



# IEEE 802.3 Interpretations Report 12<sup>th</sup> March 2009, Vancouver, BC, Canada

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# Process

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- Present response recommended by the Maintenance Task Force
- Three way vote
  - Approve proposed response
  - Reject proposed response
  - Send proposed response out for WG Ballot
- Note: Motion to do a WG Ballot takes precedent if requested

# Standards Companion Text

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Interpretations are a unique form of commentary on the standard. They are not statements of what the standard should have done or meant to say. Interpretations cannot change the meaning of a standard as it currently stands. Even if the request points out an error in the standard, the interpretation cannot fix that error. The interpretation can suggest that this will be brought up for consideration in a revision or amendment (or, depending on the nature of the error, an errata sheet might be issued).

However, an interpretation has no authority to do any of this. It can only discuss, address, and clarify what the standard currently says. The challenge for the interpreters is to distinguish between their expertise on what "should be," their interests in what they 'would like the standard to be," and what the standard says. Interpretations are often valuable, though, because the request will point out problems that might otherwise have gone unaddressed.

# Standards Companion Guidelines

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- 1) The standard is what it says. If the words are substantively wrong, then a corrective corrigenda via the balloting process is the correct response.
- 2) If the standard is ambiguous, then the interpretation must favor a looser requirement rather than a more restrictive one. Again, a corrective corrigenda can be initiated if needed.
- 3) If two parts of the standard contradict one another, then a rationale should be created and the IEEE errata process should be applied to correct the contradiction.

# Interpretations Request 1-03/09

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- 1 new interpretation request received
  - 1-03/09 – TX and RX MAC Paths
- Overview of interpretation request(s)
  - 1-03/09 – TX and RX MAC Paths
    - Submitter quotes first paragraph of clause 2.3.2.5 and last paragraph of clause 4.1.2
    - Submitter interprets, and asks for confirmation, an architectural requirement for a “bridge” between the TX and RX MAC paths and particular behaviors
- <http://www.ieee802.org/3/interp/interp-1-0309.pdf>

# Interpretation Request 1-03/09

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- Proposed response

This request is a request for consultation rather than an interpretation request. It also does not meet the requirement of providing at least two possible interpretations.

The functionality required is unambiguously stated in the standard.

The requester's interpretation is not correct as the standard does not specify or limit how the functionality is achieved.

- Move

- Accept above response to interpretation request 1-03/09

- M: R. Grow      S: S. Carlson

- Y: 7      N:0      A:0 Motion Passes

# Interpretation 1-03/09 Motion (WG)

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- Move

- Accept below response to interpretation request 1-03/09:

- This request is a request for consultation rather than an interpretation request. It also does not meet the requirement of providing at least two possible interpretations.

- The functionality required is unambiguously stated in the standard.

- The requester's interpretation is not correct as the standard does not specify or limit how the functionality is achieved.

- Other standards may affect implementing these functions (e.g. IEEE Std 802.1)

- M: W. Diab                      S: R. Grow

- Tech (75%)

- .3:                      Y:49                                      N:0                                      A:19

- Motion Passes

# Interpretations Web Information

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- IEEE 802.3 Maintenance web site:  
<http://www.ieee802.org/3/interp/index.html>
- IEEE Standards Companion text and guidelines on interpretations:  
<http://standards.ieee.org/guides/companion/part2.html#interpret>