**3GPP TSG RAN#88e RP-20xxxx**

**e-Meeting, June 29th – July 3rd, 2020**

**Agenda item:**

**Source:** 3GPP TSG RAN1 Chairman

**Title:** EMeeting Management

**Document for:** Discussion/Decision

# Introduction

In this document, we will provide a summary on a potential list of improvement proposals regarding the management of Electronic meetings, using the contributions listed below as a starting point:

* RP-200724 Process Improvement Proposals AT&T GNS Belgium SPRL
* RP-200778 Views on E-meeting management LG Electronics
* RP-201098 Observations on Rel-17 handling in the RAN1 e-meeting Futurewei
* RP-201137 Considerations on e-meeting arrangements Intel

# Potential Improvements of EMeeting Management

## General Process Related

As proposed in RP-200724:

* Decisions made by the Lead Working Group should be adhered to by Secondary Working Groups and not be changed or held hostage. The Chair of the Lead WG should always make every effort to ensure and enforce this criterion consistently and effectively. Additionally, rapporteurs should try to identify these issues in status reports and work plan updates to try and avoid disconnects ahead of time.
* Lack of previously having done something is not an excuse for not trying new techniques and processes and TSG-RAN and RAN-WGs should avoid resorting to this excuse.
* Companies need to maintain consistency in their decisions across TSGs and WGs, in order to enable an efficient standards setting process.
* Functionally sound optional capabilities and features should be allowed when there is enough support in the industry.

Questions:

* Do you agree with the above proposals?
  + For each proposal:
    - If not, please elaborate
    - If yes, is there is a need to document these proposals (with potential re-wording)?
* Any other thoughts?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Company** | **Views** |
| LG Electronics | Though we are generally fine with the principle, it would be difficult and problematic to enforce this principle for every case. We think this kind of process management should be up to Chairman’s discretion, and documentation of the principle is not needed. |
| Qualcomm | Agree with the spirit of the proposals.  In the first proposal we may want to clarify that the lead WG refers to that of the given objective and not necessarily the entire SI/WI. |
| Intel | We feel that it is quite difficult to capture any hard rules or even guidelines related to these proposals. While the proposals serve to highlight good practice there may be quite valid reasons for them not to be followed in all cases. For example, RAN WGs should be free raise and discuss issues that are within their scope. So if one WG makes a decision, a second WG should respect that decision as much as possible but if it causes genuine technical issues in areas that are within their scope we think it is appropriate for the second WG to engage in a discussion with the first WG. Of course, we expect companies to be reasonable and focus on genuine technical issues. |
| FUTUREWEI | The paper makes some good points. One concrete example of the first bullet is the FR2 fallback, where RAN4 took a decision and RAN2 should follow up on it. Some concern on the last bullet, however,  as encouraging optional capabilities is actually opposite of the discussion trend we had at last ran where concerns on too many optional capabilities and market fragmentation led to some thinking on 'basic' features.  Overall, not sure we can do anything but "Note" the paper in RAN. |
| Vodafone | The “Lead WG” statement is not necessarily correct, e.g. SA WG 3’s views on security need to be taken into account.  Multiple ways (c.f. “options”) to solve the same problem should be avoided.  What specific action(s) does the proponent propose? |
| Nokia | The first three bullets are helpful guidance.  The fourth bullet is rather unclear. It should not be used as an excuse for unwarranted fragmentation in UE capabilities, nor as a justification for including multiple options in the specifications when it is difficult to reach consensus on a single solution. |
| ZTE | We agree with the spirit of the proposals but we are also not sure these can be reworded into rules that can actually be enforced. |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | In general, we think it is ok to discuss and clarify on the four bullets here, but it seems not really necessary to document them. WGs and TSGs are skilled through many years of successful standardization in handling these cases. |

Propoals:

* TBD

## GTW Management

Current GTW Slots:

