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Disposition of comments made on ‘Evaluator’s guide’ (SC7 N 1136)

1. Introduction

The SC7 document N 1317 ‘Evaluator’s guide’[Now known as ‘Process for evaluators’] was submitted for ballot to SC7 member bodies as CD 14598-5.2. All the comments made have been collected in SC7 document N 1369. The present document lists all these comments according to their type and scope and proposes a disposition for each of them. An implementation of these dispositions is proposed in version 08 of the project. Previous versions of this disposition of comments, as well as intermediate versions of the project were reviewed during WG6 meetings in Dublin (November 1995) and in Prague (May 1996). After review by WG6, this disposition of comments and version 8 of the project have been approved and sent to SC7 secretariat for DIS ballot.

Comments considered

Comments on SC7 N 1317 have been made by the Czech Republic (CZ), Japan (JPN), Korea (KO), Sweden (SWE), UK (UK) and the USA (US).

2. General Comments

(US-1) The USNB wishes to compliment and thank SC7/WG6 for their dedicated work in producing this carefully constructed and informative document.

Disposition: Thank you very much.

(US-2) A project requirements document was not available for the review of this document as specified in the 1994 SC7 Plenary Resolutions.

Disposition: See WG6 document 6/N-317.

(US-3) Is this document a standard or a guideline? If it is guideline, it contains useful information; but "shalls" should not be used. If it is a standard, it contains too much detail. Most requirements are at a procedural level. In fact, if the terms "evaluator" and "requester" were changed to enterprise names, this document could probably be signed and executed as a procedural contract.

Disposition: The title of the proposed standard was changed as decided by SC7 at the Brisbane meeting.

(US-5) The information provided for specifying and allocating quality requirements is inadequate, whether for an existing product a new development. What are the criteria for allocation of subcharacteristics to components;e.g. are all

subcharacteristics allocated to all components? What if the customer has more than one reliability requirement, the specifics of which depend on how the product is used (i.e. one software product with multiple missions); then how are decisions made about allocations? Is the allocation of a reliability subcharacteristic to a component the same as allocating (part of a) reliability requirement to that component? Does the approach to allocating reliability requirements affect the ability to demonstrate levels of product reliability?

Disposition: The information requested by this comment are beyond the scope of this standard, the objective of which is to define procedural requirements for conducting evaluations. Of course, the information requested would be of very high interest; however, one can doubt the possibility of obtaining a consensus on this topic.

- (US-6) The only type of evaluation mentioned is "evaluation of components". What about evaluation of collections of components and of the whole product? For example, would component evaluation be sufficient to demonstrate that product reliability requirements have been satisfied?

Disposition: The definition of "component" has been clarified to make clear that components can be collections of components. In addition, the fact that evaluation actions can target the product as a whole and not just components has been added throughout the document.

- (US-7) The term "criticality" is used several times but is not well-defined. How is criticality different than quality? Should criticality be reflected in the quality requirements?

Disposition: The notion of "criticality" is replaced by quality in 4.4.3 and 5.2.2 while in 5.2.1 the notion of "risk in using the product" is introduced.

- (US-8) Are field trials planned to demonstrate the validity and usefulness of the information in this document?

Disposition: Evaluations conforming to these requirements are being performed. However, no plans have been set up to make this experience public. Ideas on this topic are welcome.

- (US-9) Finally, the document needs to be brought into harmony with other work of JTC1/SC7, specifically:

. Life-cycle terminology with ISO/IEC 12207

. Use of levels in Annex C with the work on Integrity Levels in JTC1/SC7/WG9

Disposition: A statement has been added in the introduction to stress the complementarity of this standard with ISO/IEC12207. Moreover, the terminology in Annex C has been aligned with that of WG9 work.

(CZ-3) Services associated to a software product should not be considered as a part of the present standard. It may be useful to prepare the special guide for the evaluation of software services, training etc.

Disposition: accepted.

(KO-1) It should be defined the relationship with evaluation activities in software life-cycle process (ISO/IEC 12207), for example, quality assurance, verification and validation, certification, and audit in the supporting process.

Disposition: See US 9.

