



IPTC Mirror

A New Approach

A special conference-call meeting of the Standards Committee was held in January to deal with reorganisation of the IPTC standards efforts. A new working structure - based on the relationship between news and real-world events - was formally adopted, and brought into use for the Spring 2005 Meeting in San Diego.

During the Autumn 2004 Meeting a suggestion was made to take a close look at the Working Party structure, to see if it could be modified to better meet the demands imposed by work on the new standards suite.

A series of conference calls, emails and discussions resulted in a set of proposals which were initially considered in a Standards Committee Teleconference in mid-December 2004, leading to a number of additions and modifications.

Telephone meeting

The revised proposal was circulated and IPTC delegates were informed that a telephone meeting of the Standards Committee was to be held in early January, to consider and vote on the proposals.

Opening proceedings, Standards Committee Stéphane Guérillot (AFP) welcomed participants to what he said was the first official meeting of the Standards Commit-

tee on a conference call, pointing out that the only item on the agenda was the new Working Party organisation.

If approved it was intended to bring the new arrangements into use for the IPTC Spring 2005 meeting in San Diego.

Common base

One of the aims of the reorganisation was to give all IPTC standards a common base with a common style, with another feature being the development of common components for use in all IPTC standards.

Some concern was expressed about the impact that this might have on the established standards. It was recognised that care will be needed to avoid upsetting the user base of established standards - for example the NITF is the singly most implemented IPTC standard.

However, for existing standards the process will be one of gradual

evolution so that, for example, when common features have been agreed it will be possible to start the process of implementing them. This, and adoption of the common architecture and any common components, would generally imply a new major version of any existing standard.

Work organisation

During discussions it was stressed that the proposals under consideration were only concerned with the way that future work would be organised. Decisions on the actual architecture and the common components, and the way they will be developed and applied will have to be taken by the appropriate Working Parties and approved by the Standards Committee.

After checking that a quorum was present at the meeting the motion to reorganise IPTC standards work was approved.

Spring Meeting

As planned, the new working arrangements were in use for the Spring 2005 meeting (in San Diego). At the opening Standards Committee session, Chair Stéphane Guérillot gave delegates (only some of them had been able to take part in the teleconference

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The IPTC Mirror has hyperlinks for web addresses (in blue) and for the page references (in red).

meeting) an overview of the thinking behind the new structure, and of the work involved in establishing it. An intensive effort had been needed - during one week there had been a conference call every day - and the process had been time-consuming.

He thanked all the members that had been involved in the effort, saying that it had been a particularly difficult time for them to find resources to devote to the IPTC work, as they would also have been busy in their own organisations.

Aims

Main aims of the new Standards organisation are:

- improve the consistency, design and development of any new standards.
- give IPTC standards a common base and family style.
- shorten the development cycle.
- make use of common components and functionalities.
- ease and improve support and management of the new standards.
- and simplify understanding and implementation of the new standards.

Analysis

The approach taken had been to start with an analysis of news - in the broadest sense - and then to establish the links between real-world events and items and the resulting news content. From this the analysis moved on to consider the metadata that describes the content, and the mechanisms needed for man-

agement and exchange of the content.

Using this model it was then possible to identify the best way of organising the IPTC standards effort, resulting in a structure based on three work domains - Architecture, Content focused, and Specialised - with appropriate new Working Parties (WP) being established to deal with specific areas.

News Architecture

All common architectural issues for the "new generation" IPTC standards are dealt with by the **News Architecture Working Party** under the Chair of Laurent Le Meur (AFP), with Vice-Chair Stuart Myles (Dow Jones). This WP has a series of Working Groups (WG) dealing with different aspects of the architecture:

News Structure WG (Chair Laurent Le Meur) - has to develop an abstract news model that can be customised to meet the needs of the IPTC standards.

News Management WG (Chair Stuart Myles) - takes over the work of the News Management WP (the processing of news items throughout their life cycle), but extended to cover all IPTC standards.

Common Components WG (Chair Johan Lindgren - TT) - deals with components that will be used in more than one standard (possibly with some customisation). Work includes consideration of submissions from the various content WGs.

News Metadata Framework WG (Chair Mischa Wolf - Reuters) -

replaces the Common Metadata Structure WG and deals with the application and management of

Committee of the Whole Council

Sessions of the Committee of the Whole Council (CWC) are intended for the presentation and discussion of issues affecting IPTC as an organisation, as opposed to technical issues, and are held when considered appropriate.