* General consideration:
  + To avoid 12am-5am for most delegates as much as possible!
* Primary: 12-15 UTC
* Secondary (may not be suitable for a 3-hour conference call)
  + 20-23 UTC
    - 20:00 UTC may be a bit too early for China (4am)
    - 23:00 UTC may be a bit too late for CET (1am)
  + 3-6 UTC
    - 4:00-6:00UTC may be a bit too late for US EDT (12-2am) (11-1am for US CDT)

Questions:

* Is there a strong need to rotate GTW meetings slots (e.g., one week with the Primary slot, another week with a secondary slot) within a WG for regional balance? If so, within an EMeeting (e.g., across different weeks of an EMeeting) or across EMeetings?
  + Note that rotation within a week may result in less GTW session time, if a sufficient time gap between two GTW meetings sessions is enforced (e.g., no less than 11 hours between two adjacement GTW sessions)
  + Note that secondary GTW slots may not be ideal to have a 3-hour conference call if the time window of 12am-5am is avoided as much as possible for most delegates
* Should we enforce a strict GTW session closing time?
  + Note: if a strict enforcement is deemed necessary, up to Chairman’s discretion, some over-time may still be allowed, but generally should not be more than 30 minutes
* Any special weekend considerations for GTW sessions?
  + E.g., no GTW sessions after 8:00UTC Fridays (i.e., 5pm Fridays Korea/Japan time)
* Any other considerations?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Company** | **Views** |
| LG Electronics | **GTW rotation**  It is important to ensure delegate’s life in pandemic situation. Working in abnormal time more than 1 week would damage the delegate’s normal life. We prefer to rotate the GTW time on week basis to share the pains.  **GTW closing time**  As some part of the globe is very late at night, the closing time should be strictly kept. 30 min overtime is way too long, and we propose to allow less than 10 min overtime.  **Weekend consideration**  We think this is the most important issue. It should be ensured that delegates enjoy the weekend with his/her family. GTW sessions after 8:00UTC Fridays should be prohibited in any WG or Plenary. |
| Qualcomm | Rotation should be done to try to share the pain of ungodly meeting times.  Closing time of GTW should be strictly enforced past 30min of the scheduled slot.  Weekend considerations may considerably shorten the work week if we look at both ends of the time zones at the beginning and the end of the meeting. They should be considered for multi-week meetings. |
| Intel | Firstly to clarify our proposal to share the pain of GTW slots more fairly across different regions is not motivated purely for regional balance. It is proposed with consideration to the wellbeing of the delegates involved in those discussions. 2 weeks of 5am GTW starts in addition to the email discussion load is extremely demanding., and even worse if the same schedule is extended to 3 weeks for the Q4 meetings. We fully appreciate that there is no perfect time slot for the GTW session to be held - whatever schedule we choose compromises need to be made but maybe it should not consistently be the same compromises. In summary we do see a strong motivation to address this concern in some way.  On the more specific points:  - **GTW rotation** at a weekend is probably better but rotation within the meeting week could be also considered although this would result in a time zone having 2 meetings within one day (i.e. early and late) as experience in RAN2  - **GTW session** close time should be honoured. A hard rule of max 30 minutes overrun would be acceptable.  - Some special **consideration of** **GTW session near the weekend** is reasonable, in a similar way as we try to avoid email discussion over the weekend periods. |
| FUTUREWEI | The primary slot is the only one appropriate for a 3 hour call.  We are not OK with any rotation that has 3-6 UTC secondary slot and a 12-15 UTC primary slot in the same day because should have more hours to sleep.  Our preference is to minimize rotations as it takes time to adjust to a early morning or late evening schedule. |
| Vodafone | **GTW rotation:**  - During a week (and probably during a multi week meeting) the same GTW slot should be used.  - “rotation between meetings” -> with short, 1-2 hour webinars stay with 1300 UTC start. Longer webinars require a change in approach (see **alternative** below in 2.4).  **GTW closing time**  - Avoiding work between midnight and 0600 is highly desirable, but, the Q4 and Q1 working group meetings are on winter time and this restricts the session to 1 hour.  - closing times should be respected (e.g. max 10 minute overrun, and, chair to start wrap up 10 minutes before the end time)  **Weekends:**  These **shall** be respected in the case of **multi-week** emeetings.  For a 5 day, Monday-Friday emeeting, the beginning and end slots may impinge on the weekend (as with normal F2F) **provided that** this avoids the meeting becoming “multi-week”.  **Alternative approach**:  Imitate a F2F meeting with 8 hours of web conference/day held on the timezone of the meeting host – see 2.4. below |
| BT | **Meetigns are already being held at inconvenient times but it is harsh to say that getting up a couple of hours earlier than normal is equally as bad as getting up in the middle of the night and having a completely disrupted “night of two halves”. We should avoid the middle of the night for all calls as much as possible but people should be able to flex their days within reason if they are doing the same thing every day.** |
| Nokia | **Overall, delegate health is very important, and it is important to minimise the pain as much as possible.**  **GTW rotation:** The “primary” GTW slot is the only one that avoids the 1-5am slot for most delegates. Other options will introduce even more unearthly working hours for some delegates. Therefore it makes sense to continue to use the “primary” slot for the majority of sessions. “Secondary” sessions could perhaps be limited to 2 hours to reduce the worst-case pain. Switching between primary and secondary timings should include a long-enough buffer period without GTW sessions to allow proper adjustment.  **GTW closing time:** This must be strictly enforced, with absolutely no more than 30 mins’ overrun. |
| ZTE | Rotation of GTW slots (with respect to using only the "primary slot") can be considered, although this would limit the overall online time (as secondary are not suitable for a 3-hour conference call, if we need to respect the 12am-5am quiet period in all the regions).  Closing time of GTW sessions should be strictly enforced past 30min of the scheduled slot (in the worst case).  Weekend considerations can be applied for multi-week meetings. For instance the 3:30-5:30 UTC slot could be considered for the Friday GTW session of a multi-week meeting (although this would typically imply an intra-week GTW slot rotation, which is not ideal). But in general we think that so far weekends have been quite well preserved during e-meetings (for sure much better than for regular f2f meetings). |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | 1. We can understand that it is very painful for delegates suffering from bad time. We are fine to rotate GTW meetings, but we don't see strong need. 2. We think it is good to stick to the GTW session closing time as much as possible, especially if the time is very bad for a certain region. |

