



IPTC Mirror

IPTC - INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FOR NEWS

NewsML V1.1 Released

The Autumn 2002 Meeting - held in Amsterdam - saw final development and approval of NewsML V1.1, which offers a series of functional improvements, with further progress also being made in a number of other areas.

Standards Committee

Taking his first meeting as Chairman of the Standards Committee, Stéphane Guérillot (AFP) noted that it took place at a time of some changes for IPTC - in particular the handover from outgoing Managing Director David Allen to Michael Steidl, who formally takes up the position next January. He drew members attention to the considerable help that David had given to the Chairmen of the Working Parties, along with his technical input to the work.

Stéphane felt that there was now a need to improve work at the Standards Committee level and he was proposing to introduce a series of changes. Prior to Meetings there will be a teleconference of the Working Party Chairmen to agree the Meeting Schedule and the Working Party Agendas and establish priorities.

This group would also decide on new areas of work; track relevant technology; help promote IPTC by projecting its aims and achievements; and manage liaison with relevant outside organisations such as OASIS. There would also be an effort to try and establish an agreed set of goals, both for the immediate term of the next year and for the next two or three years.

The teleconference would be held at least one month before the Meeting to allow time for members to receive the proper notification.

Meetings will start with a session of the Standards Committee which will present and organise the work that it is hoped to

complete during the meeting. There may also be a Standards Committee Session at the end of the Meeting, primarily to give formal approval to the efforts of the Working Parties. It was recognised that this work would place an additional burden on the Working Party Chairmen, but this was seen as necessary to ensure that IPTC's activities would remain successful.

The Amsterdam Session then received a series of reports by the Working Party Chairmen on the activities of their groups - full reports on the work carried out are included in the following pages. These reports also raised a number of points needing action by the Standards Committee, as follows:

Specialised Content - the departure of Irving Levine (Reuters) meant that there was a need for someone else to take on the task of monitoring, and reporting on, developments in financial standards. At Irving's suggestion this was entrusted to Misha Wolf (Reuters).

News Metadata - proposed additions to the Subject Reference System (SRS) were formally improved. Full implementation of the "Fast Track" procedure for Subject detail additions required the appointment of a jury to review the proposals, and Geoff Haynes (AP), John Minting (UPI), Jean-François Richard (AFP) and Bill Ross (Business-Wire) agreed to serve.

There is also a need for an ad-hoc group to review - and refine as appropriate - more substantial (Subject Matter) proposals before the full Working party sessions. This will be undertaken by the jury members along with other available volunteers.

NewsML Support - a formal motion to approve NewsML V1.1 was approved and the Standard has been released for use. The departure of Irving Levine meant that a new Chairman was needed for the Working Party and Laurent Le Meur (AFP) was appointed.

Agreement was also given to adoption of the name "**Broadleaf**" for the NSK

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This PDF version of the IPTC Mirror has active links to both the content and to external web sites

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RadioTVNewsML format, though a full trademark check will be made before the name is brought into general use.

At the end of the Session, Stéphane Guérillot reminded delegates that this was the last IPTC technical session for David Allen and formally thanked him for the tremendous work he had done. He was glad to know that David would be present during the Spring 2002 Meeting - in Nice - and hoped that David would be able to have a good time there without facing any work pressures.

In a brief reply David thanked everyone for their good wishes and said that he had

greatly enjoyed the technical work along with the contact with members.

Finally Stéphane welcomed Michael Steidl to his new position as Managing Director (see details alongside).

Specialised content

Content for use within NewsML continues to be a very active area with a number of possibilities under investigation and development.

Election Markup:

Chairman Geoff Haynes (AP) reminded members that the main decision to be made in this area was to see if it would make sense for IPTC to develop a common Elections DTD. This would have to be able to deal with a wide variety of countries' political systems and voting arrangements. To help with this a series of presentations was given by members to show how they had dealt with recent elections.