Following approval of the IPTC Articles of Association at the 2004 AGM the IPTC Operating Procedures have been amended, and were presented to delegates at a CWC session held at the start of the Spring Meeting. Delegates were also informed that a supporting document on the management of IPTC's intellectual property is being produced.

A major change to the Articles of Association was a revision of the membership conditions and a section in the new Operating Procedures makes it possible to name Honorary Members of IPTC. A proposal to make Klaus Sprick the first Honorary Member was unanimously approved.

Membership

In a separate development it has been announced that the Management Committee intend to make use of the revised membership conditions to offer deeply discounted membership fees for new members who are based in economically distressed countries, and for educators and certain consultants.

It is hoped that this will help to increase IPTC membership in Africa, South America and Asia, and among universities. Special membership rates are offered on a case-by-case basis, after a review by the Management Committee.

New Members

Athens Technology Center (ATC) is involved in the design, integration and support of information systems, and offer a range of services for e-business, with ISO 9001 certification. Their Asset Management systems are said to offer an integrated and secure environment for the storage, retrieval and management of sensitive information. ATC's News Asset Agency Edition was selected by the Athens News Agency (ANA) as part of its new editorial system which was introduced in time for the Olympic Games 2004.
www.atc.gr

Mainstream Data offers a comprehensive range of services, equipment and applications for the collection, distribution, and display of information. Distribution services and associated applications are provided using DVB satellite broadcast, two-way VSAT networks, and managed IP distribution platforms. Since 1985 Mainstream Data networks have delivered news, real-time stock quotations, digital images, audio, music, and video to subscribers around the world for a range of customers - which already includes a number of IPTC members. Mainstream's President and CEO - Scott E Calder - took part in the San Diego meeting.
www.mainstreamdata.com

metadata vocabularies.

In general the work of these groups will build on the NewsML 2 and EventsML Business Requirements, (as well as other IPTC standards). In order to carry work forward as rapidly as possible consultants - RivCom and Cnet - were commissioned to investigate alternative architectures for implementing IPTC standards by using XML Schema technology. Their proposals were considered in some detail during the meeting - this will be dealt with in a report on the activities of the Working Party.

News Content

The News Content Working Party

- under the Chair of Geoffrey Haynes (AP), with Vice-Chair Henrik Stadler (TT) - has general responsibility for standards dealing with various forms of structured content. It has a set of Working Groups dealing with specific content standards: **NewsML**, **EventsML**, **SportsML**, and **ProgramGuideML**.

Here the EventsML and SportsML (Chair Alan Karben, XML Team) developments continue much as before, though there may be some changes to the development plans in the light of the new Architecture proposals.

A new group (Chair Laurent Le Meur) deals with **NewsML** as a means of news representation - essentially as a content wrapper when generating news items.

Specialised Groups

Finally, the Specialised Groups area is concerned with work that does not directly form part of the new standards family. In this area the **NITF Maintenance Working Party** (Chair Alan Karben) continues with development and promotion of the NITF, while the **NewsCodes Working Party** (Chair John Minting, UPI) continues with development of standard sets of



*Above: Standards Committee Chair Stéphane Guérillot (AFP) outlines the thinking behind the new organisation adopted for IPTC standards work.
Left: Henrik Stadler (TT) has taken on the responsibility of Vice-Chair of the Standards Committee*

NewsCodes for use by the news industry (and outside the industry in some cases). Neither of these WPs is immediately affected by the reorganisation, though future developments will take account of at least some aspects of the new News Architecture.

Also in this domain a new **NewsML 1 Maintenance Working Party** (Chair Dean Large, Business Wire) has been established to deal with issues related to this standard.

Outstanding issues

The first stage of the reorganisation had left a couple of outstanding items, including the issue of "News Messages", which were described as being related to the message envelope in the IIM (Information Inter-change Model) and the "News Package" as dealt with by NewsML1. It was agreed that these would be best dealt with by the

News Architecture WP.

