# Data Format Description Language (DFDL) v1.0

**Experience Document 7**

**Experimental Feature: emptyElementParsePolicy**

Status of This Document

Grid Working Document (GWD)

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Abstract

This document provides experience information to the OGF community on the Data Format Description Language (DFDL) 1.0 specification (GFD-P-R.207).

It documents an experimental property feature: dfdlx:emptyElementParsePolicy.

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# Introduction & Description

Compatibility and interoperability between two different implementations is required for success of the DFDL standard.The IBM DFDL implementation in their Message Broker, Integration Bus, AppConnect, and otherproducts has a behaviour for occurrences of empty elements that is not in compliance with the DFDL v1.0 draft standard as of the Sept 2014 draft [DFDL]. However, the behaviour of the IBM DFDL implementation is considered useful and desirable. A property is proposed to enable selection of this behaviour in any DFDL implementation. The property was implemented experimentally as dfdlx:emptyElementParsePolicy in the Daffodil DFDL implementation with good success at improving interoperability of DFDL schemas with IBM DFDL.

The description of the new property and its values herein is updated from what is found in the Daffodil implementation to use clearer naming. Specifically, the value ‘treatAsMissing’ used in Daffodil is changed herein to the preferred ‘treatAsAbsent’ value.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Property** | **Description** |
| dfdlx:emptyElementParsePolicy | Enum  Valid values are "treatAsAbsent" or "treatAsEmpty"  This property describes the behavior of the DFDL processor for occurrences of elements of any type that have the empty representation.  When 'treatAsEmpty' if an occurrence of an element has the empty representation when parsed, the behaviour is as stated in section 9 for an occurrence with empty representation. Consequently, default values or empty strings may be added to the infoset.  When 'treatAsAbsent' if an occurrence of an element has the empty representation when parsed, the behaviour is as stated in section 9 for an absent occurrence. Consequently, default values or empty strings are never added to the infoset. |

1. Security Considerations

No security issues have been raised.

1. Contributors

Michael J. Beckerle,

Tresys Technology,

Columbia, MD, USA

mbeckerle@tresys.com

Stephen M. Hanson,

IBM Software Group,

Hursley,

Winchester,UK

[smh@uk.ibm.com](mailto:smh@uk.ibm.com)

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1. References

[DFDL] OGF DFDL 1.0 specification: <http://www.ogf.org/documents/GFD.207.pdf/>