

Source: NTT DoCoMo, Inc., Vodafone

Title: Release Planning

Agenda Item: 8.8, 8.9

Document for: Discussion & Decision

1. Introduction

This contribution discusses the current status of the work/study items included in the 3GPP work plan for Rel-7. Based on a discussion of the current status of work for Rel-7 and the factors to be considered when planning the freezing of 3GPP releases recommendations are made to TSG SA on the schedule for Rel-7 and future 3GPP releases.

2. Discussion

2.1 Current Situation

Currently, there is a variety of work/study items included within the 3GPP work plan for Rel-7. The different types of work items are summarized below (non-exhaustive list):

- Enhanced functionality for existing features e.g. OSA service broker, LCS enhancements, Fixed BB access to IMS
- Standardisation of combination of features e.g. Combinational Services
- New features for a specific purpose e.g. Selective disabling of UE capabilities, Voice Call Continuity
- Improvement of existing features e.g. Network Selection, Videotelephony Teleservice
- Some things not completed in Rel-6 e.g. IMS Emergency Calls, QoS provisioning over I-WLAN, SMS/MMS over IP
- Major new developments i.e. ‘Evolution-related’ e.g. AIPN, System Architecture Evolution (SAE), Evolved UTRA(N)

The work/study items within the Rel-7 work plan encompass a number of Feasibility Studies in SA1, SA2 and RAN WGs in particular for the ‘evolution-related’ work/study items such as AIPN and Evolved UTRA(N).

Based on discussions of two contributions at SA#27 (SP-050154 & SP-050156) it was provisionally decided to aim for freezing of the stage 1 (i.e. SA1 service requirements) for Rel-7 at SA#29 (Sept. ‘05).

Based on an analysis by the author(s) of this contribution it appears that if the current schedule for Rel-7 is maintained most of the features aimed at Rel-7 will be included. However, this would result in Rel-7 comprising mainly of small enhancements and improvements to the functionality of the 3GPP system based around existing features. The primarily ‘evolution-related’ work/study items (AIPN, SAE, EUTRA(N)), in particular SAE and EUTRA(N), are considered as release-independent for the time being. Insofar they are not aimed for inclusion in Rel-7. Some other work items currently under development may also not be included, unless decided otherwise, such as: Network Selection Principles, Videotelephony Teleservice, and any SA1 work item that has not yet been approved.

It should also be noted that four new work items for SA1 (Multimedia Telephony Capabilities for IMS, Personal Network Management, MBMS Enhancements, Transferring of emergency Call data) were agreed at the last SA1 meeting (SA1#28) in April 2005.

2.2 Problem Statement

When considering the schedule for Rel-7 and future 3GPP releases a number of factors should be considered.

1. Rel-7 should not be as long or as large as Rel-6

It has been expressed a number of times that Rel-6 took a long period of time and is a large 3GPP release. Currently, Rel-7 does not appear to be as large a Release as Rel-6 and it would be preferable for Rel-7 to be a shorter and smaller 3GPP release than Rel-6. However, if the content of Rel-7 is not finalised soon it may snowball into a large release (like Rel-6).

2. Content-based releases preferable to calendar-based releases

Although TR 22.900 states the principle of producing “approximately annual Releases”, it has been accepted that calendar-based 3GPP releases are not desirable and the content-based release approach was adopted several years ago. However, waiting for particular features of content-based releases may result in delays to the freezing of other features already complete.

3. Need to satisfy market demands

There appears to be a market demand for some features currently being developed in Rel-7 to be made commercially available soon.

4. New work is still being proposed

As stated in section 2.1 of this document new features are still being proposed for Rel-7 and four new work items aimed at Rel-7 were agreed at the last SA1 meeting. Some of these items may require a considerable amount of work and so it would appear to be rather unrealistic for these work items to be included in Rel-7. However, a clear and realistic schedule for inclusion within a particular 3GPP Release is needed for these and other work items that will not meet the provisional deadline for inclusion in Rel-7.

Considering the factors detailed above, it can be concluded that there is a need for a clear schedule for a content-based Rel-7 and future releases. This should enable features near completion to be included in a frozen release and provide a clear schedule for features that will take more time.

3. Proposal

Based on the discussion within section 2 of this document, the following proposal is recommended for adoption by TSG SA as working assumptions regarding the schedule for Rel-7 and Rel-8.

