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NEM position papers – approval procedure

Definition

A NEM position paper is any document that gives the NEM Initiative view on any subject related to the networked electronic media area.

NEM position papers typically include:

- letters of advice to the Commission,
- formal opinions submitted to the Commissioner
- submissions to regulatory bodies,
- or any other formal statement of this nature.

All Official NEM position papers will be made available on the NEM website.

Position papers cannot be considered confidential as they will have been seen and read by the NEM membership and the receiving body outside of the NEM initiative.

Labelling a document as a NEM position paper means that it represents a widely agreed view within the NEM community.

As, we cannot expect unanimity on every position paper, each position paper should contain a simple disclaimer that the ***"this paper represents common views within the NEM community but, as such, cannot be taken to represent the exact views of any specific member company"***.

Lower level responses to questionnaires, press releases, or articles in journals written on behalf of the NEM Initiative are the responsibility of the Executive group.

Technical papers or scenarios coming from working groups that are intended to stimulate discussion without taking any formal position are not considered NEM Position papers and should be under the control of the group chairs and the EG.

Process outline:

- **Ideal level:**
 - We should prepare a position paper.

Any member of the NEM community can propose that NEM takes a position on any subject related to the NEM agenda. These Ideas should be sent via the secretariat to the Steering board for consideration.

- **Policy level:**
 - Approval: we should prepare a paper

The NEM steering Board has the responsibility to approve if it is appropriate for NEM to give an official view on the retained subjects and authorizes the set-up of working groups on the retained papers if a suitable leader can be found. If no one is prepared to be the leader/editor it is unlikely the group will be approved.

- **Practical level:**
 - Working group write the paper

A call is issued within the NEM community for interested parties to join in the work of drafting the paper. There should be good use of electronic tools to support the work to allow as many as possible to contribute.

- **Community level:**
 - Period of consultation within NEM

Once the first draft position paper is available, it should be made accessible to the NEM community, via the members' web site, and all members should have the chance to comment. The working group should incorporate the results of the consultation.

- **Publication level:**
 - Politically correct, good quality and appropriate for purpose

The NEM executive group should check that the process for generating the paper has been open and fair, has had sufficient participation to be a representative view, is within its mandate and, if all is correct, forward it to the Steering board with a recommendation to publish (or not). The Steering board has to make a final check that the paper is appropriate for purpose and then approve it for publication by simple majority decision.

Formal approval procedure

NEM position papers are prepared by working group(s), which is open to all members, and the content should be approved by the group that prepared them. The "final" version should be available in sufficient time to allow the Steering Board to approve the paper for release.

The Steering Board will approve the paper for release as the considered opinion of interested members, unless it contains statements that are contrary to the SRA and vision of NEM. This approval may be by decision at meeting, via e-mail or audio conference as is the established practice for the Steering Board.

At no time should the NEM executive group or the NEM steering board get involved in editing the words of such papers. This is the exclusive task of the working group. If there is anything in the paper that is contrary to the SRA and vision of NEM, it should be returned to the ad-hoc working group for correction.

EXCEPTION HANDLING

1. Requests for fast responses from external bodies

When the Executive Group – as the point of first contact - is requested to give a contribution in a short time, and the Executive Group deems it important that NEM should make this contribution, it may prepare and approve a position paper, acting autonomously. The Steering Board should be informed in parallel and asked to ratify the Executive Group's decision.

2. Emergency consultation of the NEM Community

NEM position papers that are prepared at short notice without adequate notification to NEM members must be placed on the NEM website for some period of time (not less than 7 days) to give the NEM community at least some chance to comment on the content. The editor of the document is responsible for handling the comments received.

3. Immediate response action

In cases when a position paper is needed so quickly that there is not enough time for the above procedures, the available NEM officers may respond on behalf of the community or authorise someone to give an appropriate response.

In such cases, the position paper must state that there has been prepared by the Executive group of the NEM and a revised version may be published in the future when there has been sufficient time to consult the NEM community. All NEM members must be informed, and a copy of the submitted information must be placed on the website.