(KO-2) Also, the evaluation criteria are different according to the software products. Evaluation examples for this are suggested in Annex C, but tailoring process is necessary for application.

Disposition: See US 9. Moreover, the standard describes how to specify and design the evaluation, which gives much flexibility in tailoring the process.

(UK-1) SC7 should expedite the progression of a resolution from its 1992 Plenary for the development of a "Working Glossary for SC7". Reason: If each of the various SC7 standards and multi-part standards published or under development, continue to include their own page-length sets of new definitions, correct choice of terms for use in new texts will become increasingly onerous.

Disposition: Some effort has been made to harmonise vocabulary across WG6 documents. They were very close to some of ISO/IEC 14598-1 to which they have been aligned.

(UK-2) The normative text of ISO/IEC 14598-5 should be presented as a set of Evaluation process requirements, by a) shifting the present clause 4 to an informative annex; b) in the present clause 5: replacing usage of the verb "should" with "shall" (and where that is not desirable, by reformatting the "should" sentence as a NOTE.)

Disposition: There are no requirements or recommendations in clause 4; it can therefore be considered as an explicitation of the definitions in clause 3. Concerning clause 5, the three types of clauses in a requirement standard: requirements ("shall" sentences), recommendations ("should" sentences) and permissions ("may" sentences) may be used in the normative text. Moreover, the proposed modification would change the structure too much and the conversion from "shoulds" to "shalls" would change the meaning.

Detailed Comments

Foreword

(UK-4) Foreword & Annex B, line 22: Amend to show annexes A and B as normative. Retain in Annex B, definitions only for terms used in the normative text of 14598-5.

Disposition: The definitions in annex B are not used in the normative text and may cause confusion. Therefore annex B is deleted.

(SC7-1) The titles of the other parts of the standard have been changed.

Introduction

(JPN-1) pp v: ISO/IEC 9126

Disposition: accepted.

(UK-5) Introduction, line 1: Replace "Software products are getting..." with "Software products are becoming..."

Disposition: accepted.

Title

(CZ-5) We don't propose any changes of the title of the considered standard.

Disposition: See SC7-2.

(UK-3) Replace the title by: "Information technology - Software Engineering - Software product evaluation - Part 5: Evaluation process requirements"

Disposition: See SC7-2.

(SC7-2) The title is changed to "Process for evaluators".

Scope (1)

(US-4) It is not clear whether the scope of this document is limited to evaluation of existing products or includes development of new products.

Disposition: The scope includes these two aspects. A paragraph and a note have been added in the Scope clause.

(UK-6) Page 1 (scope), line 5: Reformat the present text as a subclause, headed:

1.1 Purpose and applicability.

Insert a subclause giving guidance on compliance:

1.2 Terms for compliance

Because of the freedom of choice afforded to the user by the general nature of its recommendations, a simple claim of compliance with this part of ISO/IEC 14598 is not valid. Any organization imposing this part of this international standard as a condition of trade is responsible for specifying and making public a set of required processes, activities and tasks which constitute the terms for compliance for a given application of this standard (see clause 5).

Disposition: Implemented as clause 5.

Normative references (2)

(SWE-1) Page 1, line 26: Add: 1993 Information technology - Software packages - Quality requirements and testing.

Disposition: The requirements in ISO/IEC 12119 apply to software products, not to evaluation processes.

(SWE-2) Page 1, line 28: Add: ISO/IEC 9126-1 (new) Information Technology Software quality characteristics and metrics - part 1: Quality characteristics and sub-characteristics.

Disposition: A document can only be referenced when at DIS level. The 1991 version is better.

(SWE-3) ISO/IEC 9126-2 (new) Information technology - Software quality characteristics and metrics - Part 2: External metrics.

Disposition: A document can only be referenced when at DIS level.

(SWE-4) ISO/IEC 9126-3 (new) Information technology - Software quality characteristics and metrics - Part 2: Internal metrics.

Disposition: A document can only be referenced when at DIS level.

(SWE-5) ISO/IEC 14598-1 (new) Information technology - Product evaluation Part 1: General guide

Disposition: Accepted.

