

This document has been forwarded from WG to the General Technical Committee for review.

**Service Mode Decoder Lock for  
Digital Command Control,  
All Scales**

March 6, 2005

TR-1-05

5 **Working Group Chair's Report for Topic  
0307122**

The proposed revisions relevant to topic 0307122 Service Mode Decoder lock have completed formal review.

10 While Stan Ames started as topic editor, the process was concluded by Bob Jacobsen. While not Topic Editor through the discussion and debate stage, Bob acted as the final topic editor after the formal comment period had started and people's opinions were documented. He gathered the comments from the formal comment period and wrote a recommendation.

15 As Bob Jacobsen took the Topic Editor role, he asked me to review the document from the position of acting co-chair of the WG and execute the Chair's role. He also offered to the WG that further comments on his solution could be forwarded for consideration in this document given the procedural complications and compromise of this one proposal. No additional comments were received since he  
20 submitted his summary on 28Feb05.

My first role as acting Chair of the Working Group for this topic is to determine whether this document has properly completed the WG review process. I'm to ensure that Bob has included all of the comments, that he has properly represented the opinions of the Working Group members, and that he  
25 has addressed the issues raised. He has done an admirable job of all of this.

Secondly, I have to decide whether to endorse this proposal.

30 This proposal does a good job, by negative example, of illustrating the problems that are created when actions are taken without care to follow the underlying purpose and logical processes that are necessary in order to build consensus in a group of disparate manufacturers such as in the DCC hobby.

Specifically in this topic these two major actions that are detailed in the Topic Editor's recommendation that should not be repeated:

35 A - a conformance warrant's being issued for the feature, to a manufacturer, before such a feature was approved by the Working Group. This is a serious flaw outside of the DCC WG and needs to be examined by the NMRA and procedures put in place so that it does not happen again. This put the WG in a very untenable position - on one hand there was a manufacturer who was building product to this  
40 feature, in good faith, as he had a conformance warrant and on the other hand there were manufacturers and other WG members who objected to the feature for various legitimate reasons. This is a no-win situation before it reached the WG and should never have happened.

45 B - the original proposal was submitted to the WG as a 'done deal' with no desire by the original Topic Editor to undertake compromise nor real discussion with other WG members before the formal comment period arguing that point 'A' above made it unnecessary. In order to make fair and useful progress in the WG, or the DCC industry for standards as a whole, compromise and discussion with the other affected parties is necessary and required. By taking this stance and thus incurring a very significant additional

50 delay, particularly while the manufacturer in question was potentially producing product, the problem was made even more serious as any technical changes had a greater impact.

These two resulted in a very clearly polarized set of opinions as will be illustrated in Bob's summary/recommendation.

55 However it is clear that adding this type of ability to the DCC standards is an action supported by almost all and had the process been logically followed - proposal - debate- discussion - modification - comment period - recommendation - conformance warrant - and a solution produced which meet the technical requirements of the WG members before a conformance warrant issued and a manufacturer committed, a very powerful and widely implemented feature would have resulted that would have benefited many  
60 manufacturers and modellers. It is unfortunate that the integrity of the process was compromised by the conformance warrant's being issued first. There is still a significant need for a feature such as this that is accepted by all.

65 Bob's recommendation follows a middle ground which is a reasonable solution to this inherited and no-win situation. Please review his attached e-mail and referenced document for the details.

I therefore endorse this proposal and recommend that it be adopted as Technical Department policy for the DCC Working Group.

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Regards,  
Peter Ely  
acting co-chair, DCC Working Group