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<b>Source:</b>	<b>O2</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Release 6 Completion Schedule</b>
<b>Document for:</b>	<b>Discussion</b>
<b>Agenda Item:</b>	<b>4 &amp; 8.8</b>

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## **1 Introduction**

The review of the Release 6 Work Plan and the status of development of Release 6 Features during the last TSG SA meeting (#20) resulted in March 2004 (TSG#22) being agreed as the earliest “freezing” date for the release. As a consequence it was also agreed that this current TSG SA meeting would be the last opportunity to identify new Release 6 requirements.

Informal discussion with other 3GPP participating companies has indicated that further consideration should be given to the need, necessity and feasibility of progressing Release 6 according to these timescales.

## **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. During this time, however, the rollout of 3<sup>rd</sup> generation has been considerably slower than expected and currently there are only early deployments of Release 99 networks. Consequently the new and additional features supported by Releases 4 and 5 are still largely under development by vendors and, as yet, not deployed in operational networks. In particular, Release 5 contains the first set of specifications for the IP Multi-media Subsystem (IMS) which represents a major new technology and new advanced service environment. To date the IMS has only been tested under laboratory and perhaps trial conditions.

The specification of Release 6 will result in significant enhancements to Release 5, both to features newly introduced in Release 5, and by introducing additional new features. Release 6 represents an important development for both operators and vendors and its timely completion is of major commercial importance; a completion schedule which is too aggressive will result in incomplete features being delayed until Release 7. Additionally, according to the current schedule, any new requirements identified after this TSG SA#21 meeting would also be delayed until Release 7. This would include new requirements which may be identified as a result of ongoing 3GPP discussion (e.g. relating to WLAN, IMS Emergency Calls, clarification of MBMS) and well as capabilities requested by the OMA (e.g. IMS enhancements to support Push to Talk over Cellular – PoC). The timing of Release 7 has yet to be addressed by 3GPP, however its early development would compound the problems already identified in the context of Release 6.

The resources required for the overall management of the 3GPP specifications and participation in 3GPP activities also needs to be considered as part of the Release 6 planning process. This represents a significant cost to both the SDOs (funding the MCC) as well as to individual 3GPP members; freezing Release 6 too early would require additional recourses and consequential increased cost.

### **3 Conclusions and Summary**

The timely completion of Release 6 and the resulting additional capabilities that it will realise is of major commercial importance to both operators and vendors. The Release 6 completion schedule, however, needs to be reviewed taking into the following considerations:

- that the 3GPP is already perceived as being “well ahead of the market” and the commercial need for a further release - Release 6 - in the immediate future is very difficult to justify;
- that the deployment and operational experience of deploying Releases 4 and 5 is not widely available – this is likely to result in significant (but currently unknown) changes to 3GPP specifications;
- that an unnecessarily aggressive Release 6 completion schedule is likely to delay the availability of key features that can’t meet the early Release 6 timeframe. Early Release 6 freezing will cause a split of currently identified features between those that can be included in Release 6 and those that have to be delayed to Release 7. Release 7 timescales have not yet been discussed.
- the overly early completion and subsequent management of Release 6 will increase the burden upon the MCC, and hence increase cost to the SDOs and 3GPP membership.

### **4 Proposal**

**It is proposed that** the timescales for the completion of Release 6 are further reviewed during this TSG meeting, taking into consideration the observations made within this contribution. Target completion dates of either September or December 2004 are suggested.

**It is further proposed that** the timescale for the development of further detailed Release 6 requirements is extended beyond this TSG meeting