

Background information

Preface

Aims and membership

History

Past Presidents - Past Secretary General

How to join

Preface

Information Technology, Telecommunications and Consumer Electronics are key factors in today's economical and social environment. Effective interchange both of commercial, technical, and administrative data, text and images and of audio-visual information is essential for the growth of economy in the world markets. Through the increasing digitalisation both information technology, telecommunications and consumer electronics are getting more and more integrated.

Open Systems and Distributed Networks based on world-wide recognised standards will not only provide effective interchange of information but also help to remove technical barriers to trade. In particular harmonised standards are recognised as a prerequisite for the establishment of the European economic area.

For forty years ECMA has actively contributed to world-wide standardization in information technology, telecommunications and consumer electronics. About 320 ECMA Standards and 80 Technical Reports of high quality have been published.

In the coming years ECMA sees important challenges for information technology, telecommunication and consumer electronics standardization, especially in the following areas:

- Multimedia
- High Speed Telecommunications
- IT Security
- Environmental Product Attributes
- High Capacity Storage Media, including DVD
- Programming and scripting languages
- Computer Telephony Integration
- Internet and related activities

ECMA - Standardizing Information and Communication Systems

Standardization provides the means for economical solutions for complex technologies. Moreover, it is most effective if it is performed in a precompetitive mode and parallel with product development with all interested parties involved.

ECMA standardization work has always been recognised as far-sighted and reflecting technological trends at an early stage. As a consequence many ECMA Standards have been accepted as a base for international and European Standards. To ensure close co-operation ECMA has established formal liaisons with European and international standardization bodies.

ECMA Standards are developed by highly qualified experts from information technology, consumer electronics and telecommunication industry with the commitment to provide in a consensus mode technical solutions ready for implementation in product development and conformity testing.

The benefit of ECMA membership is twofold:

- Early knowledge of technological trends and better understanding of high technology standards requirements.
- A platform where technical contributions of member companies are evaluated by experts who through a most effective mode of operation develop ECMA Standards and Technical Reports of high quality in a very short time.

The participation of the majority of leading companies in ECMA ensures not only the acceptance of ECMA Standards in European and International standardization but also their world-wide implementation.

Aims

The aims of ECMA are:

- To develop, in co-operation with the appropriate national, European and international organizations Standards and technical reports in order to facilitate and standardize the use of ICT systems.
- To encourage the correct use of standards by influencing the environment in which they are applied.
- To promulgate the various standards that it produces.

To this end, all ECMA Standards and Technical Reports are made available free of charge to all interested parties without restriction.

Membership

ECMA consists of the following classes of members: **Ordinary**, **Associate**, **SME** and **NFP**.

- Ordinary membership may be obtained by a company which develops, produces and markets in Europe hardware or software products or services in the field of information technology or telecommunications.

NOTE:

With effect from 1st July 2001 this will likely be changed into: “Ordinary membership may be obtained by a company which has interest and experience in matters related to one or more Technical Committees

of the Association, and which wishes to practice the right to vote at the General Assembly and other exclusive rights defined in the By-Laws and Rules.”

- Associate membership may be obtained by a company not qualifying as an Ordinary member but having an interest and experience in matters related to one or more of the Technical Committees of the Association.

NOTE:

With effect from 1st July 2001 this will likely be changed into: “Associate membership may be obtained by a company which has interest and experience in matters related to one or more of the Technical Committees of the Association but without the right to vote in the General Assembly.”

- SME (Small and Medium-sized Enterprise) membership may be obtained by a company which has an annual turnover of less than one hundred million Swiss Francs.
 - NFP membership may be obtained by an organisation which is not-for-profit.
-

History

By 1959 the growing use of computers, built by several different manufacturers, showed the necessity for standardization in operational techniques, such as programming, and also input and output codes. Such standards would make it possible to use data prepared for, or even by, a computer made by one

ECMA - Standardizing Information and Communication Systems

manufacturer to be on a computer made by another with the minimum of alteration. Also it would avoid duplication of work in the preparation of, for example, programming languages by several manufacturers.

Though certain National Bodies had, before 1960, started work on standards in this field, e.g. paper tape and codes, there did not appear to be collaboration between them, nor between the manufacturers themselves. Different countries may have different requirements, so that it may not be necessary to have the same standards everywhere, but the standards should at least be compatible.

With the object of co-ordinating such work, the Heads of the Companies of longest standing in Europe in the data processing field (Compagnie des Machines Bull, IBM World Trade Europe Corporation and International Computers and Tabulators Limited) sent a joint letter to all the known computer manufacturers within Europe, inviting these companies to send representatives to a meeting. This meeting was held on April 27, 1960, in Brussels; it was decided that an association of manufacturers should be formed which would be called European Computer Manufacturers Association, and a Committee was nominated to prepare the formation of the Association and to draw up By-Laws and Rules.