Propoals:

* TBD

## Email Management

### Necessity of Separate/Dedicated Email Exploder for Uploading

In RP-200778, it is proposed that:

* Make a new e-mail archive dedicated to upload announcement (e.g. [3GPP\_TSG\_RAN\_WG2\_ANNOUNCEMENT@LIST.ETSI.ORG](mailto:3GPP_TSG_RAN_WG2_ANNOUNCEMENT@LIST.ETSI.ORG)).

Questions:

* Do we need to create a separate email exploder in each WG for announcing uploading new drafts by each company?
  + Note: in RAN1, dedicated draft folders are created for each email thread, where as part of the email thread discussion, companies duly announce when there is a new revision
* Other thoughts?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Company** | **Views** |
| LG Electronics | In RAN2, it is observed that most of the e-mails are for upload announcement. This is root cause of e-mail flood. Thus, it would be better to make a new e-mail archive dedicated to upload announcement. However, normal e-mail reflector is still used for important announcement, e.g. kick-off the e-mail discussion, summary upload, close of the e-mail discussion, etc. |
| Qualcomm | We see no need to create a new email exploder for upload announcements. |
| Intel | The proposal is based on the observation that an excessive amount of email is generated by emails that contains no useful content, and we support to try to find a way to avoid these. When this was discussed previously the point was made that it may be useful for the email discussion moderator to know when someone adds their content to the discussion document on the server. A new announcements email exploder is one potential solution although it is not our preference. Our preference is that we simple ask people not to send upload announcements to the reflector. Instead, if a moderator feel announcements would be useful, then they could request that upload announcement is sent direct to the them. |
| FUTUREWEI | It seems better to make these announcements in the respective email threads, including a link such that the document can be opened directly.  (current RAN1 best practice) |
| Vodafone | 1. Strict rules in the email subject lines need to be used (and clearly published) and then delegates are (fairly easily) able to apply filtering to identify the emails that matter to them. 2. Separate email reflectors limit the distribution load on 3GPP’s email servers: this may be useful. They also reduce total incoming email traffic from “3GPP” to the recipient organisation and hence reduce problems with “spam” filters. |
| Nokia | No, a special announcement reflector should not be created. This would cause unnecessary overhead and load on the servers.  Delegates can use their own tools to get automatic notifications of when new documents are uploaded.  Only moderator summaries and significant events related to the discussions need to be announced. |
| ZTE | No need to create a new email exploder for upload announcements and no need to actually announce all the uploads.  However it should still be possible to make specific announcements, whenever this is considered as useful. |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | No need to create a separate email exploder in each WG for announcing uploading new drafts. It may result in email forks or people reply to the wrong email exploder also. WG chairmen can each set their preferred way of working. |

