

Technical Specification Group Core Network
Technical Specification Group Radio Access Network
Technical Specification Group Terminals
Meeting #10, Bangkok, Thailand, 6 – 8 December 2000
Technical Specification Group Services and System Aspects
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Title: Changes to stock text in the "References" clause of 3GPP specs

Document for: decision

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1 Interpretation of non-specific references

All 3GPP specifications contain a clause providing a list of references to other documents. The 3GPP TS and TR skeleton documents (boiler-plates) carry the following text:

The following documents contain provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of the present document.

- References are either specific (identified by date of publication, edition number, version number, etc.) or non-specific.
- For a specific reference, subsequent revisions do not apply.
- For a non-specific reference, the latest version applies.

This text was originally taken from the standard ETSI boiler-plate, and does not recognize the "release" mechanism employed in 3GPP. By comparison, the GSM specifications contained an additional bullet point of the form:

- For this Release 1998 document, references to GSM documents are for Release 1998 versions (version 7.x.y).

Of course, this text varied from release to release and had to be edited manually when a specification was upgraded from one release to the next.

It is proposed to introduce a similar concept into the 3GPP specifications by modifying the existing third bullet point as shown below:

- For a non-specific reference, the latest version applies. In the case of a reference to a 3GPP document (including GSM a document), a non-specific reference implicitly refers to the latest version of that document in the same Release as the present document, or, in the absence of such a version, the latest version in the most recent previous Release.

This text overcomes two potential problems of interpretation:

1. It avoids a non-specific reference **in a Release 1999 specification** being interpreted as being to a subsequent **Release 4** specification.

2. It avoids a "null" reference from, say, a Release 4 specification to a specification which only exists in a Release 1999 version (because no changes are necessary for use of that document for Release 4 application, and the responsible TSG has not taken the decision to upgrade it to the next Release).

All TSGs are asked to agree to the new text, and to instruct the Support Team to include it in every 3GPP TS or TR which is being edited for the implementation of approved CRs (without the need for an explicit CR for each specification in which it is proposed to include the text).

2 Interpretation of references to GSM specs from Release 4 (and subsequent) specs

On the transfer of the GSM specifications from ETSI TC SMG to 3GPP, it was agreed that, for Release 4 onwards, a new numbering scheme would be employed:

- 40 is added to the first part of the specification number (before the point); and
- the second part of the specification number (after the point) is extended from two to three digits.

Thus the (hypothetical) GSM specification known up to and including Release 1999 as 02.14 would become, for its Release 4 incarnation, 42.014.

A problem arises in reference to GSM specifications made from 3GPP specifications – both from pure GSM and from 3G ones – pertaining to Release 4 (or a subsequent Release): what does a reference to 02.14 mean? Does it mean a reference to:

02.14 Release 1999 (or earlier, if no R99 document has been produced); or to

42.014 Release 4; or even to

22.014 Release 4 if this document exists as a common 2G-3G spec?

(Of course, 42.014 and 22.014 cannot *both* exist, but *either* one or the other may; or *neither!* – in which case the reference is indeed to 02.14.)

Further, if such a reference is made in a document approved prior to the creation of 42.014 Rel-4, does its meaning change from 02.14 Release 1999 to 41.014 Release 4 when, eventually, that latter document is created? Logically, yes; but this may be far from obvious to the reader / system designer.

An independent contribution to TSG-SA#10 proposes the creation of a 3GPP TS 41.001, being a list of specifications which comprise GSM Release 4. It is intended that this spec will be maintained and periodically updated (by MCC, after consultation with the TSGs and their WGs) to show the set of documents which comprise the Release, together with each new document's predecessor. Thus, an old-format number can be easily checked to see whether it has been subsequently converted to a new format number.

In order to guide the reader of a specification towards 41.001, it is proposed to add the following text after the three bullet points of clause 2 (modified as shown in clause 1 above, if agreed):

This specification may contain references to pre-Release-4 GSM specifications. These references shall be taken to refer to the Release 4 [5, ...] version where that version exists. Conversion from the pre-Release-4 number to the Release 4 (onwards) number is given in subclause 6.1 of 3GPP TR 41.001.

(The text [5, ...] indicates that "Release 4" will be changed to "Release 5" in the case of Release 5 specifications, etc. The selection of text is automatic (courtesy of Microsoft Word) and reflects that which appears just below the title on the cover page of the specification.)

The text is not appropriate to Release 1999 or earlier specifications, since the numbering change confusion cannot occur.

All TSGs are asked to agree to the new text, and to instruct the Support Team to include it in every Release 4 or subsequent 3GPP TS or TR which is being edited for the implementation of approved CRs (without the need for an explicit CR for each specification in which it is proposed to include the text).

3 Summary

It is proposed to change the stock text of the "References" clause (normally clause 2) in 3GPP TSs and TRs thus:

The following documents contain provisions which, through reference in this text, constitute provisions of the present document.

- References are either specific (identified by date of publication, edition number, version number, etc.) or non-specific.
- For a specific reference, subsequent revisions do not apply.
- For a non-specific reference, the latest version applies. In the case of a reference to a 3GPP document (including GSM a document), a non-specific reference implicitly refers to the latest version of that document in the same Release as the present document, or, in the absence of such a version, the latest version in the most recent previous Release.

This specification may contain references to pre-Release-4 GSM specifications. These references shall be taken to refer to the Release 4 [5, ...] version where that version exists. Conversion from the pre-Release-4 number to the Release 4 (onwards) number is given in subclause 6.1 of 3GPP TR 41.001.

The TSGs are asked to approve this change. A similar contribution will be made to TSG-GERAN at its next meeting.