Definitions (3)

(UK-7) Page 2, line 1: Replace the first sentence with "For the purposes of this part of ISO/IEC 14598, the definitions reproduced in Annex B, together with the following apply".

Page 2, line 3: Delete the sentence, beginning: "Further definitions..."

Disposition: Solved as a consequence of UK-4.

- (JPN-3) pp. 2, 3. Definition, 3.1 component: The component and the configuration item are seemed to be distinguished. Relations between them should be described in note.

Disposition: The use of “configuration item” in annex D has been replaced by that of “component”.

- (SWE-6) Page 2, line 14 and 15: Explain more restricted or remove sentence.

Disposition: End of sentence deleted.

- (SWE-7) Page 2, line 18: Change can occur in with can be a part of, if that is the meaning

Disposition: Accepted.

- (UK-8) Page 2, line 22: Replace the body of this definition with "documented objective evidence of all activities performed and of all results achieved within the evaluation process."

Disposition: Accepted.

- (UK-9) Page 2, line 24: Reformat the second sentence of the definition as a NOTE.

Disposition: Accepted.

- (UK-10) Page 2, line 31: The term "metric" should probably be shown as "(software product) metric" because plain "metric" is a common dictionary term.

Disposition: Accepted.

- (UK-11) Page 2, line 33: Replace "and designated the delivery to a user" with "as being the deliverable item".

Disposition: Replaced "and designated for the delivery to a user"

- (UK-12) Page 2: Insert a new definition after 3.11 "deliverable (item): any item for which an agreement to deliver exists".

Disposition: Should not be necessary

- (JPN-2) pp.3, 3. Definition: (Software product), (evaluation), that is, "(")" are needed?

Disposition: Accepted.

- (JPN-4) pp.3, 3. Definitions, 3.8, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11: 3.8 measure, 3.9 measurement, 3.10 metric, 3.11 software product Description should be consistent with General Guide. Otherwise, instead of definition, it may be only noted that a reader can refer to the General Guide.

Disposition: Accepted.

- (CZ-1) (3.13, p.3. line 1 and 5.5.2.3, p. 15 line 25-26) Evaluation tools may collect, perform interpretation and evaluate also more general data (indicators), then raw and intermediate data only.

Disposition: Accepted.

- (JPN-5) pp.3, 3.Definitions, 3.13 (evaluation) tool "software product" is too limited. Evaluation tool should include documents for evaluation such a check list or table.

Disposition: Accepted.

Evaluation Concepts (4)

- (UK-13) Page 3, line 6: Move the whole of clause 4 to an informative annex (?), Insert the following NOTE under the main heading of clause 5.

NOTE - guidance on the interpretation of the text of this clause is given in Annex (?) (informative)

Disposition: See UK-2.

General Aspects (4.1)

- (JPN-6) pp.3, 4.1 General aspects, 2nd para.: It should be explained with more detailed examples what kinds of methods are non-deterministic evaluation method?

Disposition: A note proposing an example has been added.

Parties involved in the evaluation (4.2)

- (UK-14) Page 3, line 19: Replace the Title for 4.2 with "Evaluation specification"

Disposition: Replaced by "Evaluation starting point"; "Evaluation specification" has a very specific meaning in rest of the standard.

- (UK-15) Page 3, line 20: Insert subclause heading: "4.23.1 Evaluation specification agreement" followed by the text of lines 20 to 24 inclusive.

Disposition: Added "4.2.1. Initial agreement".

- (UK-16) Page 3, line 25: Insert subclause heading: "4.2.4 Parties involved in the evaluation" followed by the text of lines 25 to 38 inclusive.

Disposition: Accepted.

- (SWE-8) Page 3, line 37: Add after even if the words the developer is

Disposition: Accepted.

Characteristics of the evaluation process (4.3)

(UK-17) Page 4, line 2: Replace the complete text of this clause with "A principal objective of the evaluation process described in this part of ISO/IEC 14598 is to promote the following desirable evaluation process characteristics:

- repeatability: repeated evaluation of the same product to the same evaluator should produce results that can be accepted as being identical.
- reproducibility: evaluation of the same product to the same evaluation specification by different evaluator should produce results that can be accepted as being identical.
- impartiality: the evaluation should not be biased towards any particular result.
- objectivity: the evaluation results should be factual, i.e. not coloured by the feelings or the opinions of the evaluator.