Johan Lindgren (TT) explained that in Sweden the Government Voting Authority provides a regularly updated XML file containing the national election data. The TT system checks the supplied file for updates and breaks down and consolidates the data for distribution to their customers. Output is provided in a number of forms including Web services; internal TT service; FTP to automatically update customers' Web sites; and to the editorial system for subsequent satellite distribution.

After election night an official recount of the votes generates a further set of data which includes details on the people elected.

Describing the dpa experience, Klaus Sprick said that they started to formally handle election results in 1998, with results being generated from a database which also had previous election results for comparison. Results are handled at Federal, Regional and Constituency level.

In 1998 the output was in IPTC 7901 text files with tagging, but for the 2002 elections (in September) output was a text format along with XML for further processing. The XML was based on the NITF table model and this is now available as a regular service. The dpa online department uses XML data to provide real-time, on-line, graphic presentations.

In France different elections (such as Presidential, National and Local) can have different rules and Jean-François Richard explained that this means the format has to be modified to suit. An XML system has been in use for the past two years to handle local elections, and XML was also used for the 2002 presidential elections.

The system gives a dynamic grouping for each election area. In one application

New Managing Director



Michael Steidl

Following an extensive search and a series of interviews, the Management Committee have appointed Michael Steidl as the new IPTC Managing Director. Mr Steidl will be taking over the responsibility next January, and attended the Amsterdam Meeting so that he could start getting to know delegates, and get a taste of what he will be faced with in Nice!

Mr Steidl's background is as a self-employed IT consultant and software developer, producing publishing systems for smaller news agencies, while he also has experience as the Managing Director of a small news agency (Kathpress) in Austria. He is an Austrian, based in Vienna, and will continue to work from there - though IPTC will remain a British registered company.

results are presented in graphical form, and clicking on an area causes the results for the region to pop-up. Information fed into the system is gathered by AFP itself.

In the USA preparations were underway to cover the November elections. Geoff Haynes (AP) said that their impression was that the more technically advanced customers - such as newspapers and television stations - were mainly interested in having results in a delineated database. It seems that the main reason for this is the ease of handling a database. Although an XML markup is also available there is not much demand for it.

Information is gathered by AP reporters along with some government input (from 12 states out of 50) and fed into the database with the output being updated regularly for users to pull a feed as required.

The VNS (Voter News Service) consortium in the USA are building an XML system, which AP will use as an input along with their own feeds.

These presentations confirmed that elections are clearly a major area of interest with individual members making considerable investments in their own systems. However, after some discussion delegates decided that the differences in electoral and political systems meant that development of a universal system by IPTC would be a major undertaking and likely to prove impractical.

Overall, it was agreed that the best approach would be to maintain a watching

brief on other developments and to continue to share information, comments and approaches to help members with their individual implementations.

RadioTVNewsML:

An update of progress on RadioTVNewsML was provided by Manabu Miyake from the Yomiuri Shimbun, on behalf of the NSK Working Group. Since the Spring meeting the group have started to revise the TV-programML DTD with particular attention to program management. When complete DTD V0.2 will be made available on the RadioTV-NewsML web site (www.newsml.jp/radiotv/).

Tokyo News will be using V0.2 of the standard for delivery service tests in Spring 2003, with the aim of starting full deliveries later in the year. Comments on the project from IPTC members would be particularly welcome and it was pointed out that other examples would help shape the development.

Following this presentation the question of the relationship of such DTDs to NewsML and the way they should be named was raised. Was it appropriate to include NewsML in the name in such developments? In some cases the content is structured in such a way that it can be used outside NewsML, so use of the name would not be appropriate, But in other cases the structure might depend on NewsML concepts so inclusion of the name might be appropriate.

After some discussion it was decided that it would be appropriate to look into the possibility of renaming RadioTVNewsML to minimise any possibility of confusion.

Further work on this (outside the main session) resulted in agreement to adopt the name "Broadleaf" - as discussed above in the Standards Committee report.