1. In principle, Rel-7 to be a short release providing enhancements and improvements to the 3GPP system but no major new features (i.e. not like Rel-6 with a number of ‘brand new’ features). The current provisional schedule for Rel-7 should be maintained with the stage 1 frozen at SA#29 (Sept. ‘05). Based on an analysis of features likely to be included in Rel-7 if the stage 1 frozen at SA#29, the aim should be to completely freeze Rel-7 (i.e. to stage 3) at SA#32 (June ‘06). However, experience tells that some exceptional treatment is always necessary to cater for difficulties experienced during progress of work, e.g. IETF dependencies.
2. In principle, Rel-8 to include major new features of the 3GPP system (e.g. results of the ‘evolution-related’ WIs - dependent upon results of the AIPN/SAE Feasibility Studies and EUTRA(N) Study Item) as well as other work items that are not completed in time for Rel-7.

Based on the current status of work within 3GPP as described in section 2.1 of this document a number of caveats to this proposal should also be adopted by TSG SA.

- (a) As work has already started (with feasibility studies) stage 1 and stage 2 work for Rel-8 items can take place in parallel to work for Rel-7.
- (b) In some cases, the stage 1 or stage 2 work for a Rel-8 feature may be completed before a Rel-7 feature.
- (c) Although the actual organization of work within a particular TSG WG will be dependent upon the contribution received and will ultimately be at the discretion of the TSG WG Chairperson, in principle, no priority should be given within the TSG WGs due to a work item being classified as being for ‘Rel-7’ or ‘Rel-8’.

- (d) In principle, the Rel-7 timeframe should not be substantially extended to include work items that are not completed within the agreed Rel-7 timeframe i.e. no 'late items' for Rel-7 and work items incomplete at time of Rel-7 freeze should be postponed to Rel-8, if appropriate and manageable (see under 1.).

It is accepted that there may be exceptions to this principle if e.g. work to stage 3 were completed in time for inclusion within Rel-7 even if the deadline for completion of the stage 1 was missed.

- (e) The target dates for Rel-8 should be:
- Stage 1 freeze by SA#32 (June '06)
 - Stage 3 freeze by SA#38 (Dec '07)

A graphical representation of how work on Rel-7 and Rel-8 work items will progress within 3GPP if the above proposal is adopted by TSG SA is provided below.

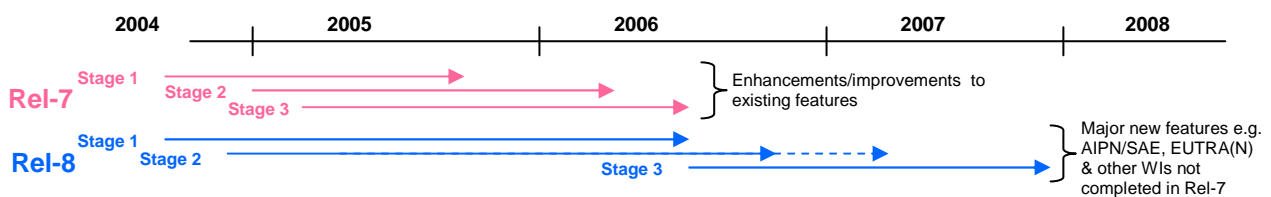


Figure 1: Proposed method for progressing work on Rel-7 & Rel-8

It is accepted that any decision taken at this stage may be revised or rescinded by TSG SA at a later date based on reevaluation of the progress of work within 3GPP. Furthermore, it is not felt necessary to 'officially' create Rel-8 (e.g. start to create 8.x.x versions of specifications) at SA#28 but wait until a more appropriate time when Rel-7 is nearer completion. Taking these two points in consideration, the above is proposed as working assumptions for work for both Rel-7 and Rel-8 for discussion and adoption at this time by TSG SA.

5. Additional consideration

At present, when 3GPP releases are frozen both Radio Access and Core Network features are frozen together at the same time. In the future it may be beneficial to introduce the possibility of freezing of Radio Access and Core Network features separately in the future. At present the author(s) of this contribution have no specific proposals. However, it is recommended that TSG SA consider and discuss the possibility to allow for such flexibility for future 3GPP releases.