NOTE - Evaluations of the same product can be conducted with different evaluation specifications. They are therefore not comparable and may lead to different results."

Disposition: Accepted.

Evaluation process (4.4)

(UK-18) Page 4, line 14: Replace "the process for the evaluation..." with "the evaluation process (see clause 5)."

Disposition: Accepted.

(UK-19) Page 4, line 20: Replace "... to fulfil varied requirements and all potential requesters are not concerned by the same issues." with "...to fulfil the particular evaluation specification agreed by a requester (see 4.2.1)."

Disposition: Replaced by "... to fulfil varied requirements and an evaluation requester may agree particular evaluation requirements (see 4.2.1)."

Evaluation activities (4.4.1)

(UK-20) Page 4, line 27: Replace this line with "the evaluation process (see clause 5) comprises the five activities listed below."

Disposition: Accepted.

(UK-21) Page 4, line 28: Replace lines 27 and 28 with "analysis of evaluation requirements (see 4.2.1)."

Disposition: Accepted.

(UK-22) Page 4, line 30: Replace lines 30 and 31 with "specification of the evaluation based on the evaluation requirements and the description of the product provided by the requester (see 4.2.1)"

Disposition: Accepted.

(UK-23) Page 4, line 32: Replace "which produce..." with "which produces..."

Disposition: Accepted.

Input to the evaluation process (4.4.2)

(JPN-7) pp.5, 4.4.2 Input to the evaluation process: (The following text should be described in NOTE):

NOTE: It the requester is the user, the user should agree with the developer to support the evaluator and may direct the developer to send to the evaluator the description of software component and software product to be evaluated.

Disposition: Accepted

(JPN-9) pp.5, 4.4.2 :(List of inputs of evaluation process and their explanation should be described separately. It also makes the description correspondent well to the Fig. 2.)

Requester's Input

The requester provides initially the following input to the evaluation process:

Requester's Requirements

The requester provides intermediately the following input to the evaluation process:

- evaluation requirements;
- product description;
- product components.

Evaluation requirements may be an initial version of evaluation requirements.

Product description is description of...

The evaluator provides initially or intermediately the following input to the evaluation process:

- pre-defined evaluation specifications;
- evaluation methods;
- evaluation tools.

Disposition: Accepted with slight modifications.

Output of the evaluation process (4.4.3)

(UK-24) Page 5, line 25: Replace "... to allow to re-process the evaluation results" with "... to allow re-processing of the evaluation results".

Disposition: Accepted.

(JPN-8) pp.5, 4.4.3 Output of the evaluation process: (The final product and the intermediate product should be distinguished each another for more understandable. So, the following text should be additionally attached.)

The evaluation requirements and evaluation specification are the intermediate products of evaluation process. The evaluation records and evaluation report are the final products of evaluation process.

It also should be described in Fig, 2 that a larger box with the arrows of Requester's input "and" Evaluator's input" from outside into the box and with the other arrows of "evaluation records" and "evaluation report" from inside of box to outside.

Disposition: Accepted;

(JPN-10) pp.5, 4.4.3: (List of outputs of evaluation process and their explanation should be described separately. It also makes the description correspondent well to Fig. 2)

During the evaluation process, the evaluator provides the following output products:

- evaluation requirements;
- evaluation specifications;
- evaluation plan;
- evaluation record;
- record of evaluation actions;
- synthetic evaluation results;
- draft evaluation report

Evaluation requirements describe...

Evaluation specification defines...

Evaluation plan is that...

Evaluation record is that...

As the results of the evaluation process, the evaluator provides finally the following output products:

- evaluation record;
- reviewed evaluation report.

Evaluation record contains...

Disposition: Accepted with slight modifications.

Relations between evaluation and life-cycle (4.5)

(SWE-9) Page 6, line 9 and 12: the word submitted is hard to understand, maybe is the word performed that is meant

Disposition: Accepted.