NewsML Technology In Japan



Takahiro Fujiwara

Takahiro Fujiwara from IBM Japan provided an overview of the work being undertaken by IBM Japan in the development and application of NewsML. They have recently joined IPTC and recognise the importance of cooperation with the organisation.

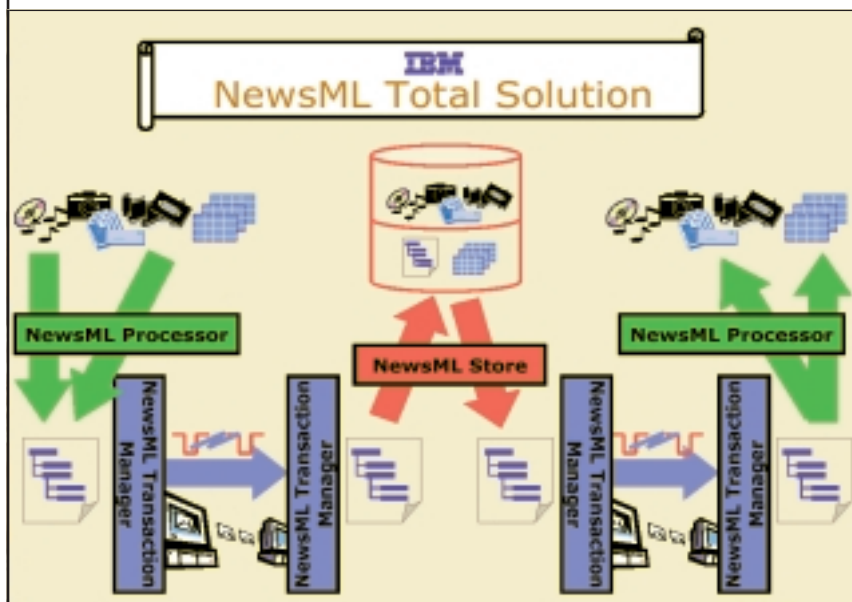
Work is carried out at the Yamato Software Development Laboratory (YSL), which was founded in 1999 and is the newest laboratory in the IBM Software Group. Activities include development of NewsML related software; support for the NSK NewsML Team (with five members); construction of NewsML based systems for newspapers and news agencies; and general promotion of NewsML.

Much of the NewsML activity in Japan is carried out by the Japan Newspaper Publishers & Editors Association (NSK) which includes newspaper companies, news agencies and broadcast companies. Mr Fujiwara is the leader of the NewsML Internal Study Group which uses monthly meetings and a mailing list to increase the number of people with a practical understanding of the standard.

Reference models have been produced to suit specific companies needs, including: Mainichi - content for Internet and PDA devices; Chunichi - image database and data exchange; Tokushima - conversion of the existing Kyodo News format and NSK Tiff (image format) to NewsML; and for RadioTV-NewsML. In addition development work has been carried out on the IPTC Compliance Checker, and an extended explanation of TopicSets produced (available in English on the IPTC Web site).

The company claim to offer a total NewsML solution with an editorial PC system (handling both text and images); NewsML Processor for production (including browsing and editing); a database NewsML Store (with data being saved as NewsML documents); and a NewsML Transaction Manager.

Mr Fujiwara's presentation was complemented by descriptions of specific applications with Naoki Onodera providing details of the Palace System which has been developed for Mainichi Newspapers. Information on a second system at the Chunichi Shimbun was provided by Masaaki Sugimoto, though he had been unable to take part in the meeting and the presentation was made on his behalf. Details of both these systems will be included in a future edition of the Mirror.



Weather Data:

Although weather data was one of the initial areas looked at by the Specialised Content Working Party it has not received a lot of attention so far, with other areas taking priority. It now appears that there is increasing interest from newspapers - particularly in the USA - in being able to process weather data in a more flexible manner. This means that it may now be time to increase the level of IPTC activity in this area.

