

Standardizing Information and Communication Systems

TC39 Chairman's Report to the General Assembly

06 October 2000

Officers

Chairman: Andrew Clinick (Microsoft)
Vice-Chairman: Dr. Clayton Lewis (Netscape)

For reference the most recent chairmans report is contained in ECMA/TC39/00/1

Meetings

The following 3 technical meetings of TC39 and one TC39 meeting have occurred since the most recent report.

Bristol, England, 27th September 2000
Orlando, Florida, USA July 13th 2000
TC 39 Bristol, England, 28th September 2000

Future meetings

The following meetings are planned

Nov 6-9, Mountain View, CA (Netscape)
Dec 4-7, Cupertino, CA (HP)
Jan 16-19 Redmond, WA (MS)
Feb 13-16, Phoenix, AZ (Intel)
TC 39 meeting March 13th in Redmond hosted by Microsoft

Progress

'TC39 agrees to undertake into its Programme of Work the development of standards for C[#] and CLI as proposed in TC39/2000/2 and further clarified by TC39/2000/4. Furthermore, and recognizing that the undertaking of this new work will likely result in substantial additional resources being added to the Committee, TC39 anticipates the need to create TGs within its structure to facilitate both the rapid deployment of the new work and the continued emphasis on its current work. TC39 resolves to implement such a new structure in a manner as to cause minimal impact to its organization and ongoing Work Items. Finally, TC39 resolves to review both its structure and its terms of reference and to make recommendations respecting amendments, if appropriate, by way of the Chairman's Report to the CC not later than May 2001.'

Latest Status:

At the September 2000 TC39 meeting it was unanimously agreed that in addition to developing a standard for ECMAScript TC39 will undertake work to develop standards for a programming language named C# (pronounced C sharp) and a Common Language Infrastructure. To facilitate this within TC39 3 Task groups will be set up:

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- TG1: Dynamic Scripting Languages
- TG2: C[#]
- TG3: Common Language Infrastructure (CLI)

TC39 unanimously agreed to appoint the following officers to each Task Group

- TG 1: Dynamic Scripting Languages
 - Convenor: Dr. Lewis (Netscape)
 - Editor: Vacancy
- TG2: C[#]
 - Convenor: Ms. Thompson (HP)
 - Editor: Mr. Jaeschke (Microsoft)
- TG3: Common Language Infrastructure (CLI)
 - Convenor: Mr. Ruby (IBM)
 - Editor: Mr. Miller (Microsoft)

The additional work undertaken by TC39 necessitates an update to the Scope and Programme of work for the TC. It is proposed that the Scope be changed to encompass the new work being undertaken. The new scope for TC39 will be:

To standardize the syntax and semantics of a general purpose, cross platform, vendor-neutral scripting language (ECMAScript), the programming language C[#] (C “sharp”) and a Common Language Infrastructure (CLI)

The Programme of Work for TC39 will be amended to:

1. Develop a scripting language standard, based on initial submissions by Netscape, Microsoft and Borland
2. Develop a programming language standard based on the initial submission by Microsoft, Hewlett Packard and Intel
3. Develop a Common Language infrastructure standard based on the initial submission by Microsoft, Hewlett Packard and Intel
4. Contribute the standards to ISO/IEC JTC1
5. On completion of standards 1,2 and 3 investigate the further direction of the ECMAScript, C[#] and CLI
6. Evaluate and consider proposals for complementary or additional technology
7. To maintain liaison with appropriate other ECMA TCs and TGs

The convener of each Task Group will provide an agreed Programme of Work for their Task group. This will be provided to the TC39 chairman in time for the General Assembly meeting in December.

The ECMAScript Working Group met June 7th 2000, July 13th 2000 and September 27th 2000. The committee is working hard on ECMAScript 2.0, an ambitious much-improved ECMAScript language definition that it hopes to standardize in the year 2001 (though this may be overly ambitious). The principal goal of ECMAScript 2.0 is to provide support for ‘programming in the large’ - that is, to support construction of programs written by several different people and assembled, perhaps for the first time, on the user’s desktop. Work is going relatively slowly, primarily due to the scale of the change work but some progress is being made.

To provide a version of ECMAScript that is more suited to running on mobile devices a working group within the ECMAScript Task Group will be formed to prepare a Mobile Profile of ECMAScript. Mr. Raggett (W3C) volunteered to chair a Working Group to prepare a draft. It will be decided at a later moment in time whether the subset will be published as a (normative) annex within the 4th edition of ECMA-262 or as a TR. The TC39 Chairman will announce the new Working Group and will send out an invitation to TC39 experts to participate in this WG.

The results of the fast-track ballot of the current edition of ECMA-262 in ISO/IEC JTC 1 are available. The main comments come from the Japanese National Body (JNB). Mr. Clinick will prepare a draft Resolution of Comments (RoC) Report to resolve the ballot results: a meeting for the ballot resolution is not needed. If this is acceptable to JTC 1/SC22 (which includes JNB) then the draft will become the final RoC Report, and an SC22 document number will be assigned to it. Mr. Clinick will also prepare the so-called Final DIS (Draft International Standard) text which includes the result of the ballot resolution; to this an SC22 document number will be assigned as well. The RoC Report and the Final DIS text will be sent by the ECMA Secretariat to ISO/IETF which takes care of the publication by ISO/IEC of the new edition of ISO/IEC 16262.

Drafts to be submitted to the GA for adoption

None

Recommendations

Consistent with the agreements made at the most recent meeting of TC39, and in consultation with the SG the following recommendations are made by the chairman:

The Scope be changed to encompass the new work being undertaken. The new scope for TC39 will be:

To standardize the syntax and semantics of a general purpose, cross platform, vendor-neutral scripting language (ECMAScript), the programming language C[#] (C “sharp”) and a Common Language Infrastructure (CLI)

The Programme of Work for TC39 will be amended to:

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- On completion of standards 1,2 and 3 investigate the further direction of the ECMAScript, C# and CLI
- Evaluate and consider proposals for complementary or additional technology
- To maintain liaison with appropriate other ECMA TCs and TGs

Andrew Clinick
Chairman TC39