**Annex C: Glossary**

(informative)

**A**

**Activity** Work that a company or organization performs using business processes. An activity can be atomic or non-atomic (compound). The types of activities that are a part of a Process Model are: Process, Sub-Process, and Task.

**Abstract Process** A Process that represents the interactions between a private business process and

another process or participant.

**Artifact** A graphical object that provides supporting information about the Process or elements within the Process. However, it does not directly affect the flow of the Process.

**Association** A connecting object that is used to link information and Artifacts with Flow Objects.

An association is represented as a dotted graphical line with an arrowhead to represent the direction of flow.

**Atomic Activity** An activity not broken down to a finer level of Process Model detail. It is a leaf in the

tree-structure hierarchy of Process activities. Graphically it will appear as a Task in BPMN.

**B**

**Business Analyst** A specialist who analyzes business needs and problems, consults with users and

stakeholders to identify opportunities for improving business return through information technology, and defines, manages, and monitors the requirements into business processes.

**Business Process** A defined set of business activities that represent the steps required to achieve a

business objective. It includes the flow and use of information and resources.

**Business Process Management**

The services and tools that support process management (for example, process analysis, definition, processing, monitoring and administration), including support for human and application-level interaction. BPM tools can eliminate manual processes and automate the routing of requests between departments and applications.

**BPM System** The technology that enables BPM.

**C**

**Choreography** An ordered sequence of B2B message exchanges between two or more Participants.

In a Choreography there is no central controller, responsible entity, or observer of the Process.

**Collaboration** Collaboration is the act of sending messages between any two Participants in a

BPMN model. The two Participants represent two separate BPML processes.

Business Process Model and Notation, v2.0 **499**

**Collapsed Sub-Process** A Sub-Process that hides its flow details. The Collapsed Sub-Process object uses a

marker to distinguish it as a Sub-Process, rather than a Task. The marker is a small square with a plus sign (+) inside.

**Compensation Flow** Flow that defines the set of activities that are performed while the transaction is being

rolled back to compensate for activities that were performed during the Normal Flow of the Process. A Compensation Flow can also be called from a Compensate End or Intermediate Event.

**Compound Activity** An activity that has detail that is defined as a flow of other activities. It is a branch

(or trunk) in the tree-structure hierarchy of Process activities. Graphically, it will appear as a Process or Sub-Process in BPMN.

**Controlled Flow** Flow that proceeds from one Flow Object to another, via a Sequence Flow link, but

is subject to either conditions or dependencies from other flow as defined by a Gateway. Typically, this is seen as a Sequence flow between two activities, with a conditional indicator (mini-diamond) or a Sequence Flow connected to a Gateway.

**D**

**Decision** A gateway within a business process where the Sequence Flow can take one of several alternative paths. Also known as "Or-Split."

**E**

**End Event** An Event that indicates where a path in the process will end. In terms of Sequence Flows, the End Event ends the flow of the Process, and thus, will not have any outgoing Sequence Flows. An End Event can have a specific Result that will appear as a marker within the center of the End Event shape. End Event Results are Message, Error, Compensation, Signal, Link, and Multiple. The End Event shares the same basic shape of the Start Event and Intermediate Event, a circle, but is drawn with a thick single line.

**Event Context** An Event Context is the set of activities that can be interrupted by an exception

(Intermediate Event). This can be one activity or a group of activities in an expanded Sub-Process.

**Exception** An event that occurs during the performance of the Process that causes a diversion from the Normal Flow of the Process. Exceptions can be generated by Intermediate Events, such as time, error, or message.

**Exception Flow** A Sequence Flow path that originates from an Intermediate Event attached to the

boundary of an activity. The Process does not traverse this path unless the Activity is interrupted by the triggering of a boundary Intermediate Event (an Exception - see above).

**Expanded Sub-Process** A Sub-Process that exposes its flow detail within the context of its Parent Process.

An Expanded Sub-Process is displayed as a rounded rectangle that is enlarged to display the Flow Objects within.

**F**

**500** Business Process Model and Notation, v2.0

**Flow** A directional connector between elements in a Process, Collaboration, or Choreography. A Sequence Flows represents the sequence of Flow Objects in a Process or Choreography. A Message Flow represents the transmission of a Message between Collaboration Participants.The term Flow is often used to represent the overall progression of how a Process or Process segment would be performed.

**Flow Object** A graphical object that can be connected to or from a Sequence Flow. In a Process, Flow Objects are Events, Activities, and Gateways. In a Choreography, Flow Objects are Events, Choreography Activities, and Gateways.

**Fork** A point in the Process where one Sequence Flow path is split into two or more paths that are run in parallel within the Process, allowing multiple activities to run simultaneously rather than sequentially. BPMN uses multiple outgoing Sequence Flows from Activities or Events or a Parallel Gateway to perform a Fork. Also known as “AND-Split.”