The Swedish News Agency TT are already handling weather data supplied by the Swedish Government in XML, while Pinnacor use a XML feed supplied by Accu Weather in the USA. There is also a WRXML (Weather Markup Language), but this seems to be mainly intended for financial applications such as future trading. The Hong Kong Observatory have been looking at the possibility of producing an XML Schema for weather data, but this work is still at a very early stage.

Financial Data:

There appeared to have been little development in the various standards for handling financial data in the past few months. The main point of note was that James Hartley - who had been an IPTC delegate for Reuters (and, previously, Bridge) - was now heading up MDDL (Market Data Definition Language) development.

SportsML:

Work is continuing to further refine the standard and Alan Karben (Pinnacor) said that the aim was to produce a draft V1.0 that could be circulated to members for comment and also put out to other interested parties. It was hoped that the process could include some activity at the Sports Media and Technology exhibition to be held in New York during November.

The aim is to make SportsML (www.sportsml.com) as easy to use as possible, with users only having to undertake minimum work to meet their requirements.

To help with this the sports-specific DTDs are being made more consistent and easier to implement with a guideline for future development work. Another area receiving a lot of attention is the handling of controlled vocabularies, with consideration being given to the possibility that some of these vocabularies - such as team names - may also be suitable for use on their own within NewsML.

EventML:

The possibility of producing a markup language to deal with events listings was investigated, with the need for this also being raised during discussions in the News Management group. Areas dealt with might include news schedules, sporting events and

financial earnings calendars, while the content could take in locations, people, organisations, times and dates and news coverage.

Significant interest was shown in the suggestion and it was decided to start establishing what the requirements were. There appear to be a number of other initiatives in this area which will be investigated as part of the effort. Work is being coordinated by Dominic Chan (Canada NewsWire), and a new group EventML-DEV has since been established on Yahoo.

News Management

Chairman Stuart Myles (Dow Jones) informed members that following the San Francisco meeting, there had been a teleconference to address some of the outstanding items. These included investigation of the ways that publishers could use NewsML to indicate the type of News Management that is being provided, and the possibility of enhancing NewsML to provide better News Management functionality.

A proposed way of dealing with the first of these was to introduce an additional NewsItem type of NewsManagementMode - which will have the Property NewsManagementCapabilities. This would

not require any changes to the DTD but would give a formal structure for publishers to identify which news management features they are using.

If required, this approach could be expanded to handle other optional elements. Use of a standardised system is seen as having particular value for subscribers dealing with a number of providers, and the approach could also give added confidence in the data stream by making clear what should be present.

It was generally agreed that the concept was valuable and further work will look at extending it to provide a more detailed profile of the type of service being offered. This could include identification of which of the optional NewsML features are being used, or - for example - what image formats are supported.

A second proposal by Klaus Sprick and Klaus Herwig (both dpa) dealt with the inclusion of Advisories, which can be used to provide a description of the planned schedule and coverage of news events, and an indication of relationships between items. Although described as a small proposal it would introduce a considerable amount of flexibility to NewsML and to the linkage between items. However, it was pointed out that the traditional use of the term 'Advisory' might mean that the name would not be appropriate in the context of

NewsML content management.

The approach is based on application of the ARM (Abstract Relationship Model) originally developed for use with the IIM (Information Interchange Model). Any changes of status would be dealt with using the established NewsML mechanism, while all other operations would be carried out using the AssociatedWith or DerivedFrom elements and a set of LinkTypes.

For example, it would allow users to replace items, add an item to an existing series, or inform users that an item is the same as another item published in a different service. Overall this proposal would make it possible to move towards full lifetime management of news within NewsML - from production planning through reports and updates to a final archive.

The NewsML News Management Guidelines have been updated in response to various comments and it was decided to circulate them as a separate document, rather than as a part of the more specific NewsML News Agency Guidelines.

