

Agenda Item: Electronic Methods

Source: Telecom Modus/NEC

Title: Cybermeetings methods

Document for: Approval

SMG1 routinely makes plenary decisions using email reflectors, for example finalisation of CR's. The use of email reflectors can reduce the frequency and duration of physical meetings, and in at least one case has replaced them (ie handover ad-hoc originally scheduled for UK). This document recommends some working practices to be adopted for decision making using e-mail reflectors.

The criteria which are applied are:

- Authority: clear rules according to which plenary decisions can be made by email.
- Traceability: discussions leading to a decision should be recorded.
- Ease of access: email discussions should be easily accessible to all WG members.
- Information Overload: information overload should be avoided.

Authority: normally a cybermeeting should be announced at an ordinary WG meeting, and should at that time be given a mandate to resolve a clearly defined issue on behalf of the WG by a given date. In cases of urgency the WG chairman can mandate a cybermeeting at "reasonable notice" using the WG reflector.

Method 1: Cybermeeting on main WG reflector

In this model there is one reflector per WG, for example TSG_SA_WG1 reflector. This reflector is used for a variety of purposes, and in particular for cybermeetings.

Ease of access: excellent, all persons subscribed to WG reflector receive the without taking special measures.

Information overload: poor, for the same reason.

Traceability: poor, since debate will not be separated from any overlapping debates on the same reflector and general information.

Method 2: One reflector per Cybermeeting

A special reflector is created, and its creation is announced *with the same formality as an ad-hoc meeting*, ie invitations are sent via main WG reflector to a 'cybermeeting'. This reflector has: a limited lifespan with a defined start and end; a nominated chairman (or 'discussion moderator') and inherits the mandate.

Ease of access:good, since it is simple to subscribe to new reflectors.

Information overload: excellent. If persons are not interested in the discussion, they can ignore the reflector.

Traceability:excellent, since discussions on reflector are clearly identifiable and can be logged automatically. Also it is clear when discussions on the subject begin and end.

Recommendation

It is recommended that where a decision is to be made using an email reflector, Method 2 is adopted.