**I**

**Intermediate Event** An event that occurs after a Process has been started. An Intermediate Event affects

the flow of the process by showing where messages and delays are expected, distributing the Normal Flow through exception handling, or showing the extra flow required for compensation. However, an Intermediate Event does not start or directly terminate a process. An Intermediate Event is displayed as a circle, drawn with a thin double line.

**J**

**Join** A point in the Process where two or more parallel Sequence Flow paths are combined into one Sequence Flow path. BPMN uses a Parallel Gateway to perform a Join. Also known as “AND-Join.”

**L**

**Lane** A partition that is used to organize and categorize activities within a Pool. A Lane extends the entire length of the Pool either vertically or horizontally. Lanes are often used for such things as internal roles (e.g., Manager, Associate), systems (e.g., an enterprise application), or an internal department (e.g., shipping, finance).

**M**

**Merge** A point in the Process where two or more alternative Sequence Flow paths are combined into one Sequence Flow path. No synchronization is required because no parallel activity runs at the join point. BPMN uses multiple incoming Sequence Flows for an Activity or an Exclusive Gateway to perform a Merge. Also know as “OR-Join.”

**Message** An Object that depicts the contents of a communication between two Participants. A message is transmitted through a Message Flow and has an identity that can be used for alternative branching of a Process through the Event-Based Exclusive Gateway.

**Message Flow** A Connecting Object that shows the flow of messages between two Participants. A

Message Flow is represented by a dashed lined.

**N**

Business Process Model and Notation, v2.0 **501**

**Normal Flow** A flow that originates from a Start Event and continues through activities on alternative and parallel paths until reaching an End Event.

**P**

**Parent Process** A Process that holds a Sub-Process within its boundaries.

**Participant** A business entity (e.g., a company, company division, or a customer) or a business role (e.g., a buyer or a seller) that controls or is responsible for a business process. If Pools are used, then a Participant would be associated with one Pool. In a Collaboration, Participants are informally known as “Pools.”

**Pool** A Pool represents a Participant in a Collaboration. Graphically, a Pool is a container for partitioning a Process from other Pools/Participants. A Pool is not required to contain a Process, i.e., it can be a “black box.”

**Private Business Process** A process that is internal to a specific organization and is the type of process that has

been generally called a workflow or BPM process.

**Process** A sequence or flow of Activities in an organization with the objective of carrying out work. In BPMN, a Process is depicted as a graph of Flow Elements, which are a set of Activities, Events, Gateways, and Sequence Flow that adhere to a finite execution semantics.

**R**

**Result** The consequence of reaching an End Event. Types of Results include Message, Error, Compensation, Signal, Link, and Multiple.

**S**

**Sequence Flow** A connecting object that shows the order in which activities are performed in a

Process and is represented with a solid graphical line. Each Flow has only one source and only one target. A Sequence Flow can cross the boundaries between Lanes of a Pool but cannot cross the boundaries of a Pool.

**Start Event** An Event that indicates where a particular Process starts. The Start Event starts the flow of the Process and does not have any incoming Sequence Flow, but can have a Trigger. The Start Event is displayed as a circle, drawn with a single thin line.

**Sub-Process** A Process that is included within another Process. The Sub-Process can be in a collapsed view that hides its details. A Sub-Process can be in an expanded view that shows its details within the view of the Process that it is contained in. A Sub-Process shares the same shape as the Task, which is a rectangle that has rounded corners.

**Swimlane** A Swimlane is a graphical container for partitioning a set of activities from other activities. BPMN has two different types of Swimlanes. See “Pool” and “Lane.”

**T**

**Task** An atomic activity that is included within a Process. A Task is used when the work in the Process is not broken down to a finer level of Process Model detail. Generally, an end-user, an application, or both will perform the Task. A Task object shares the same shape as the Sub-Process, which is a rectangle that has rounded corners.

**502** Business Process Model and Notation, v2.0

**Token** A theoretical concept that is used as an aid to define the behavior of a Process that is being performed. The behavior of Process elements can be defined by describing how they interact with a token as it “traverses” the structure of the Process. For example, a token will pass through an Exclusive Gateway, but continue down only one of the Gateway's outgoing Sequence Flow.

**Transaction** A Sub-Process that represents a set of coordinated activities carried out by independent, loosely-coupled systems in accordance with a contractually defined business relationship. This coordination leads to an agreed, consistent, and verifiable outcome across all participants.

**Trigger** A mechanism that detects an occurrence and can cause additional processing in response, such as the start of a business Process. Triggers are associated with Start Events and Intermediate Events and can be of the type: Message, Timer, Conditional, Signal, Link, and Multiple.

**U**

**Uncontrolled Flow** Flow that proceeds without dependencies or conditional expressions. Typically, an

Uncontrolled Flow is a Sequence Flow between two Activities that do not have a conditional indicator (mini-diamond) or an intervening Gateway.