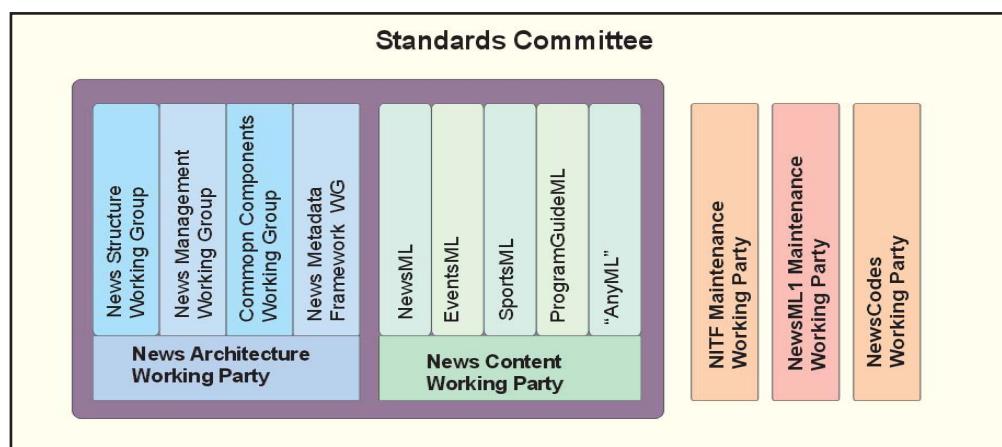
Making a standard

Making a standard
A major aim of the new approach is to make it easier and faster to develop a new standard and an outline of the steps behind making an “AbcML” standard helped to illustrate concepts behind the new architecture.

- A basic item can contain any content, and has standard characteristics.
 - Standards should conform to the IPTC Architecture and Structure recommendations.
 - Common components are available, along with management rules and processes.
 - Metadata facilities of an item can be extended by plug-in components.

Discussion groups

Where appropriate new public dis-



Arrangement of Working Parties and Working Groups following the reorganisation. The purple surround encloses the areas concerned with the new standards effort.

Note that the News Content Working Party is shown as having a "AnyML" group as this is where any further - as yet unidentified - content standard would fit



cussion groups have been established for the new work areas, to complement existing groups. There are also a series of internal groups, primarily for communication between the members of the various Working Parties and Working Groups together with a (restricted) group for IPTC members to deal with general issues. Details of both the public and internal groups are given in the "members only" section (registration needed) of the IPTC Web site at <http://www.iptc.org/membersonly/mo-forums01.php>.

Document naming

Following established practice documents produced by, and for, the new working parties and groups will be identified by identifier and a number. New identifiers have been introduced for the new WPs and WGs with the identifier being com-

pleted by the (last two) year digits and a sequential number. If documents are revised they will be denoted by a decimal revision number. For example the document detailing the revised naming procedure is [DIR0503.1- Workdoc-Naming2005.doc](#).

File names will be based on the document identifiers, and all documents will have a URN that complies with the rules for the IPTC URN namespace (specified by RFC 3739). For example - Document URN:
<urn:iptc:workdoc.dir:0503.1>

XML Schema Style

Recommendations for a common XML Schema style to be used by IPTC standards have been developed by a Task Force moderated by IPTC Managing Director Michael Steidl - see box below. The draft

document detailing the recommendations - and outlining where further work was required - was presented to the Standards Committee and formally approved with the intention of making additions and amendments as required.

Conference calls

Conference calls have become an important part of the standards development process and it was agreed to establish fixed time slots for these calls. These are on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 14.00 GMT (winter time) and 13.00 GMT (when daylight saving time is in operation in Europe and the US). Individual development groups have to book slots with the Managing Director ([mdirector @iptc.org](mailto:mdirector@iptc.org)) and a schedule of the conference calls that have already been arranged is available on <http://www.iptc.org/>

IPTC XML Schema Style

Agreement has been reached on the approach to be adopted for a common XML Schema (to be used by IPTC standards) in the following areas:

1 Documentation notation

Documentation will be added by using xs:annotation and xs:documentation elements of the XML Schema specification. External programs will be employed to collate a standalone reference document and to create a browseable linked (web) documents.

Annotation/documentation should be added: to the XML Schema as a whole; to each specified data type or group; - to each specified element; to each specified attribute; to all "modules" or "sections" and to all "import" or "include" statements.

2 Notation style of XML elements and attributes

XML namespace prefixes

Should be short (not exceeding 12 characters) and all lowercase (no camel back). Examples - nsml, *iptc4xmpcore*

XML element names

May be built from concatenated words/terms, and lower camel case with uppercase for the first characters of words inside a string. Examples: *status*, *myElement*, *firstCreatedDateTime*

XML attribute names and attribute groups

May be built from concatenated words/terms and all lower case Examples: *myattribute*, *formalname*

Common styles

Subsections of names should not include punctuation characters - the only helper for improving readability of element names is the use of lower camel case.