By December 1960 the form that the Association would take was fairly well defined and it had been decided that the headquarters should be in Geneva to be near the headquarters of the International Organization for Standardization and the International Electrotechnical Commission. In May 1961 the Association officially came into being and all those Companies which attended the original meeting became members. The constituent assembly was held on 17th June 1961.

Just prior to the official registration of ECMA, it was invited to be represented at a Round-Table Conference to be held in Geneva organized by ISO and IEC to discuss standardization in the general field of

ECMA - Standardizing Information and Communication Systems

computers. This meeting resulted in the formation of TC97 and in the organisation of its own Working Groups, and ECMA was asked to become a liaison member. In 1987, when TC97 became part of ISO/IEC JTC1, ECMA became A-liaison member of JTC1 thereby accelerating the process by which an ECMA Standard could be adopted as an International Standard.

To reflect the international activities of the ECMA organisation the name was changed in 1994 to: ECMA - An **international** Europe-based industry association for standardising information and communication systems.

In 1996, when the ICT Standards Board was established to oversee the development of Standards in Europe, ECMA became a founder member.

ECMA celebrates this year its 40th anniversary. Since 1961 400 Standards and Technical Reports have been published, more than 40% of which have also been adopted as International or Regional standards.

Past Presidents

1961-1962

Mr. C. G. Holland-Martin (ICT)

1963-1964

Prof. Dr. J. Engelfriet (EL)

1965-1966

Mr. M. R. Pedretti (IBM)

1967-1968

Dr. J. M. M. Pinkerton (ICL)

1969-1970

Mr. P. J. Davous (Bull)

1971-1972

Dr. K. Scheidhauer (AEG-Tfk)

ECMA - Standardizing Information and Communication Systems

1973-1974

Dr. J. M. M. Pinkerton (ICL)

1975

Mr. J. van Eijbergen (Philips)

1976-1977

Mr. W. Heimann (Siemens)

1978-1979

Mr. M. H. Johnson (Ferranti)

1980-1981

Mr. J. van Eijbergen (Philips)

1982-1983

Mr. H. Feissel (Cii HB)

1984-1985

Mr. J. Scherpenhuizen (Digital)

1986-1987

Mr. C. Rossetti (STET)

1988-1989

Mr. J. Dubos (Bull)

1990

Mr. J. van den Beld (Philips)

1991-1992

Mr. G. Haberzettl (Siemens Nixdorf)

1993-1994

Mr. W. Brodbeck (IBM)

1995-1996

Mr. D. Gann (HP)

1997-1998

Dr. P.A. Trudgett (BT)

1999-2000

Mr. M. Bermange (Xerox)

Past Secretary General

1961-1991 Mr. Dara Hekimi

How to join ECMA

All information about the Association, Technical Committees, publications, membership, etc. can be found in this CD-ROM. A printed copy, including the By-laws, Rules, list of Committees, list of standards, can be obtained, free of charge, from documents@ecma.ch. Please ask for the “Memento 2001”.

ECMA is a purely industrial association for the development of Standards and, therefore, can act in a flexible way, offering outlets both on International and European level.

Participation in ECMA Technical Committees and Task Groups by experts from non-member companies is possible on invitation by the ECMA Secretary General, e.g. to become familiar with the working style. To participate regularly, organizations must join ECMA.

If an organization wants to participate in ECMA activities on a regular basis, then this organization must join the Association (see under “[Membership](#)” for the four classes of members).

In order to join ECMA, a Company should address to the Secretary General, Mr. Jan van den Beld, a formal application in form of a letter on Company stationery, stating:

1. that the By-Laws and Rules of the Association have been received,
2. that the Company satisfies Art. [3.2](#), [3.3](#) and Art. [3.8](#) (or Art. [3.9](#) for associate members or article [3.10](#) for SME members) of the By-Laws.

This application will then be submitted to the Management of the Association and could be voted upon at the nearest General Assembly meeting (June or December). In the meantime, during which the application is pending, representatives of the Company can attend meetings of the TCs and TGs as guests.

As soon as a formal application is received, the list of the forthcoming meetings of all ECMA TCs and TGs is provided. At the same time, if the names, address, phone and fax numbers, and E-mail address of the experts are provided, these data will be entered in the corresponding mailing lists.

Technical Committees of ECMA and their sub-groups usually meet between twice and six to eight times a year depending on the nature and urgency of their subjects. Their activity should be clear from the programme of work and the publication list to be found in this CD-ROM.

The application letter shall be addressed to:

The Secretary General

ECMA

114 Rue du Rhône

CH-1204 Geneva

Switzerland

Further information can be obtained at the above address, by fax (+41 22 849.60.01) or by E-mail (either helpdesk@ecma.ch or jan.van-den-beld@ecma.ch).