Evaluation process requirements (5)

General requirements (5.1)

Organisation and quality system (5.1.1)

(UK-25) Page 7, line 3: Insert here the list of "desirable characteristics" referenced in 5.1.1.

Disposition: Accepted.

(UK-26) Page 7, line 8: Explain in the NOTE, exactly which requirements of ISO/IEC Guide 25: 1990 are "interpreted or further refined" in this clause.

Disposition: This improvement would be interesting, however the discussion on how requirements in ISO/IEC guide 25 are interpreted or further refined would lead to difficulties. It is therefore better to remove the existing note.

Requester's responsibilities (5.1.2)

(JPN-11) pp.7, 1.2.3, 25, 5.1.2:

- to ensure the timely...> to inform, whenever necessary, the...
- to inform the ...> to inform, whenever necessary, the...

Disposition: Accepted.

Evaluator's responsibilities (5.1.3)

Analysis of evaluation requirements (5.2)

(CZ-2) (5.2.2, p.8 line 23) The sentence "In particular, the criticality of the product should be taken into account" seems to be redundant, as the sentence which begins on the line 17 ("critical issues such as ...") has the similar meaning.

Disposition: The sentence has been removed.

(JPN-12) pp.8-16, 5.2, 5.3,5.4, 5.5: There are some expressions where it is difficult to distinguish whether an activity or a product (document)

Because here is explanation of process, the description should be arranged such below to help readers to understand.

5.X.1 purpose of (activity)

5.X.2 elaboration of (activity)

- list of sub-activities with explanation
- additional explanation of activities including output products or items corresponding to the activity.

5.X.3 contents of (output products)

- list of sub-activities with explanation
- additional explanation of output products or items

5.X.4 approbation and reporting

Disposition: See dispositions of related comments below.

(JPN-13) (relating to Comment 12), pp.8, 5.2.1: Title: "Purpose of the analysis of evaluation requirements"

Disposition: Accepted.

(JPN-14) (relating to comment 12), pp.8, 1.8: The purpose of the analysis of evaluation requirements

Disposition: Accepted.

(JPN-15) (relating to comment 12), pp.8, 5.2.2: Title: "Elaboration" of the analysis of evaluation requirements"

Disposition: Rejected because "Elaboration" applies to a product.

(JPN-16) (relating to comment 12), pp.8, 5.2.2: (It is recommended that the below text should be added)

The activity of analysis of the evaluation requirements is composed of the following sub-activities:

- proposing requester's requirements by the requester;
- expressing the extent of the coverage of the evaluation by the requester;
- supporting the requester in analyzing the reason for evaluation and in describing the evaluation requirements by the evaluator;
- explaining the extent of confidence and stringency of evaluation by the evaluator;
- agreeing on the evaluation requirements.

Disposition: Accepted.

(JPN-17) pp.8, 1.13, 1.20, 5.2.2: (The "requester's requirements" is not referred anywhere in 5.2)

The requester of the evaluation shall propose the evaluation requirements...

The requester of the evaluation shall propose the requester's requirements...

The requester shall express requirements...

The requester shall express requester's requirements

Disposition: First part of the comment accepted - for the second part, the text refers to only one element of the "requester's requirements".

(JPN-18) pp.8, 1.36, 5.2: Evaluation Level Annex B.> Annex C

Disposition: Accepted.

Specification of the evaluation (5.3)

(JPN-19) (relating to comment 12) pp.9, 5.3: Title: "Specifying of evaluation"

Disposition: Accepted.

(JPN-20) (relating to comment 12) pp.9, 5.3.1: Title: "Purpose of the specifying of evaluation specification"

Disposition: Accepted.

(SWE-10) Page 9, line 22: Add after should not the word contain

Disposition: Accepted.

(UK-27) Page 9, line 22: Replace "...should not proprietary..." with a correctly worded text.

Disposition: Accepted.

(UK-28) Page 9, line 24: Replace the sentence beginning "therefore it would not be advisable..." with a correctly worded text.

Disposition: Tried.

(JPN-21) (relating to comment 12) pp.9, 1.16

The evaluation specification shall...

The specifying the evaluation shall...

Disposition: Accepted.

