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Title:	Evolution and Management of 3GPP specifications beyond Release 6
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1 Introduction

A companion contribution has addressed issues relating to the completion of Release 6; this contribution addresses the requirements for evolving and managing 3GPP specifications beyond Release 6. It specifically does not address possible solutions.

2 General

Since its establishment in 1998, the 3GPP has proved to be a major success, having delivered specifications for Releases 99, 4 and 5 in accordance with the needs of both operators and vendors. Each Release represents an enhancement to the overall 3GPP system, by incorporating additional service enabling features and new technologies. This is a continuation of the original process established for the evolution of the specification of the GSM system, and has proved to be an effective mechanism for ensuring overall system integrity.

There are, however, a number of issues that need to be addressed regarding the current “Release” approach in view of the growing complexity of the system and the fragmentation of the specification process. The key issues are:

- **Complexity** – where the addition of the new 3G radio access (Rel 99) and the IMS (Rel 5) are examples of major additions to the scope of the system and have resulted in a significant increase in the number of specifications as well as their overall complexity. The production of new and revised versions of every existing specification as part of a new release is an increasingly complex, time consuming and resource intensive exercise;
- **Fragmentation** - the establishment of the OMA has resulted in the fragmentation of the specification development process – there is no longer a single body (i.e. 3GPP) managing the specification of the overall mobile system.

In view of these issues there is a need to review the overall specification evolution and management processes within the 3GPP in order to ensure that they are meeting the requirements of both operators and vendors. Key requirements for the future include mechanisms that:

- Enable 3GPP specifications to evolve independently of other bodies (e.g. OMA), whilst ensuring the support of a mutually agreed set of capabilities which meet their requirements;
- Allow the rapid specification of new service enabling features, without necessitating a system-wide specification Release;
- Recognise that the constituent parts of the 3GPP system need to evolve reflecting different economic and technology life-cycles (e.g. UTRAN = large investment, mature, slow evolution. IMS = new, relatively low investment, rapid short term evolution);
- Simple and flexible specification management and publication processes – allowing the timely publication of 3GPP specifications;
- Maintain overall system integrity;

- Reduce cost (for both the MCC and individual 3GPP members).

3 Proposal

It is proposed that TSG SA addresses the above requirements for the future evolution and management of the 3GPP specifications and initiates work towards developing appropriate mechanisms to be introduced following the completion of Release 6.