News Metadata

As in previous meetings the News Metadata Working Party gave consideration to both specific NewsML metadata and the Subject Reference System (SRS), which also has other applications. The Amster-

Content Metadata and Tools

An overview of the ways that the value of content can be enhanced by metadata was provided during the Amsterdam Meeting by Jo Rabin (linguafranca.org) in association with Peter de Bie from Inxight (www.inxight.com).

Mr Rabin started by pointing out that content has to be produced, made accessible and delivered in a useful form, but the ways of doing this have changed. Now the way content is produced is not determined by how it is delivered, while the use of content has become much more individual. At the same time there is a lot more information available and it is unique, targeted information that has intrinsic value.

But most information providers offer content that is similar to that of other providers and they have to find ways of boosting its value. Jo believed that the main contribution that can be made by technology is to make it easier to find, target and be useful - and this is the role of metadata. Metadata schemes have to be designed to suit their purpose - such as the IPTC Descriptive Metadata. Within this there are a number of different areas, such as what it is about, with one of the better known schemes being the IPTC Subject Reference System. Another area is concerned with who, or what, is named in the material.

Fundamentally Jo believed that application of metadata to content is a matter of editorial

judgement and the expression of this judgement is part of the provider's brand. Tools are available to help with this, but their purpose is to enhance judgements rather than replacing them.

In conclusion Jo said that he hoped delegates would agree that the addition of metadata to their content is a key component, with accurate metadata enhancing the value of content.

Mr Rabin's presentation was followed by a demonstration by Peter de Brie of tools designed to allow users make better use of metadata. In particular, the application of Star Tree technology makes it possible to navigate easily through a lot of data - such as a Taxonomy. The graphical interface allows rapid progression through related information nodes with direct links to relevant documents.

Jo Rabin (right) and Peter de Brie (left) explain some of the finer points involved in the effective use of metadata.



dam meeting was the first session under the new Chairman, John Minting (UPI).

Following a submission by the NSK NewsML Team, an entry for NITF has been added to the IPTC Format vocabulary - this appears to have been left out by mistake when the vocabulary was generated. Information on any other formats that appear to have been left out of the TopicSet should be sent to David Allen (by email) for inclusion. In addition, a FormatVersion attribute has been added to the Characteristics property, making it possible for different versions of the NITF, for example, to be identified. A note explaining the use of versioning will be added to the News Agency Guidelines.

The submission also included a request to add CSV (Comma Separated Values) which are commonly used in Japan for handling such material as Financial Data. Although the general principle was accepted, there was some debate because it appears that the delimiting character used need not necessarily be a comma (for example a colon is used in Germany). To resolve this the following definition was approved for the entry CSV - *Text stream containing character delimiters, usually commas but in some cases other*

characters.

When the content of a NewsComponent consists of encoded data, details of the encoding that has been used can be described using a notation attribute. The question was raised of which values should be used for this. One possibility was to use an appropriate existing TopicSet (specifically the Mime Vocabulary), with the alternative being to generate a new TopicSet containing such values as BinHex, base64 and so on.

It was pointed out that the data in this new TopicSet could well be the same as that of the Mime Vocabulary, but its use would minimise the risk of future complications - though keeping to a single TopicSet would make maintenance simpler. Agreement was reached that the cleanest approach was to create a new Encoding TopicSet, though it was also decided to update the Mime TopicSet since this could be used as an alternative, depending on the information provider's preferences.

There was an outstanding proposal for a new Genre of "Advice" but from the definition provided it was unclear if it was meant to cover "Personal" advice or more general advice such as Gardening and Financial Queries. A request was made for the submitters to provide some clarification of the required scope of the Genre.

Moving on to the SRS, the mechanism for making changes and additions was reviewed. John Minting pointed out that procedure outlined in the SRS Guidelines had not been fully put into practice, but there would be advantages in properly implementing them. He considered that the SRS is a living document that should be able to respond rapidly to changes in the news industry. After some consideration it was agreed that the procedures as published were practical and should be put into operation.