Propoals:

* TBD

### Post-EMeeting Email Discussion

In RP-20, it is proposed that:

* Post-meeting discussions for Rel-17 should be the exception and not the norm, and be used only for focused issues that can be completed quickly.

Questions:

* Do you agree with the proposal?
  + Note: if the proposal is agreeable, up to each WG chairman’s discretion, exceptions are still possible as part of normative meeting management by WG chairmen
* Other thoughts?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Company** | **Views** |
| LG Electronics | We agree with the proposal. Otherwise, delegates cannot escape from 3GPP work for whole year. |
| Qualcomm | Agree with the proposal. |
| Intel | I think it is difficult to make a hard rule here. Better to leave to this to the discretion of the WG chairs. Different WGs have difference traditions about how email discussion in used between meetings. For example, RAN2 has long had the process of email discussion between meetings where the scope is set during discussion at one meeting and the outcome reviewed and decisions taken at the next meeting. Over the years this has been a productive tool for RAN2 and should not be prevented by a blanket rule. Still, care should be taken with the number and scope of such email discussions to carefully manage load between the meetings; the period between meetings should not be allowed to become 'continuous e-meeting'. |
| FUTUREWEI | Yes, agree with the proposal |
| Vodafone | While the proposal is very highly desirable, without an alternative approach to the whole emeeting concept it is probably infeasible without massive slippage to R16 and R17 timelines. |
| Nokia | We agree with the proposal. If there are post-meeting discussions, they should be strictly limited in time for a short period, e.g. 1 week, and never more than 2 weeks, and never overrunning the deadline. The number of such threads should be kept as low as possible. |
| ZTE | Agree with the proposal, with the understanding that "Post-meeting email discussions" refers to email discussions to approve CRs and take other agreements that are intended to be part of the meeting outcome (and then de facto extending the meeting time). Other post-meeting email discussions which are meant to prepare summaries to be submitted for a subsequent meeting (i.e. "in-between meeting email discussions") should still be allowed. |
| Huawei, HiSilicon | We understand that the proposal here is mainly for RAN1.  We agree with the proposal in principle. For email disucssions with short time (e.g. 1 week) post the meeting, it is good to only focus on issues that can be completed quickly.  In an exception case, there may be a general open issue which warrants a longer discussion until the next meeting, but these are unlikely to be decision-making. |

Propoals:

* TBD

### Other Aspects

Questions:

