

Subject: Future Plans for the IEEE 802.5 Token Ring Working Group

The IEEE 802.5 Token Ring Working Group is now looking into the best short and long term strategies for advancing the work on Token Ring. While there is general agreement that the vast majority of the work has now been successfully completed, there are still open work items including maintenance issues and some minor enhancements. It is important that this work progress in the most efficient manner possible, and with the broadest possible review. The working group has seen a significant decrease in the number of its voting members over the last two years. This decrease prompts us to seek ways of maintaining and broadening the pool of experts available to contribute to and review our documents. As we look at the types of changes we may make, we note that there has already been a significant shift from progressing our work at meetings to electronic methods of working via the email reflector and the IEEE 802.5 web site. In line with this trend, one possibility is to move to a methodology that will allow us to advance most or all of our work electronically, without being encumbered by the requirement for face-to-face meetings. It would be desirable to expand our cadre of experts to include all those with an interest in Token Ring. No specific timeframe has been determined for moving to such a new mode of operation, although it is likely to happen some time in the year 2000. To meet this goal, we are establishing a call for interest and participation which is being widely distributed, and posted on our 802.5 Web site (www.8025.org).

Call for Interest and Participation

To prepare for changes to our mode of operation we are now opening up the IEEE 802.5 reflector to all interested parties that would like to

participate electronically in the development and review of IEEE 802.5 documents. The working group would further appreciate those individuals identify themselves who are willing to serve in the cadre of experts and interested parties willing to review documents. Please send any such requests to join the group, and willingness to participate to the IEEE 802.5 reflector (stds-802-5@mail.ieee.org) or to me (rdlove@us.ibm.com).

Status of open work items in 802.5:

802.5t 100 Mbit/s Token Ring. The draft has been conditionally approved by the IEEE pending resolution of patent issues (patents that apply to 100 Megabit/s Ethernet Physical layer may apply to 100 Mbit/s Token Ring as well). It is expected that all patent issues will be resolved by mid December with publication of 802.5t by the end of the year.

802.5v Gigabit Token Ring - 802.5 recirculation ballot closed with no negative comments. LMSC sponsor ballot due to start in December.

802.5w Corrigenda to 802.5:1998 and its Amd.1:1998. The LMSC Sponsor ballot closed with no negative votes. Changes implemented to address comments will require an LMSC Sponsor recirculation ballot. Expect close of comments by mid December in time for approval of 802.5w at the January IEEE Standards Board meeting.

802.5x - Source Routing for VLANs - Call for interest to be posted to the reflector - withdraw in March 2000 unless sufficient interest is expressed and an editor is forthcoming.

802.5z Link Aggregation: A first draft was presented at the November plenary meeting and adopted by the task force.