One potential problem is that not all areas have fully populated Subject Matter headings, so it may not be possible to use the "Fast Track" mechanism to introduce new Subject Details. However, introduction of additional SubjectMatter entries opens up completely new areas and needs more detailed consideration, so rapid processing is not really appropriate.

SRS additions

Agreement was reached on a number of additions to the SRS including: *Mathematics* (as a SubjectMatter under *Science and Technology*); *Herbal, Holistic, Traditional Chinese, and Western* as SubjectDetails under *Medicine* as a SubjectMatter; along with new Sports Qualifiers for *Injuries and Business*.

There appears to be a need for a Geographical TopicSet covering



The 2002 Autumn Meeting was the last IPTC session for Irving Levine, who is leaving Reuters at the end of the year. At the end of the NewsML Support session he thanked delegates for the opportunity to contribute to the development progress, saying he had found it both rewarding and satisfying.

geographical and political regions. Although a number of external sets - such as the one produced by the UN - have been looked at, the breakdowns do not really correspond to the needs of the news industry and it may be necessary for IPTC to develop its own groupings.

NewsML Support

Main aim of the Working Party was to finalise and approve changes for the first update release of NewsML - two years after the initial release. Discussions during previous meetings had resulted in a series of changes which had been further refined in a teleconference held at the end of August.

Working Party Chairman Irving Levine (Reuters) explained the thinking behind the proposals.

- 1) Replace Genre? with Genre* - this would allow for none/single/multiple use.
- 2) Define a NewsML namespace - see panel alongside.
- 3) Add an optional Version attribute to the NewsML element. This change was critical since a new version of the standard was being introduced and would have to be properly identified. However, changes would always be published using Version 1.0.
- 4) Clarify use of the optional Scheme attribute in the Property element - this was achieved by changing the guidelines.
- 5) Add an optional AllowedScheme attribute to the Property element, making it possible to use externally defined values.
- 6) Clarify use of the Encoding element - to describe the coding used for content. This element can also be used for references to external media.
- 7) Introduce a ByLineTitle element and re-structure NewsLines to allow the option of multiple ByLines.

IPTC Namespaces

Extensive consideration has resulted in agreement on the need to establish namespaces for IPTC standards, with the additional ability to specify the version.

Following discussion with appropriate parties David Allen has submitted an Internet Draft covering a namespace for NewsML Resources, which has been published as RFC3085bis (www.ietf.org). It is hoped that formal approval from the IETF (Internet Engineering Task Force) will be obtained early in 2003.

The proposed format is **urn:newsml:iptc.org:20021006:NewsML**. In order to reduce complexity and speed the registration process this proposed namespace is based on the already registered NewsML URN (Uniform Resource Name) - by replacing the URN "NewsItemID" and "RevisionID Update" elements by a "FormatName".

This structure can be used to provide a namespace for any of the IPTC standards by simply using a different FormatName and an initial declaration has been made for NewsML, NITF and SportsML.

8) Add a logical equivalent of DateLine. To complement the readable text format, A precise logical structure has been developed which allows improved granularity for the location. The way the Location element has been constructed means that it can also be used within content. This is one of the larger modifications to the DTD but is still a relatively minor change.

9) Allow non/single/multiple use of the StatusWillChange element. This makes it possible to indicate a progression of changes on a single news item. For example TV programme details might be sent out with an embargo, become usable on a given date, and be cancelled at a second date.

10) Add a Property element to the Party element to allow better definition of the Party without having to refer to external data.

11) Add a CommentType attribute to Comment element.

These changes represent some two years of consideration and use of NewsML and were described as minor, but critical, and intended to enhance both flexibility and usability. Since there are no major changes the revised version is backwards compatible to the original V1.0, and the proposals were accepted with the new version of the standard approved for release.