* Any other thoughts for email management in EMeetings?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Company** | **Views** |
| LG Electronics | The number of e-mail discussions for each WI should be limited based on allocated TUs. Rapporteur or chairman should reduce the scope of the WI if the outstanding issues are more than the scheduled number of e-mail discussions. |
| Intel | Agree with comment from LG. The contribution from the WG chairs on Rel-17 TUs described how chairs will use the TU as a guide to set the number of email discussion. This can only be useful if the size of each email discussion is also controlled. For example, the chair or session chair should review the moderator's email discussion document and could rule parts of it out of scope in order to control the load from that discussion. |
| FUTUREWEI | We saw that even a single email discussion can be huge. Agree with Intel that active chair involvement is key. |
| Vodafone | Email load (and related delegate pain) might be dramatically reduced by the Alternative proposal in 2.4, below. |
| Nokia | In general the number of email discussions should be kept low, but a pragamatic approach should be taken to focus on the key issues, rather than imposing an artificial rigid limit.  Effort should be made to stabilise the discussions well in advance of each final conclusion deadline, to avoid last-minute changes or new proposals coming shortly before deadlines. Chairs need to enforce this. |
| ZTE | Agree that the number of e-mail discussions per WI should be limited, but it should be left to WG leadership discretion. No need to define rules at RAN level for this. |

Propoals:

* TBD

## Other Aspects

Questions:

* Any other thoughts for EMeeting management?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Company** | **Views** |
| Qualcomm | If we are going to stay in electronic format for some time. It may make sense to have more continuous GTW sessions, not necessarily linked to a particular “meeting week”. Those sessions could become more regular (weekly?) and limited to e.g. 2h of discussions on a specific topic for the sake of exchange of views, progress and contention resolution. |
| FUTUREWEI | Not in favor of the continuous meeting proposal, it is better to have active chair involvement for progress rather then sending things back to a feature lead / offline till progress is made. |
| Vodafone | 1. Regrettably, there is a significant risk that the whole of 3GPP R17 will have to be conducted without Face to Face meetings. (Flying hundreds of delegates from almost all corners of the planet to meet in close proximity for a week must be one of the last things to be relaxed!) 2. The current emeetings are (i) not as effective as F2F meetings, and (ii) are occupying far more delegate time as they span multiple weeks coupled with elongated preparation and wrap up sessions. 3. **An alternative approach is to adopt 1 week emeetings with 8 hours/day of web meeting time; 4 hours of allocated email/offline discussion time; and a 12 hour quiet period.** 4. The web meetings would be held on the timezone of the meeting host. 5. The web conferences could be broken up into 2 hour sessions with 30 minute gaps inbetween. 6. Delegates use the gaps (and sessions they are less interested in) to conduct offline, **but realtime,** electronic chats/conference calls with the other delegates (who should be awake at that time). 7. At the end of the 4th web conference session, there is an allocated 2.5 hours ‘offline discussion time’ before a 12 hour rest/sleep/quiet period. 8. This working arrangement is clearly disruptive to family life, so, it is anticipated that most delegates should “travel” away from the family home, e.g. to use their company’s meeting rooms (generally empty from 8pm to 8am) and stay in some local hotel or holiday accommodation. 9. With 1 week meetings, it is then feasible to hold two WG meetings between each TSG plenary. 10. This method of working is proposed for Q1 2021 onwards – but could be trialled in Q4 2021. |
| BT | Tend to agree with Vodafone on the above. We should look in more detail at these proposals. It may be sensible as we come tentatively out of the lockdown to arrange regional hubs for these meetings as well (e.g. designated hotel rather than random hotel) to enable cross-company offline dialogue. |
| Nokia | Clear guidance on which topics will be handled in each meeting would be helpful.  GTW session time must be fairly allocated between topics.  Moderators should be selected based on their ability to progress the work, and chairmen should be able to replace moderators if progress could be better.  Final chairman’s notes should be available promptly at the end of the official meeting. |
| ZTE | We are not sure we can take any formal agreement on it this week, but the idea of GTW sessions not necessarily linked to a particular “meeting week” is something that can be considered. But it should also be ensured that this does not lead to an never-ending meeting throughout the year. |

Propoals:

* TBD

# Conclusion

Based on the email discussion, the following are proposed:

* TBD

# References

RP-200724 Process Improvement Proposals AT&T GNS Belgium SPRL

RP-200778 Views on E-meeting management LG Electronics

RP-201098 Observations on Rel-17 handling in the RAN1 e-meeting Futurewei

RP-201137 Considerations on e-meeting arrangements Intel