3GPP TSG-CN ***Tdoc NP-040322***
3GPP TSG-SA ***Tdoc SP-040611***
Meeting #25, Palm Springs CA, USA, September 2004

Source: **MCC**
mailto:john.meredith@etsi.org

Title: **Dependence on proprietary technology**

Document for: **discussion**

The 3GPP change control mechanism is well known and beloved by all. Proposed modifications to specs are agreed at working group level, approved at TSG level, and then rapidly implemented by the working group secretary (Support Team member). They are then made available on the 3GPP file server, and the change cycle may then begin again.

The Support Team has set a limit of three weeks following the end of each TSG SA plenary to make available all new and modified specs resulting from a round of TSG meetings.

In some cases – for example, test specifications using TTCN – the Support Team has to make use of external resources to help provide the formal language output, which is an integral part of the specification. In the vast majority of cases, this expertise is available within ETSI, and since the Support Team is harboured within ETSI premises, liaison between the two is quick and easy. The language experts within ETSI are well aware of 3GPP's deadlines, and strive to provide their output in a timely manner so that the Support Team's time scales can be respected.

In some cases, however, the expertise external to the Support Team is not available within ETSI, but is provided by 3GPP member companies. Examples of this are the C-code for codecs and Java for OSA specs. In these cases, the Support Team is entirely dependent on the cooperation of those member companies for the timely delivery of the necessary components of the 3GPP specs.

Whilst it is always possible for the text-only CRs to be implemented by the Support Team in due time, there is little point in providing simply the Word file without the attachments (TTCN, C-code, Java, or whatever). Figure 1 shows this process in the case of the OSA specs.

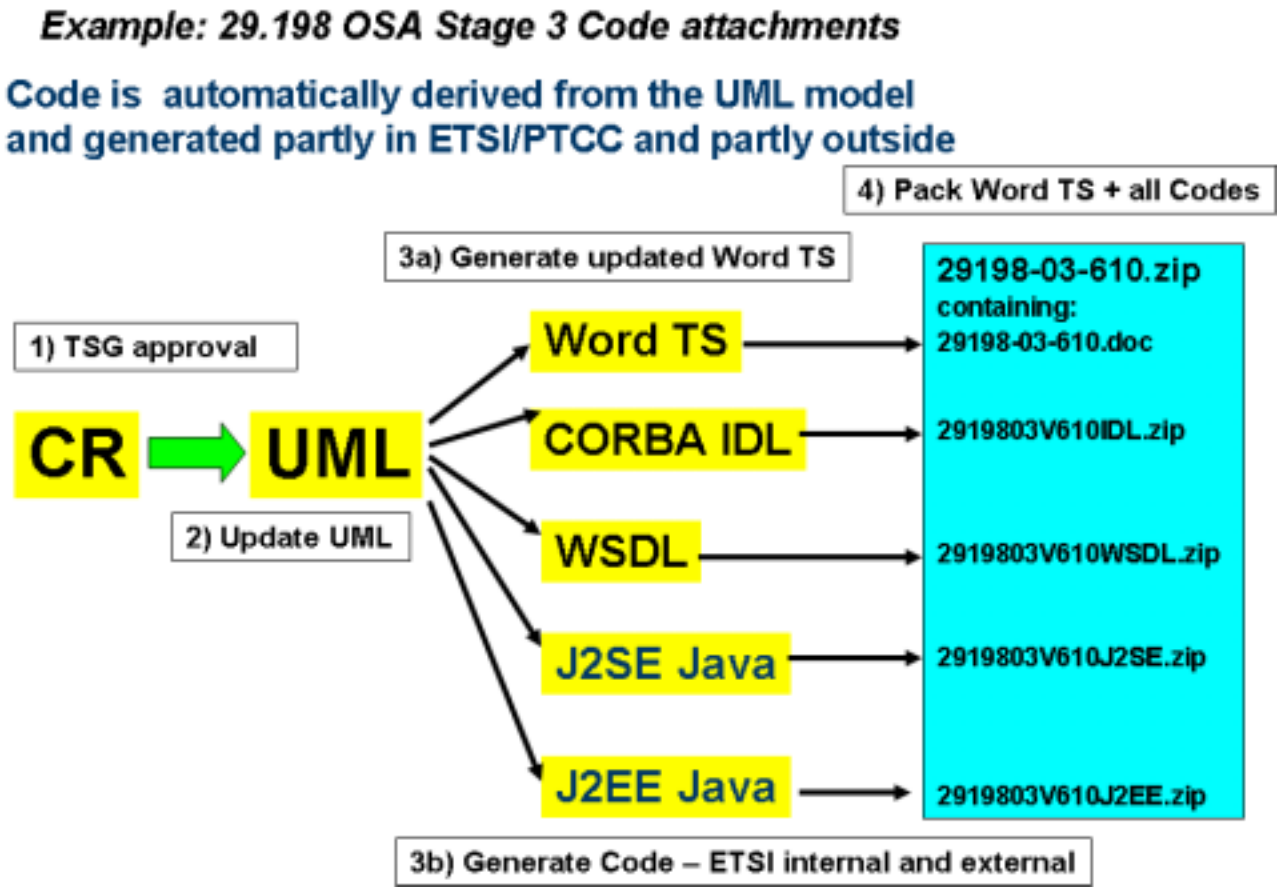

Figure 1: Process flow for handling OSA CRs

In most cases, these files which accompany the Word document (body of the spec) are provided on time (albeit sometimes just in time!). However, it has been noted that in the case of the OSA specs for which CN5 is responsible, the delay in providing this output has become excessively long. So much so, in fact, that the specs revised at CN#24 were only available a few days before the start of CN#25. This obviously has an adverse affect on the production of CRs to be addressed by CN#25.

TSG CN and TSG SA are asked to take note of this, and to consider whether this state of affairs is acceptable. If not, several measures can be identified to remedy the situation:

1. Accept that there is no control over the supply of attachments, and allow the Word files to be provided early (so that CRs on the purely textual part can start immediately), with the attachments being provided at a later date (with a concomitant increment in the last digit of the version number of the spec).

2. Request that the Support Team be provided with the necessary tools to support the proprietary attachments. Note that this may involve purchase or lease of those tools and may require the recruitment or secondment of a person with the necessary capabilities. ($$$$$)

3. Forbid WGs to produce / maintain specs with attachments which involve proprietary technology maintained by "outside" agencies.

Discuss.