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In the past few months it became apparent that many new features were proposed for Rel-5 in various TSG / WG. At SA#12 there had been already concerns about the finalisation of the then-work program and the difficulties are increasing to get the multitude of features implemented in due time.

Even worse, the delay of the release seems to give an additional opportunity to introduce new functions because shifting the release date ostensibly gives additional time. Of course, this leads into a vicious circle because introducing these new functions draws manpower and meeting time from the finalisation of the already existing work, which the release date was initially shifted for.

This even holds true for new functions where a single company or a few companies take care of the implementation in the standards and thus - at the first look - few meeting time is consumed as the work is mostly done outside the meetings within these companies. In case a few companies do this it usually takes place in drafting sessions during the meeting time, thus reducing available manpower for the meeting. When it comes to the presentation of the papers and change requests in the relevant TSG and WG, some time has to be spent to ensure consistency, correctness, completeness and verify the interactions with other functions. Experience tells that some time will be spent for discussion and clarification within the TSG / WG even if there were no problems identified when checking the proposal.

Another point aggravating the situation is that in certain WG defining a new WI is easy - however in other WG this WI may cause high effort. For example, in the recent time SA1 has defined new features all dated for Release 5 mostly causing a lot of effort in SA2 and other WGs.

A number of these services were created when SA1 had finished its original Rel-5 works to a large extent. One would expect that these functions should then be targeted for Rel-6 however, possibly due to the lack of clear guidelines the initial target was set to Rel-5.

An idea to resolve that problem could be a date that is set before the finalisation of the release where new features for that release are to be normally be accepted (e.g. 6 month before the finalisation). After that new features should normally be targeted to next release.

Concerning new features for Rel-5 presented at TSG#13, it has to be questioned whether they are better targeted for Rel-6. This could be dealt with under agenda items " Approval of contributions from TSG-SA WGx"

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