lingual terminology and the support tools for producing multi-lingual versions of UN/EDIFACT
  - audit reports indicating whether or not each new version of the UN/EDIFACT messages and their supporting directories has been developed according to procedures and containing a recommendation as to its publication.

With the exception of the audit reports, the procedures for creation of the above deliverables must include full consultation with DMD resulting in documented support from the DMD.

B. Recommendations for the Procedures

The ESG's recommendations for procedures are the same as for the DMD group, with the exception of the organization.

In a preliminary review of the group's organization, the ESG would recommend that at least the following be included:

a) Syntax Development Group (SDG)
The UN/EDIFACT Syntax Development Group (SDG) performs the continuous maintenance and development of the EDIFACT Syntax (ISO 9735) jointly with the International Standards Organisation (ISO) and the International Electrical Commission (IEC) under the terms and conditions of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

b) Message Design Rules group (MDR)
The MDR group is responsible for the maintenance and development of the UN/EDIFACT Message Design Rules.

c) Directory Audit Team (DAT)
The DAT is responsible for auditing the directories developed by the DMD. It is also responsible for generating a audit report to the CEFACT Steering Group .

d) Multi-Lingual Terminology Group (MLT)
The MLT is responsible for analysing the language of descriptions and definitions within the UN/EDIFACT directories and recommending changes to the language so that the meaning is consistently interpreted when translated into various languages.

ANNEX B

As stated in Annex A, in order to become empowered under CEFACT (the Centre for Facilitation of Procedures and Practices for Administration, Commerce, and Transport) a group must have the following approved: a mandate, its resource requirements and terms of reference.

To fulfil CEFACT's work programme, will require groups working in three areas: 1) UN/EDIFACT and Electronic Commerce, 2) Procedures and 3) Joint/Common Activities of interest to both of the previous areas. Because of the importance it places on developing these common activities, the UN/EDIFACT Steering Committee (ESG) has spent some time thinking about what groups are needed to support this part of the work programme. As a result, they have developed the following draft mandates for review by CEFACT and its participants. Some recommendations for the organization to be included in the TMF group's procedures are also given.

The ESG has developed a matrix showing, where it believes, existing groups should be located and in some cases integrated under CEFACT (the Centre for Facilitation of Procedures and Practices for Administration, Commerce, and Transport). This matrix is included as Annex C.

In order to fully understand this paper the reader should be familiar with the UN/ECE document TRADE/R.650, "Recommendations for the establishment of CEFACT". This document outlines the specific documentation for a group to be empowered under the Centre. Specific terminology is used which may, or may not, correspond to how the same terminology is used in other organizations (for example, "mandate" and "terms of reference" have a slightly different meaning in every organization that uses them). Therefore, it is important: 1) to concentrate on the content, rather than the terminology and 2) to be sure that the information provided covers the requirements set out by CEFACT for empowerment.

I. TECHNIQUES & METHODOLOGIES FOR FACILITATION (TMF)

A. Draft Mandate

The Techniques & Methodologies for Facilitation group is empowered by CEFACT to research and identify potential techniques and methodologies which could be utilised by CEFACT and its work groups to enhance the process by which its deliverables are produced and integrated.

1. Key Deliverables

Proposals and recommendations on how specific techniques and methodologies could be implemented to allow CEFACT to achieve its goals.

Proof of concept, by feasibility studies and pilots, of the above proposals and recommendations.

2. Functional Expertise of Membership

The TMF is a group of experts with broad based knowledge of existing techniques and methodologies used within CEFACT, technological developments, and the functions of CEFACT and its sub groups. Each CEFACT head of delegation may designate one or more experts to the TMF. In doing so, they may delegate this task to one or more organisation(s) which may be national, regional or international. Experts, once designated, are expected to contribute to the work based solely on their expertise.

3. Geographical Focus

The focus is global without bias towards any single country or business sector.

4. Delegated Responsibilities

It is proposed that the TMF be empowered:

- to establish sub-groups and supporting teams as required;
- to issue, publish and present, according to agreed upon procedures, proposals and recommendations for specific techniques and methodologies for use by CEFACT groups as well as feasibility studies and reports on the results of pilots on the use of these techniques and methodologies;
- to co-operate and establish liaisons with other groups and organisations as required.

B. Recommendations for Procedures

In a preliminary review of the group's organization, the ESG would recommend that at least the following be included:

a) Research Group
The research group is responsible for the identification of techniques and methodologies which have potential benefit to CEFACT in achieving its goals.

b) Feasibility Group
The feasibility group is responsible for the proof of concept of the proposals / recommendation of the research group. In addition, the feasibility group will work directly with the CEFACT group in question to pilot the concept.

II PROCESS ANALYSIS AND DESIGN (PAD)

A. Draft Mandate

The Process Analysis and Design (PAD) Group is empowered by CEFACT to consult and work with other CEFACT groups and external organisations in order to analyze business processes relevant to the objectives of CEFACT, identify constraints to these processes and recommend more effective processes.