(JPN-22) (relating to comment 12) pp.9, 5.3.2: Title: "Elaboration of the specifying evaluation specification"

Disposition: Rejected (see comment JPN-15).

(JPN-23) (relating to comment 12) pp.9, 5.3.2

- analysis of ...> analyzing...

- specification of ...> specifying...

- the verification of ...> verifying

Disposition: Accepted.

(UK-29) Page 10, line 31: Replace "the analysis of the product description may be completed by a visit to..." with "the analysis of the product description may be improved by consultation with the developer of the product."

Disposition: Accepted.

(JPN-24) pp.10, 1.45, 5.3.2.2: Evaluation level: shall= will

Disposition: Accepted.

Design of the evaluation (5.4)

(SWE-11) Page 12, line 22: Change know-how with proprietary information, if that is the meaning

Disposition: Accepted.

(JPN-25) (relating to comment 12) pp.12, 5.4.2

- documentation of ... = documentating...

- optimisation of ...= optimising...

- schedule of ...= scheduling ...

Disposition: Accepted.

(UK-30) Page 13, line 9: Move the definition of "evaluation method" to the definitions (clause 3).

Disposition: Accepted.

(SWE-12) Page 13, line 13 and 18: Delete the words precisely and the precise

Disposition: Accepted.

(UK-31) Page 13, line 15: Replace lines 15,16 and 17 with a NOTE.

Disposition: Accepted.

(JPN-26) pp.13, 5.4.2.2: Title = Optimisation of the measurements

Disposition: Accepted.

(JPN-27) pp.13, 1.43 - pp.14, 1.2, 5.4.2.3 (the following text should be transferred to other sections. It may be the section describing evaluation requirements, for example, pp.8, 5.2.2)

When the requester is not the software product developer,...

In particular...

Such support...

Disposition: From the practical point of view, the evaluator is not able to state such requirements until the evaluation plan is elaborated.

(JPN-31) pp.13, 1.15, 5.4.2.1: Evaluation Level: Annex B = Annex C

Disposition: Accepted.

(UK-32) Page 14, line 8: Replace "...may consists of..." with "...may consist of ..."

Disposition: Accepted.

Execution of the evaluation (5.5)

(JPN-28) pp.14, 1.30, 5.5.2: In addition, ...may...

Therefore, the evaluator may

- Manage the site evaluation,
- manage the requirements on specific evaluation techniques.

Disposition: Accepted.

(JPN-29) (relating to comment 12)pp.15, 1.23, 5.5.2.3: (Title should be reflected sub-activity to be consistent with others in 5.5.2)

Title: "Tool usage" = "Management of the tool usage"

Disposition: Accepted.

Conclusion of the evaluation (5.6)

(JPN-30) pp.17, 5.6.3: Title "Disposition of evaluation data" = "Disposition of evaluation data and documents"

Disposition: Accepted.

Template evaluation report (Annex A)

(UK-33) Page 20, line 12: Replace "...shall contains the ..." with "... shall contain the ..."

Disposition: Accepted.

(UK-34) Page 20, line 15: Replace "..., a reference to this documentation may only be used." with "...it is permissible to include simply a reference to that documentation."

Disposition: Accepted.

Definitions from other standards (Annex B)

Levels of evaluation (Annex C)

(NO-1) Formal proofs are not applicable for practical systems. Thus, no standard should require formal proofs for the time being. Furthermore, the draft should

refer to (and take into account the contents of) other standards defining integrity levels.

Disposition: Annex C.2 (now B.2) has been changed in its presentation so that it is less prescriptive. References to techniques not easy to define have been removed as well as references to formal proof.

Software product components (Annex D)

Interaction between parties in case of third party evaluation (Annex E)

(CZ-4) We propose to leave annexes E and F as an informative part of the standard. JTC1 has not the competence to regulate the contractual and legal issues, but the information in annexes are useful.

Disposition: Accepted.

(JPN-32) Annex E Interaction between parties in case of third party: The expression "shall" should be removed in annex E.

pp.29, 1.12 "shall" should be removed.

pp. 30, 1.1 "shall" should be removed

Disposition: Accepted.

Evaluation contract (Annex F)

Bibliography (Annex G)