

Proposed Timeline for ISO/IEC JTC 1 Fast-Track

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Based on my experience with the first round of standardization of the C# and CLI specifications, here's my suggestion for a timeline for the TC39 standards voted out of TC39 in March 2005.

1. Mar, 2005, TC39 agrees to forward the final draft based on the TG's recommendation.
2. Jun, 2005, the Ecma office will notify JTC 1 that Ecma expects to submit the spec via the Fast Track process in Jul, 2005, and provides an advance copy of the draft spec for circulation as a courtesy.
3. Jun, 2005, at its semi-annual business meeting, the Ecma General Assembly (GA) adopts the submission as an Ecma standard, Version x, gives it a number, and makes it available for free from the Ecma public website.
4. Jul, 2005, the Ecma standard is submitted to JTC 1 for Fast Track processing. JTC 1 determines that Subcommittee 22 (SC22 — programming languages and environments) is the appropriate home for this, and assigns the task to SC22.
5. Mid-Jul, 2005, SC22 starts a 6-month letter ballot period.
6. While National Bodies (NBs) are reviewing the specs and, ultimately, submitting comments, so too can the originating TG via Ecma. That TG might want to meet in person or have one or more phone conferences to determine what these comments are and possibly what should be its own formal response to those comments.
7. Jan 1, 2006, a JTC 1 ballot resolution meeting date, location, chairman, and project editor are proposed by Ecma.
8. Mid-Jan, 2006, SC22's 6-month letter ballot period ends and all comments are due to JTC 1's ITTF. (All comments must be submitted electronically using a specific Word template.)
9. Feb 1, 2006, JTC 1's ITTF collates all the ballots and their associated comments, and makes them available to the ballot resolution committee (which is, essentially, the originating TG).
10. Feb 1, 2006, the SC22 Secretariat announces the date and location of the ballot resolution meeting.
11. Feb 1–mid-Mar, 2006, the TG works on producing formal responses to all public comments.
12. Late Mar, 2006, the ballot resolution meeting is held for x days. Any NB that has voted NO on the ballot must send a representative; otherwise, their NO vote will be ignored. (Assuming that all or a sufficient number of the NBs voting NO convert that to a YES based on decisions made at the ballot resolution meeting, the draft is unofficially an ISO/IEC standard.)
13. Apr, 2006, the project editor integrates all changes based on the ballot resolution meeting, and forwards the revised spec to ITTF for final proofing and processing.
14. May, 2006, the corresponding Ecma standard is revised to match that adopted by ISO/IEC.

15. Sep, 2006, TC39 votes to forward this revised draft to the Ecma GA for adoption.
16. Late Sep, 2006, the spec is announced as an ISO/IEC standard.
17. Sep, 2006, at the annual ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 22 plenary, I (as Ecma-to-SC22 liaison) request that JTC 1 make available for free, the ISO/IEC version of the standard.
18. Nov, 2006, JTC 1 approves the free availability.
19. Dec, 2006, the Ecma GA adopts Version x+1 of the standard, which, except for some typographical and front matter differences, is identical to that from ISO/IEC.

As you can see, the Fast Track process takes about 15 months, Jul, 2005 to Sep, 2006.

Ordinarily, Ecma TC39 and the GA deal with new or revised standards at their semi-annual meetings. (While this could be done via letter ballots, it's not the normal case.) As such, this timeline synchronizes with the Mar, 2005, and Jun, 2005, meetings of TC39 and the GA, respectively. If the Mar, 2005, date is missed, the whole schedule will slip 6 months, to synchronize with the next TC39 and GA meetings.