To: WG5
From: Miles Ellis

WG5 Document Distribution

1   JTC1 Policy on Electronic Document Distribution

For the past few years JTC1 has been moving towards a purely electronic form of document distribution. Its early steps incorporated a number of poor decisions, being based on diskette-based distribution and poor choices of software formats. However, these first steps have now evolved into a new, web-based, policy which is scheduled to come into effect from September of this year. Although the procedures only formally apply to JTC1 and its SCs, SC22 has determined, quite reasonably, that they should also apply to the SC22 Working Groups.

The key features of the new policy are detailed below.

1.1   Medium of delivery

JTC1 and SC documents shall be made available using the facilities of the World Wide Web. The preferred distribution mechanism is via http protocol software (web browsers), but ftp capability may be provided in addition for reasons of efficiency at the discretion of individual Secretariats.

1.2   Document Formats

Documents may be produced in any of the following formats, although there are strong preferences for certain formats for specific document types:

        HTML version 2.0 or 3.2
        PDF version 3.0
        DOS Text, encoded in ISO/IEC 8859-1
        Word version 2.0 - 7.0
        WordPerfect version 5.1 - 7.0
        RTF (but only as a last resort if none of the above can be produced)

PDF is the preferred format for non-revisable documents.

Note that although it is recognised that in certain cases standards documents may be prepared using other formats, this may only be done after specific JTC1 approval, and on condition that a copy can be produced for distribution in one of the above formats.

Where documents are intended to be printed they should use margins which define a common area for both A4 and North American paper sizes. These require *minimum* margins as follows:

	Top	Bottom	Left	Right
A4:	10mm	28mm	20mm	10mm
NA:	10mm	10mm	20mm	17mm

1.3   Access Control to Documents
ISO, IEC and JTC1 policies require that while some information may be publicly available, other information must be kept private to defined recipients.

Privacy control (using password and/or ID protection) must, therefore, be incorporated into web sites, where appropriate, to meet these policies. Since it is envisaged that web sites will also have an associated ftp server for experienced users, the same password/ID combinations must work no matter which method is used. It is expected that passwords will be changed at least twice each year. *If any documents are copied to another site (e.g. by mirroring) then all access controls must be preserved.*

During a one-year trial period almost all documents may be freely accessed up to, but NOT including the text for a DIS, DTR or similar ballot. The accessibility of technical documents such as WDs and CDs will be reviewed after the end of the trial period.

1.4   Timetable for Change
The JTC1 "Timeline" is based on transferring from the current (partial) diskette-based distribution to a fully web-based system. It envisages that web-based distribution will commence in September 1997 and all diskette-based distribution must end by December 1997. In March 1998 JTC1 will begin web-based balloting.

2   Implications for WG5

There are (at least) three major decisions to be made:

- Do we (or rather J3) wish to continue using Frame to produce the base standard? If so, can we readily produce a pdf version?

   A similar question needs to be asked for the three TRs and Parts 2 and 3 of the Fortran Standard.

   I shall need to request SC22 at the August Plenary to ask JTC1 for permission to use whatever we decide we want.

- How can we move to a fully web-based distribution system? And when?

   In particular, we need to agree on a suitable form of access control so that we can provide DIS and DTR documents in electronic form. This will inevitably involve further changes because, for example, the web server software that is currently used for the WG5 pages cannot restrict access on a page-by-page basis. The WG5 pages must, therefore, move to a different server (or at least use different server software).

- Which of the acceptable formats shall we use?

   Note that PostScript is NOT an acceptable format. Based on our past experience I would suggest that we standardise on pdf for documents intended

to be printed, html for (shorter) documents intended to be viewed on-screen, with text copies of everything, if possible/relevant.

A related issue concerns the email distribution lists. Since passwords are meant to be changed regularly there must be a secure method of informing members of the new password. It would clearly be absurd to do this by post, and yet our current email list has links to several other lists, with the result that it would be impossible to know who was being sent the new password(s)!

Two possible ways round this are (a) for the Convenor to maintain a separate email distribution list solely for such sensitive issues, or (b) for Heads of Delegations to be sent changes, and delegated the responsibility of passing it on to those entitled to know in their countries. The former is prone to error, the latter does not necessarily improve security, it merely delegates (some of) the responsibility for enforcing it! This is, however, an important issue.

3   Action Required from WG5

WG5 must agree a new set of procedures for electronic distribution, to be incorporated in the Vienna Resolutions. The key features of these new procedures must also be incorporated in the Convenor's Report to the SC22 Plenary, which is being held in Ottawa, August 18-22.