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M2.3c Open review guidelines for eArchiving Building Block specifications and documentation

**E-ARK3
REPORT**



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Cover Sheet

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Document Approver(s)

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Document Reviewer(s)

Name	Role
DILCIS Board	Owner of the procedure
eArchiving Building Block users	eArchiving Building Block specification creators

Summary of Changes:

Version	Date	Created by	Short Description of Changes
V0.1	2020-05-06	Karin Bredenberg and Jaime Kaminski	First version created
V0.1	2020-09-01	Karin Bredenberg and Jaime Kaminski	Draft released for public comments
V0.2	2021-02-01	Karin Bredenberg and Jaime Kaminski	Updates towards version 1.0
V1.0	2021-08-31	Karin Bredenberg and Jaime Kaminski	Version 1.0 published

Glossaries of terms

E-ARK vocabs: <http://evoc.dlmforum.eu/E-ARK/group/5568370c3448e76821b3942f/list>
CEF Glossary <https://ec.europa.eu/cefdigital/wiki/display/CEFDIGITAL/CEF+Glossary>

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Contents

Contents

- Cover Sheet 2
- Guidelines for the open review of a Common Specification and/or a Content Information Type Specification (version 1.0) 4**
 - Summary 4
 - Before the initiation of a review 4
 - Documents required for a review 4
 - What needs to be reviewed? 4
 - Document structure 4
 - Document content 5
 - Publicising the review..... 5
 - Review period..... 6
 - Review process..... 6
 - Analysis..... 6
 - Documentation of review 6
 - Actions after the review 6

Guidelines for the open review of a Common Specification and/or a Content Information Type Specification (version 1.0)

Summary

Open reviews are an essential part of the verification process for eArchiving Building Block specification documentation. A review is a systematic examination of a document by experts and other stakeholders to find and remove errors early on in the specification life cycle. A well-conducted open review can reduce long-term costs for the specification developers and improve the output.

The following guide describes the process of conducting an open review for a Common Specification and/or a Content Information Type Specification (CITS).

Before the initiation of a review

All eArchiving Building Block specifications must undergo an open review. Document authors should contact the DILCIS Board (info@dilcis.eu) to receive instructions regarding requirements and timeframes.

Documents required for a review

The CITS creation process requires the delivery of the following documents to the DILCIS Board:

- The CITS document itself (the file format of the document should be discussed with the DILCIS Board prior to submission).
- An information type description (this might be a reference to a published description).
- An XML schema or a link to the XML schema describing the content information type.
- Examples showing the specification in use: more than one example is required.
- Own vocabularies if provided.
- Schematron documents if provided.

The following additional material should be provided:

- An abstract for the review.
- A list of specific questions that need to be answered in the review.

The above documentation should be assembled and sent to the DILCIS Board. If appropriate, the Board will then approve the delivery, set up the review pages, and begin to inform the user community of the review (informing the user community will require the input of the specification authors).

What needs to be reviewed?

The questions that need to be asked of the reviewers are determined by the nature of the specification. However, there are certain key elements associated with the document structure, its content, and the underlying standards that should be considered.

Document structure

The structural elements of a document such as formatting, grammar and spelling are essential to establish credibility as a poorly-proofed document may confuse the reader. Using a professional proof-reader to check the document before an open review, comments regarding the structural elements can be significantly decreased. Therefore this measure will help focus the effort of the reviewers on the document's content.

The following elements need to be considered:

- Compliance with the eArchiving Building Block format/template.
- Consistent use of naming conventions, numbering, etc.
- Functionality coverage and correctness.
- Ease of understanding for the designated community.
- Spelling and grammar.

Document content

Checking the content of a specification is the most critical aspect of an open review. This can include:

- Deviations from the underlying standard.
- Accessibility of underlying standards and profiles.
- Issues with requirements.
- Design defects (e.g. making a required element optional to use when it is mandatory in the original standard).
- Accessibility of validation (how is validation conducted: manually; automatically; online? etc.).
- Is the appropriate encoding used?
- Is anything missing from the specification?
- Are the examples supplied:
 - appropriate,
 - easy to understand, and
 - do they show the whole specification?

Specific specifications may require a focus on different components. One example is for the transfer to an archive, another for changing system. If this is the case, then these components should be described in the request for review.

Publicising the review

The review will be published and announced through various channels, including the DILCIS Board website, mailing lists, webpages, Twitter and LinkedIn. Both the DILCIS Board and the specification authors will contribute to raising awareness of the review.

An open review allows anyone with the appropriate expertise and interest to contribute. However, merely relying on reviewers to step forward is likely to yield poor results. The more extensive the range of perspectives incorporated in the review, the more comprehensive the potential benefits. A considerable effort needs to be devoted to raising awareness of the review and seeking reviewers:

- **Personal contacts:** The most effective means of obtaining review comments is through the use of personal contacts. It is recommended that such contacts are individually contacted to explain why a review is needed and the importance of their contribution.
- **Known experts:** Document authors are likely familiar with other specialists in their field. If such specialists can be contacted directly, it will benefit in the same way as personal contacts.
- **Special Interest Groups (SIGs):** There may be working groups, SIGs, etc., where the request for review should be disseminated.
- **Mailing lists and social media:** Organisational mailing lists and/or social media accounts could be used to provide information about the review.

Review period

- The documentation is usually made available for review to the user community for **three months** unless another timeframe has been agreed with the DILCIS Board.

Review process

- The links to the document for review will be located on the DILCIS Board website.
- The DILCIS Board will collect and pass on the comments received to the relevant specification authors at the end of the designated public consultation.
- The Board will collect information about the number of responses for statistical purposes.

Analysis

Although the DILCIS Board gathers the data, the examination of the data will be undertaken by the document authors/owners, who will also document the process and methodology, including how the comments are handled. For example, all comments can be registered as GitHub issues which can receive a reply.

Documentation of review

The specification authors will produce a short report stating:

- What was reviewed?
- Who undertook the review?
- How were the review comments analysed?
- The dates of the public consultation.
- The results can take the form of:
 - (Minor changes) The specification will be updated according to the comments made and released at the next available release point.
 - (Major changes) The specification requires major changes before deployment (the DILCIS Board will determine the release date according to the amount of revision required).
 - (Obsolescence) Appropriate steps for maintaining access to the current version of the specification will be undertaken, but the support of the specification will cease.
- Details of what changes were made.

This report should be delivered to the DILCIS Board for publication in all relevant channels within two months of the receipt of the review results data.

As a courtesy, all reviewers who contributed to the activity should be informed of the results (within the confines of GDPR legislation).

Actions after the review

If the review result indicates that updates are needed, the specification will be updated and published in its next release (e.g. in GitHub).