Namespace prefixes for XML Schema elements
IPTC will use the "xs" uses namespace prefix for XML Schema elements

3 IPTC XML Schema file

Beyond the declarations required to produce valid XML Schema notation these comments have to be included: copyright notice for the IPTC (© {YEAR} IPTC, all rights reserved); current contact information for the IPTC; name and version of the standard, or module; a document URN for this XML Schema file; license notice; trademark notice (depending on the standard) and a notice regarding the requirement implementers of this standard have to comply with when using this specification

4 Specific XML element types

Dates and Times

Normal approach of the IPTC is to use the standard XML Schema types provided for that purpose: date, time and duration.

Validation of values at the XML Schema level is not anticipated for W3 XML Schema version 1.0, but expect validation conforming to "Value spaces" in XML Schema 1.1.

Date and time value elements which should not conform to the standard XML Schema type for a certain reason have to be defined as a "Common Component" or "Special Component" by the IPTC standardisation track.

Further aspects of the XML Schema style, including the handling of controlled vocabularies and the use of modules will depend on decisions to be made by the News Architecture WP and so will be defined later and added to the approved style document.

[membersonly/schedule_main.php](#)
(alternatively details can be found by navigating to the "IPTC Schedule" pages in the members zone of the IPTC web site). This page also has information on how to connect to the conferences.

Working sessions

The Spring meeting saw a full series of Working Party (and Working Group) sessions, with a lot of effort having been put into the preparation of discussion papers, which were complemented by the report from the consultants.

Details of these sessions will be included in future issues of the IPTC Mirror.

News Standards Summit 2005 - Amsterdam

Taking place on 24 May 2005, in conjunction with the IDEAlliance XTech 2005 Conference in Amsterdam, the second News Standards Summit builds on the success of the first one (held during December 2003 in Philadelphia, USA).

The News Standards Summit will bring users, commercial news providers and aggregators together with experts on the standards and will explore how the various standards work, how well they fit together, and the possibility of convergence.

Sponsors of the second News Standards Summit are IPTC, IFRA, IDEAlliance, and G-SAM.

Conference fee is \$148 (plus 19% Dutch VAT) and further details and a registration form can be found at:
<http://www.newssummit.org/2005/>.



Klaus Sprick - bon voyage!

The Spring 2005 Meeting was the last to be attended by Klaus Sprick as a delegate, and his considerable service to the IPTC was recognised by a unanimous vote of the IPTC Committee of the Whole Council making him the first Honorary Member of IPTC.

A dinner in Klaus's honour was held in San Diego during which he was presented with a memento of the esteem in which he is held by the other delegates. The presentation was made by Stéphane Guérillot, who paid tribute to Klaus's efforts on behalf of IPTC:

Being in America, I understand that a public address should start with a joke... I have no joke but, as an engineer talking to an engineer and a fine sailor, I had to find some challenging issues that could be compared (you'll guess) with the IPTC work and fun.

What could be more impressive than a J class yacht - for those not familiar with the J (or 12 metre) class of yachts, it is the reference, the standard for the America's Cup sailing yachts. And we are in San Diego, one of the finest bays in the world, where the America's Cup was raced for, defended, won and lost.

The America's Cup is the most challenging event where engineers and sailors from the whole world are gathered to oppose their skills, their thinking and their technologies to win ... a silver ewer.

I said San Diego is part of the America's Cup history. As from today it is also part of your "history" Klaus as well as part of IPTC's. In 1983 the Cup was lost by the Americans and won by the Australians thanks to very clever engineering, a lot of ingenuity and high team skills. The winning yacht was Australia II with its now famous, innovative, and controversial "winged" keel.

In 1987 the Cup went back to San Diego, and in 2005 IPTC is in San Diego too with a model of Australia II - we could not find the original - as a gift from IPTC to its first Honorary Member.

Klaus, this model is a small souvenir from the organisation it is a symbol of our gratitude for your large contribution to our industry where, within our meetings and working sessions, we, as individuals and as a team, are trying to improve our business and maintain our industry in the innovative sectors. Thank you for those years and for the work done at IPTC.

Herr Sprick joined dpa in 1968, and took part in his first IPTC meeting shortly after. At that time IPTC were mainly concerned with ensuring proper press access to satellite services and obtaining appropriate treatment from telecommunications providers (which were mainly government monopolies).

Subsequent efforts were directed towards the development of standards for the news industry and Klaus was appointed as the first Chair of the newly-established Technical Committee in 1974. The efforts of this Committee resulted in the first IPTC technical standard - IPTC 7901, which is still widely used - in 1979.

He was elected to the Management Committee in 1984 and has remained a member since then, taking on the responsibility of IPTC Chairman during the period 1990 to 1993.

