

## Editorial report

July, 1995  
Andrew Koenig

## Summary

- How the Working Paper was produced
- Reasons for failure to meet the schedule
- Proposal for handling future work

## How the WP was produced

- Compressed schedule
  - Known in advance to be tight
  - Considered essential to meet public review schedule requirements
- Lots of volunteers

## Compressed schedule

- Post-meeting editing session
- Editing, March 13-24
- Review, March 27-31
- Corrections, April 3-14
- Final deadline: April 14

## Editing session

- In Austin immediately after the meeting
- Estimated 110 person-hours of work

## Editing session attendees

- Jonathan Caves
- Sean Corfield
- Josée Lajoie
- Nathan Myers
- Tom Plum
- Ben Schreiber

## Post-meeting contributors

- Steve Adamczyk
- Nathan Myers
- Jerry Schwarz
- Bjarne Stroustrup
- Mike Vilot (++)
- Please speak up if I've forgotten you

## Reviewers

- Steve Adamczyk
- Pete Becker
- Bill Gibbons
- Sam Harbison
- Tom Holaday
- Josée Lajoie
- Nathan Myers
- Bill Plauger
- Anthony Scian
- John Skaller
- Bjarne Stroustrup

## How much work was done

- 11/94 WP: 51,838 `troff` source lines
- From 11/94 to 3/95: 4,008 changes that touch 33,831 lines
- 3/95 WP: 54,128 `troff` source lines
- From 3/95 to 7/95: 6,096 changes that touch 22,447 lines
- 7/95 WP: 60,188 `troff` source lines

## Reasons for failure to meet schedule

- Some of the work was delayed for unavoidable personal reasons
- P.J. Plauger objected to content when he reviewed it on April 12
- Tom Plum and Sam Harbison insisted on satisfying all Plauger's objections
- Result: two week delay; other people now dissatisfied but chose not to object

## Sample objection (21.1.1.1)

- `all` is defined so that  
`(collate [...] messages) == all`
- To allow vendor extensions, it should be  
`(collate [...] messages | all)  
== all`
- No supporting resolution
- Correction removed from the WP

## Another objection:

`<iostream.h>`

- Extremely widespread, both in literature and implementations
- No supporting resolution
- Removed from WP

## Basis for objections

- Tom Plum:
  - It is the responsibility of the Project Editor to draft a CD that implements the decisions of the WG.
  - There is no latitude for “couldn’t do it because of tight schedule.” It simply must be done.
- Bill Plauger: just stating his opinion, not making demands

## The root of the problem

- How do we determine what goes into the WP? Two possible viewpoints
  - The outcome of a meeting is, by definition, what happens in the minutes and is voted in the formal resolutions. Nothing else is relevant.
  - We know it is impossible to obtain a perfect draft, so we do what we can with the available schedule and resources and let the committee decide on future corrections.

## Why the problem exists

- Not all issues are covered by formal resolutions
- Not all resolutions are found afterwards to be correct and unambiguous
- Not everyone agrees on what is editorial
- Regardless of our attitude, we therefore need a way to decide what to do when the committee is not in session

## Earlier attempt at a solution

- Several meetings ago, John Skaller proposed to allow the Editor to change anything that did not contradict an explicit committee vote, to save time
- This proposal was approved overwhelmingly

## Why wasn't that a solution?

- Sam Harbison:
  - each WP is accepted by vote, so
  - any change to the WP contradicts a prior vote
- Tom Plum:
  - there is almost certainly an ISO Directive that prohibited the committee from delegating substantive work
  - unfortunately he could not locate it

## The outcome

- All changes requested by Plauger appear in the WP (643 changes, touching 2,179 lines)
- Previous versions are often shown by boxes marked **Editorial proposal** (27 places)
- It is not clear that there is a consensus as to what the WP should be; this WP is therefore submitted under protest

## Postscript

- As soon as the WP was complete, Dmitry Lenkov sent electronic mail saying that ANSI prohibited electronic distribution of the draft
- After consultation, Sam Harbison concluded this prohibition did not apply to WG21
- We therefore went ahead and distributed it electronically, mentioning ISO but not ANSI

## Principles for future work

- We *must* have a clear procedure for producing future WP editions while the committee is not in session
- The procedure cannot require voting or other agreement outside official meetings
- The procedure must ensure completion

## Proposal

- The Editor has the last word over the content of the Working Paper
- If the Convener or anyone else believes the WP is incorrect or otherwise inappropriate, that person can attach an addendum explaining that belief
- The committee can (and should) resolve discrepancies at the following meeting(s)

## Why this particular proposal?

- The content of the WP must ultimately be decided by some number of people, say  $n$
- If  $n > 1$ , there must be an algorithm for resolving disagreements that terminates before the mailing deadline
- Unless someone finds such an algorithm, that forces  $n = 1$  and the only question is whether or not that person is the Editor

## Summary

- This WP was, as usual, the result of a great deal of work by many people
- There is no clear consensus as to whether this way of producing the WP is acceptable
- We must have a clear basis for future work