Attention then turned to the format that will be used to number new releases. After some discussion it was decided to number releases offering additional functionality with a single digit after the point. This meant that the new release would be V1.1. In the event of an error fix being required this would be denoted by a second digit - such as V1.1.1. Documentation will track the DTD with the addition of a lower case letter to indicate the level - V1.1.a. This makes it possible for the documentation to evolve around an established DTD level.

Schema

Release of the Schema version of NewsML was also approved. This is generally the same as the DTD with the same relationship of the elements and attributes, but with the addition of constructs to allow verification of, for example, dates, xml:lang and the pattern for the PublicIdentifier. A new NewsItem type of Schema will be introduced to allow publication (using V1.0 of the DTD) as `newsml.schema1.1`. A Schema V1.0 will also be released for completeness, and to allow for the fact that V1.0 is needed for publishing revisions.

It is intended to let the Schema numbering track that of the DTD in the same way as the documentation - with the addition of lower-case letter identifiers. This will allow for the

PR Committee

Activities during the Autumn Meeting had resulted in a need for several Press Releases to publicise the achievements. The main, general release will include announcement of NewsML V1.1 - making it clear that this was primarily concerned with added functionality - and cover the appointment of a new Managing Director.

A separate release will deal with availability of the draft SportsML V1.0 and it was hoped that this could be timed to coincide with the forthcoming Sports, Media and Technology Trade Show (November 2002, New York). The release would ask interested parties to test and evaluate the standard and would be aimed at specific targets, such as Sports Associations, Web Sites and Sports Publishers.

In addition there would be a release on the IPTC Web site covering the Broadleaf project, also seeking feedback from other interested parties.

It was recognised that widespread distribution of IPTC Press Releases can be an expensive process and major releases will continue to use established (paid for) channels along with publication on the IPTC Web site. Other releases - such as pre-Meeting announcements - would only appear on the site. In addition it was proposed to form an archive of releases, which would gradually build up to help provide a general introduction to IPTC and its activities.

Members were also asked to try and include contacts from appropriate areas of their web-sites back to the IPTC site. The possibility of producing a standard link logo for this would be looked into.

Concluding, Chairman Walter Baranger (New York Times) told delegates that he was pleased to formally take on the duties of Chairman (having previously acted on a pro-tem basis).

introduction of corrections to the Schema (if required) when the problem is specific to the Schema version. This general numbering principle will also be applied to other standards such as SportsML.

A number of additional issues were identified for further investigation - and possible inclusion at some future date in a V1.2 development. These included development of a series of ContentCreationDates; a look at the structure used for Subject Reference System codes; and more general changes in the metadata structure to take account of other developments - such as the inclusion of TopicMaps and RDF (Resource Description Framework) - which may become more widely used.

News Industry Text Format Maintenance

Summarising recent activity Alan Karben (Pinnacor) reminded members that the AGM had approved release of NITF V3.1, with one of the outstanding items being definition of a NITF namespace. It was explained that an Internet Draft covering namespaces for IPTC standards has been published as RFC3085bis (www.ietf.org) and the proposed format for the NITF is **urn:newsml:iptc.org:20021006:NITF** - more information on this is included in the

box on the previous page.

Work has continued on the spreadsheet and stylesheet for mapping between NITF and NewsML. These are seen as valuable tools for both reference and applications and will be made available on the NITF web site when they have been finalised.

One of the aims for work towards NITF V3.2 is to improve internationalisation and a first issue concerns the handling of "ruby", which is used in Japanese to provide additional information on text characters.

A detailed explanation of the need was provided by Naoki Onodera who said a solution was needed for multimedia applications. He explained that ruby could be used both to provide a pronunciation guide and for annotation - such as the explanation of an abbreviation. A further complication is that there are different styles of ruby as it may be applied to a single (Kanji) character or to a word formed from several characters.

With the requirements more firmly established attention was given to ways of handling them in the NITF and after some discussion agreement was reached on the approach to be adopted. This will now be developed into a full proposal for consideration at the next meeting. Members were asked to raise any other internationalisation issues that they have encountered.