

February 23, 2017

News from JCGM-WG2 December 2016

Executive Summary

The number of members of WG2 has decreased by three in 2016. One new member joined, but two members retired and two members passed away.

The main technical activity of JCGM-WG2 in 2016 was to develop a Draft Outline of the fourth edition of the VIM (VIM4). Late in 2016 it was decided to instead move straight to the development of the Draft VIM4. The scope of the VIM4 will still expand from that of the VIM3 to more extensively encompass nominal and ordinal properties, although the extent to which this will be done is under discussion. An approach harmonizing the structure of entries for nominal, ordinal and quantitative properties (quantities) is still being considered, although the complexity of doing this might prove to be too unwieldy. A different approach, drawing terms and definitions from examples used in practice, might be used instead.

The “VIM definitions with informative annotations” (a.k.a. “[Annotated VIM3](#)”) on the BIPM website continues to be updated, and will be used as a source for simplifying the language in definitions in the VIM4.

Brief Report

WG2 Membership:

One new member joined WG2 in 2016. She is M. Desenfant, representing ISO, who takes over for a long-time colleague and WG2 member, M. Priel, who tendered his resignation for personal reasons. Another long time WG2 member, W. Woeger, representing IUPAP, also announced that he is leaving WG2 at the end of the year. WG2 expressed its great thanks to Priel and Woeger for their valuable contributions over the years, and wishes them the very best. Sadly, two WG2 members passed away in 2016. They are W. Kool, who represented OIML, and P. DeBievre, who represented IUPAC. Both served on WG2 for many years, also providing valuable contributions, and all will be sorely missed. Condolences from WG2 were delivered to the families of Kool and DeBievre.

Status of Development of VIM4:

One of the key WG2 activities in 2016 was to identify which terms from the nominal and ordinal properties communities should appear in the VIM4, and include those in a Draft VIM4 Outline that would be circulated to the JCGM Member Organizations for their comments. However, in consultation with the JCGM Chairman, WG2 decided that circulating an outline that does not also contain proposed definitions would likely not result in obtaining the desired level of

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feedback. Therefore, WG2 will proceed directly with developing a Draft VIM4, which will contain both draft terms and definitions.

A further WG2 activity in 2016 was to begin identifying which of the definitions associated with the terms that were included in the Draft VIM4 Outline could and should be generalized in such a way in the VIM4 that they would also pertain to quantities. The idea was that those entries could serve to harmonize the conceptual structure among entries for nominal, ordinal and quantitative properties in the VIM4.

This harmonization activity has proven to be more difficult and time consuming than originally envisaged, and so a parallel effort is being undertaken in WG2 to further consult the nominal and ordinal properties communities for written examples of where metrological principles are being used in their work. These examples will then be used to identify key terms and concepts that will be considered for inclusion in the VIM4, without trying to harmonize these entries with the entries pertaining to quantities. This consultation and analysis will take place during 2017.

It is anticipated that this parallel approach will lead more quickly than the harmonized approach to a Draft VIM4. It is now projected that the Draft VIM4 will be available to circulate to the JCGM Member Organizations for their comments by the end of 2019.

Structure of WG2 (Task Groups):

WG2 continues to maintain four Task Groups (TGs) to aid in progressing its work between meetings. The first two TGs are focused on the consistency and relationships among VIM4 entries, the third TG continues the work on the VIM3 annotations, and the fourth (newest) TG focuses on the nominal and ordinal properties aspects of the VIM4.

Publishing Considerations for the VIM4:

The web-based “Annotated VIM3” is meeting with increasing popularity, and WG2 is leaning towards using a web-based format for the VIM4, which could be used to generate pdf files as required, customized to individual needs. Using a web-based format would also allow for more flexibility concerning the order of presentation of entries (e.g., alphabetical ordering versus ordering based on concepts), and facilitate the introduction of supplementary material such as explanatory texts and possibly translations into other languages.

VIM Definitions with Informative Annotations (“Annotated VIM3”):

There are now over 50 annotations of VIM3 entries in the online “Annotated VIM3”. This year, annotations on “measurement accuracy”, “measurement method”, and “primary reference measurement procedure / Note 1” have been added.