3GPP TSG RAN Meeting #87e
Electronic Meeting, March 16-19, 2020

RP-200227

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Source: ZTE, Sanechips
Agenda: 15

Views on Rel-16/Rel-17 Timeline and E-meetings

Background [1]

- Due to the need for taking precautionary measures to tackle the worldwide threat of COVID-19 outbreak, all face-to-face TSG and WG meetings in Q1 and face-to-face WG meetings in April 2020 have been canceled.
- The conversion of these meetings into e-meetings will be decided by the WG chairs individually.
- The focus of the work during Q2 will be on Release-16 completion.
- Release-16 ASN.1 and OpenAPI specification freeze is kept at June 2020.
- It's considered to have a 3 month delay to the Release-17 timeline to March Plenary (TSG#87-e) - This would put the Release 17 ASN.1 and OpenAPI specification freeze to Dec 2021.
- The Release-17 package content agreed in December remains in place and unchanged.

Based on this background, this contribution discusses e-meeting issues and practicalities, Rel-16 and Rel-17 timelines and possible addition of Ad-hoc meetings.

[1] https://www.3gpp.org/news-events/2108-3gpp

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Rel-16 and Rel-17 Timeline

Proposal 1: *Keep the Rel-16 timeline as planned i.e. Rel-16 ASN.1 freeze is kept in June 2020*

Proposal 2: *Shift the Rel-17 timeline by 3 months i.e. Rel-17 ASN.1 freeze is changed to December 2021*

- It is important to keep the current Rel-16 timeline given that any schedule change will impact the activities in other SDOs and 5G implementation plan of Rel-16 features.
- Effectively, RAN1 Rel-17 timeline is shifted by more than 3 months in the beginning given that there is no Rel-17 discussion for one meeting in 2020 Q1 and one meeting in April 2020 Q2, but 2021 Q2 can provide 2 extra meetings to compensate for the loss.
- There are two RAN2 meetings for ASN.1 review if 2021 Q4 is used (instead of original one meeting in Q3)

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Ad-hoc meetings

- To compensate the time loss due to canceled F2F meetings, additional Ad-hoc meetings can be considered.
  - Given the current situation, there is still risk on the F2F WG meetings in May. If it is still converted to e-meetings in May, it is better for all WGs to focus only on Rel-16 work to make sure on-time completion of Rel-16.
  - For RAN1, two meetings in 2021 Q2 can compensate the time loss for Rel-17 if only two meetings are lost in Q1 and Q2 2020. If one more meeting is lost for Rel-17 in May, Ad-hoc meeting in July can be considered. Rel-17 RAN1-led items which require subsequent work in other WGs can start first in the Ad-hoc meeting.
  - For RAN2, the priority in 2020 Q2 is to accomplish the target of Rel-16 ASN.1 freeze in June. Best effort should be made to achieve this target. Only if high risk on this target is forseen after the April e-meeting, it can be considered to add an Ad-hoc meeting in June/July. The Ad-hoc meeting can be another e-meeting if it is hard to setup F2F meeting at that time. Immediately after the Ad-hoc, a RAN plenary e-meeting should be introduced for official announcement of ASN.1 freeze.
  - For RAN4, the target can be kept to finish the core part of Rel-16 in June 2020. For the performance part, one Ad-hoc meeting can be added in July.

Proposal 3: *An Ad-hoc meeting in July can be considered at least for RAN1 and RAN4. Further decide whether it is face-to-face or e-meeting.*

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E-meeting practicalities

- In Q1, RAN WG e-meetings have been completed with reasonable progress overall considering the limitations of e-meetings.
- It is expected that e-meetings will be held in April 2020 to replace F2F meetings for RAN1,RAN2,RAN3 and RAN4 but exact means of e-meetings can be further decided.
- There are two major tools for the e-meetings: email discussions and conference calls (e.g. GoToWebinar).
- Email discussion is appropriate for collecting views and reaching consensus for non-controversial issues.
  - For controversial issues, it is often very difficult and inefficient to rely on just email discussion especially considering time difference of multiple time-zones. It may take more than 12 hours to simply exchange views among delegates in different time-zone.
  - Delay in the email server varies, possibly depending on loading. In some cases, delay can be more than an hour. Overloaded situation also happened to FTP server which incurred long delay to download/upload files.
  - It is hard to manage or follow massive number of emails in parallel. It is important to control the number of issues discussed over emails.

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E-meeting practicalities

- Conference call is a good complement to email discussion. When it comes to a controversial issue, it is often more efficient to setup a conference call to have discussion in order to reach consensus among the interested parties.
- Some RAN WGs including RAN2 and RAN3 used GoToWebinar for conference calls in Q1 e-meetings.
- The following issues regarding conference calls are worth noting:
  - One minor issue is to set up a proper time, considering different time-zones. Given that delegates are spread all over the world, it is inevitable that some calls will happen at inconvenient hours.
  - Limited number of parallel sessions (possibly due to the limited number of software licences or overloaded situation) is another issue. To get around this limitation, some kind of TDM can be used between different WGs.
  - Conference calls can be held by Chairman/Vice Chairman with decision powers. Conference calls can be used to have regular status check on a limited number of issues which are contentious. The topic for discussion should be precise and clear for each session in order to limit the number of participants.

Overall, email discussions with help of conference calls can be considered but it is important to limit the number of issues discussed in conference calls and email discussions to make it more manageable.

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Thanks

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