1. Key Deliverables

Based on the priorities established in CEFACT's work programme:

- the analysis of business processes relevant to the objectives of CEFACT using the common descriptive techniques and methodology agreed within the Centre;
- the identification of constraints to more effective processes;
- recommendations for more effective processes that simplify and harmonise procedures and information flows;
- assistance to other groups in understanding of the above recommendations in order to enable them to develop solutions based on these recommendations for the movement from existing to new processes.

2. Functional Expertise of Membership

The PAD is a group of experts in the areas of business processes relevant to CEFACT and/or in the tools necessary for implementing the common descriptive techniques and methodology agreed within the Centre. Each CEFACT head of delegation may designate one or more experts to the PAD group. In doing so, they may delegate this task to one or more organisation(s) which may be national, regional or international. Experts, once designated, are expected to contribute to the work based solely on their expertise.

3. Geographical Focus

The focus is global, the responsibility of PAD is to develop recommendations for business processes which are applicable globally, without bias toward any single country or business sector.

4. Delegated Responsibilities

It is proposed that the PAD be empowered:

- to establish sub-groups and supporting teams as required;
- to issue, publish and present, according to agreed upon procedures, analyses of existing processes; reports on constraints to more effective processes; and recommendations for more effective processes;
- to co-operate and establish liaisons with other groups and organisations as required.

ANNEX C

Preliminary Draft Matrix of Relationships between Existing Groups and New Groups Under the Draft Mandates Being Proposed by the ESG: version of 28/2/97

CURRENT		CEFACT	
PARENT	GROUP	EMPOWERED GROUP	SUB-GROUP
GE.1	AC1 (Research, Strategic Advice and Implementation Planning)	TMF	Research Group
GE.1	DAT - Directory Audit Team	TAS	DAT
GE.1	DPT - Directory Production Team	DMD	Secretariat Function
GE.1	ESG - EDIFACT Steering Group	*	
GE.1	MDR - Message Design Rules	TAS	MDR
GE.1	MLT - Multi-Lingual Terminology Group	TAS	MLT
GE.1	Rapporteur	**	
GE.1	SDG - Syntax Development Group	TAS	SDG
GE.1	T6 - Standards Liaison Group	Perhaps handled by each group	
GE.1 - ESG	G5 - Secretariats	***	
GE.1 - ESG	JMn (1-13) - Joint Message Design Groups 1 through 13	DMD	MDGn (1-13)
GE.1 - ESG	JRT-SC (Steering Committee)	DMD	
GE.1 - ESG	JTAG - Joint Tech. Assessment Group	DMD	TAG
GE.1 - ESG	T5 - Business Information Modelling	TMF	Feasibility Group
GE.1 - ESG	T7 - EDI Associated Objects [binary data]	TAS	
GE.1 - ESG	T8 - Harmonisation of Implementation Guidelines	To be discussed as to whether DMD or TAS is best location	
GE.1 - ESG	TTA - Team of Technical Advisors	****	
GE.1 - ESG	JRT Procedures	Each working group & CEFACT will need a sub-group responsible for procedures	
GE.1 - ESG SDG	T3 - Interactive EDI	DMD for msg. work, TAS for syntax work	
GE.1 - ESG SDG	T4 - Security	TAS	
GE.2	ITT - International Trade Transactions	PAD	

GE.2	All activities except ITT	1 or more groups on other trade facilitation issues	
ESG	G2 - Promotion Advisory Team (PAT)	Either directly to CEFACT or to its Steering Group **	
WP4	G4 - Legal Rapporteurs	LEGAL (a joint/ common activity with procedures)	

Empowered Groups:

DMD UN/EDIFACT Directory Maintenance and Development
TAS UN/EDIFACT Technical & Administrative Support
TMF Techniques & Methodologies for Facilitation
PAD Process Analysis and Design
1 or more groups on other trade facilitation issues

Notes:

* It is foreseen that the ESG's responsibilities would be allocated to a combination to nominated CEFACT Steering Group members and the Management Groups responsible for each mandated group after the Mandates and Terms of Reference have been agreed.

** The ESG believes, in general, that promotion is the responsibility of CEFACT and not of each mandated group; however, there is no reason that those responsible for promoting a particular area of work, such as PAT in the case of UN/EDIFACT, should not meet in parallel with the mandated group responsible for that work area. In addition, it is believed that CEFACT may find the use of Rapporteurs helpful in representing and promoting its work as well as in encouraging new countries to participate.

*** The UN and Regional secretariats need to meet in order to coordinate. However, they provide administrative support to more than one group and report either directly to CEFACT (in the case of the UN secretariat) or to their regional organization . Therefore, they cannot be shown as "belonging" to one group or another.

**** It would be up to the new "management team" to decide whether there is still a need for Technical Advisors. If there is a need, their role as a link between the technical support (TAS) groups and those working on directory maintenance and development (DMD) makes it unclear which group they best belong to.