

ECMA TC39 Chairman's Report to the Co-ordinating Committee

1st May 1997

There have been three TC39 meetings:

First: Mountain View, CA, USA on 2nd - 22nd November 1996

Second: Cupertino, USA, on 14th - 15th January 1997

Third: Cupertino, USA, on 18th - 19th March 1997

The participation includes all known producers and many interested parties in the field:

Netscape, NIST, Borland, HP, W3C, Mainssoft, Pithecanthropus/JTC1/SC22/SG, Apple, Spyglass, Nombas, Silicon Graphic, Microsoft, Sun, IBM, Unisys, Digital, Ilog, and KPN.

A representative of JTC1/SC22, the ISO Subcommittee responsible for programming languages, and chairman of the Java Study Group (JSG) in SC22 also participated as a liaison to SC22 and will play a key advisory role in the JTC1 fast-track.

At the first meeting some of the participating companies were members of ECMA and some were not. By the third meeting most of the participating companies joined ECMA.

At the first meeting a very aggressive schedule was set and adhered to:

1 st draft:	January 1997
Stable draft:	early March 1997
Final draft:	April 1997
GA vote;	June 1997
Fast-track submission to ISO/IEC JTC 1:	July 1997
Publication as ISO Standard:	Spring 1998

ECMA created a reflector, ftp site and web page for TC39.

The proposed Scope and Programme of Work of TC39 is:

Scope

To standardise the syntax and semantics of a general purpose, cross platform, vendor-neutral scripting language.

Programme of Work

Develop a scripting language standard, based on initial submissions by Netscape, Microsoft and Borland
Contribute the ECMAScript Standard to ISO/IEC JTC1

Upon completion of 1, to investigate the further direction of the ECMAScript Standard, and to evaluate and consider proposals for complementary or additional technology

To maintain liaison with appropriate other ECMA TCs and TGs

Officers

Chairman: Mr. G. Robinson (Sun)

Vice-Chairman: Mr. C. Cargill (Netscape)

Vice-Chairman: Mr. S. Wiltamuth (Microsoft)

Principal editor: Mr. M. Gardner (Borland)
Midway the Editor was changed to Guy Steele (Sun)

After the second meeting the working procedure was to have an editing meeting every week. On alternating weeks this meeting would be face-to-face, and alternating weeks it would be a teleconference. There was a note taker and an Editor. This process was very challenging but produced the results the group wanted.

The results are the following:

A unanimously accepted draft standard.
A name, LiveScript, to be Trade Marked by ECMA

Chair's comment:

These two simple lines don't do justice to the work of this group. TC39 took on a very difficult Program of Work and a very tight schedule. To add to the difficulties very few of the participants had any standards experience and very few knew each other. By the end second meeting TC39 had converted these competing and inexperienced standards people into a single tightly bound dedicated standards producing committee. They met goals for the draft standard and their schedule.

Special thanks must go to the Editors: M. Gardner, R. Solton, and Guy Steele; and the "note-taker", S. Wiltamuth.

The next step for TC39 is to collect thoughts on the next version of LiveScript. The next meeting is set for 15,16 July 1997 at Netscape in California with a following meeting in Nice F.

Gary S. Robinson (Sun Microsystems)
Chairman TC39