

Source: Vodafone Group plc.
Title: Policy Considerations for Release 5
Document for: Decision
Agenda Item: 7.8

TSG SA decided at its last meeting to re-examine the program for Release 5 in September. This paper addresses some of the policy issues which will need to be considered at that meeting.

In the top-level view of the Project Plan, there are around 50 items, of which about 17 are shown as Release 5. The remainder are shown as either Release 4 or NA, for those covering general enhancements to a topic, many of which will be small items to be spread over several releases.

Provisioning of IP-based Multi-media Services is considerably larger than any of the other items in Release 5. Although the service requirements and architecture for this are now stable, it is estimated that there is a great deal of work remaining to complete this task, especially the signalling and charging aspects. However, this topic is considered to be very important for the future of our businesses and is in any case likely to enjoy further enhancements over the coming years. We want it as soon as possible, but we want it to be right!

Decision 1:

SA should identify the minimum functionality for IP-based Multi-media which will stand alone and prove commercially viable. The earliest possible date for completing the standard should be estimated. The remainder of this IMS work should be deferred to a later release.

There are many other important topics planned for Release 5 which we do not want to see slip. These include Camel 4, OSA, Wideband AMR, HSDPA and some security enhancements. These can be included in Release 5 when this is ready, but this should not be delayed. It is considered unlikely that IP-based Multi-media will be ready by December 2001, but it may be possible in March 2002.

Decision 2:

Critical paths which might delay conclusion of IP-based Multi-media by March 2002 need to be identified. An ad hoc group (or teleconference) should perform this task by the end of August 2001. While it is recognised that all work is 'contribution driven', delegates should agree to add the necessary resources to overcome any shortages identified. Leaving this decision until September or December 2001 may well be too late.

If, however, this is still considered to be an unrealistic target, and IP-based Multi-media is not likely to be completed until June 2002 or later, we should take alternative measures to avoid delaying the large number of other important topics.

Decision 3:

If the planning work performed as part of (2) above, shows that IP-based Multi-media is delayed beyond March 2002, then it should be moved into Release 6¹, to allow an earlier introduction of the other features such as Camel 4 in Release 5. Release 5 would then have a smaller content but could be achieved in December 2001.

However, Vodafone would be extremely unhappy at this delay, since IMS is considered very important and if the pressure is taken off, there is a danger of contributors taking a more relaxed approach to the work, which would result in even longer delays.

Vodafone consider that no decision should be made on the detail of which topics fit into which release until the three decisions above are agreed. Each release must be complete and commercially consistent.

¹ This is mostly because, if in August '01 we predict completion after March '02, then the work will inevitably be delayed until long after June '02. Note that the current work planning exercises have been ineffective at predicting the completion dates of anything that has more than 9 months work outstanding.