

Urgent Alert on IEEE's Recent Unethical Activities

Chinese National Body (SAC)

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Introduction

Chinese National Body (SAC) has noticed that IEEE and its representatives have produced anti-WAPI documents, feeding them to national bodies, and asking JTC1 P-members to vote against WAPI using the arguments that IEEE has developed. After carefully studying the documents and analyzing the situation, China believes that IEEE's anti-WAPI campaign has gone beyond normal standardization boundaries and has continuously violated so many ISO/IEC rules and principles, now to such a extent that far exceeds the level of tolerance.

China believes that the IEEE documents are malicious, misleading, deceptive, erroneous, unethical, and provides a clear example of IEEE's arrogance and disrespect for national bodies, leadership, and rules and principles of ISO/IEC. The victim of this kind of illicit and irresponsible behavior will not only be WAPI, but also the integrity and prestige of ISO/IEC and the security interests of the international community.

Because of the seriousness nature of this issue and being a P-member of ISO/IEC, China feels the necessity to issue an alert to all JTC1 national bodies as well as ISO/IEC Central Secretariats.

China has found that IEEE has been engaged in many illicit activities against WAPI in the past 18 months. The most recent event was a document produced by IEEE in September 2005 trying to cause confusions to prevent WAPI from entering fast track ballot simultaneously with 11i on Oct. 7, 2005. After seeing that trick did not work, IEEE produced another document in November 2005, this time aimed at mobilizing negative votes against WAPI and favorable votes for IEEE's 11i.

China has always been receptive and cooperative towards comments and suggestions from the international community on WAPI. But we are strongly against the way the IEEE documents were produced, written, and presented. They are not made to provide help and seek consensus, but instead are made for a single purpose, that is to create an unfair advantage for 11i by spreading reckless charges against WAPI.

China disapproves IEEE's recent actions on the following grounds:

1. The Timing.

According to ISO/IEC directives, members and organizations are asked to provide comments as early as possible. But IEEE waited until the proposals have entered fast track ballot (during which no formal discussions are allowed) to produce

these documents. It could lead to a disaster for WAPI because national bodies might be influenced by IEEE's one sided information, while China is unaware of it and is left with no opportunity to clarify and to explain.

This is an indication of a malicious intention.

2. The Receiver

Being the developer of WAPI, China should be among the first receivers of any comments related to WAPI, and China has made repeated calls for and has been very accommodative towards comments. If IEEE really wants to help, and according to established ISO/IEC principles, the documents should be sent directly and first to China for review and explanation. However, the documents were distributed to national bodies and even appeared on some national body websites, but the one which should be among the first to see them, not mentioning to be consulted, was kept in the dark. This shows that IEEE is so interested in killing WAPI that it does not want to give China any chance to detect and explain.

Conspiracy should be the right term to describe this kind of activities..

3. The Attitude

ISO/IEC rules requires that standards are made through consensus. Following this principle, China has been carefully limiting the discussion with national bodies after September 2005 to explanations concerning WAPI and refrained from lobbying against 11i, hoping that IEEE would also take cautious attitude to preserve the consensus tradition.

However, in its documents, IEEE turned a blind eye to 11i's defects, and instead put an all-out negative campaign against WAPI.

This kind of hostile and belligerent attitude is very destructive and runs against the consensus spirit in ISO/IEC.

4. Arrogance

IEEE shows arrogance in WAPI related documents. In documents presented for Beijing meeting, IEEE had claimed that SC6 national bodies lacked the resources and experience to develop WLAN standards. In recent documents, IEEE and its representatives are concerned that national bodies might not have sufficient resources to study the issue, so that IEEE's documents are provided and national bodies are encouraged to use them to accompany ballots against WAPI.

China believes that national bodies are capable of and will make their own independent judgment.

5. The Boundaries

IEEE is a C-liaison organization and should learn where its boundaries are. However, IEEE seems does not know and oversteps the boundaries. IEEE has no voting rights in ISO/IEC, but still claimed in the Beijing meeting that WAPI should not be approved and National bodies will not approve WAPI. This sounds like a spokesman and a dictator for national bodies.

IEEE should learn to let national bodies make their own decisions.

6. The Intimidation

IEEE claims that “because of the contradictions between 1N7903 and 1N7904, ratifying 1N7904 would block any and all future contributions by IEEE to ISO/IEC. This would have a long term impact on the maintenance and progression of ISO/IEC 8802-11.”

This is a threat. Under such a huge pressure, will national bodies and ISO/IEC be intimidated into sacrificing WAPI to please IEEE, even though it would lead to a monopoly in ISO/IEC WLAN standard?

7. The Disrespect

IEEE has shown disrespect not only for national bodies, but also for ISO/IEC senior leadership. Seeing the prolonged and intensifying controversy and surrounding WAPI and 11i, ISO/IEC leaders wisely and timely intervened and took many measures to ensure a fair and smooth processing of the two proposals. However, IEEE has irresponsibly directed anger at ISO/IEC leadership and blaming them for procedural decisions which IEEE and its representative have all agreed to.

This kind of irrational behavior is damaging the reputation of ISO/IEC.

8. Cultural Chauvinism

In WAPI and 11i related technical meetings in 2005, IEEE has tried to show its technical superiority without success. Now, in the final ballot stage, IEEE is trying to show cultural superiority, blaming China for producing an “immature standard” that was not written in as good English as 11i’s. IEEE further declares that it is China’s duty to change the grammars, not the comment providers.

However, we wish to point out that IEEE’s attitude and behavior again violate ISO/IEC rules and principles, according to which, this kind of editorial issues should have been raised in early stages and editorial work should have been done by Project editor and an editorial group. WAPI has been read, commented and revised for 18 months. Why IEEE waited until the ballot has started to raise these issues? And why the editorial group was not organized? Who has violated the ISO/IEC related policies? why?

The answer is that IEEE has set up a language trap, waiting until the ballot has started so that the language issue can be used as a weapon to generate negative ballots against WAPI. And WAPI would be further delayed after the ballot. For this reason, IEEE turned down the proposal from China to form an editing group in Saint Paul De Vance meeting, August 2005.

Who is violating ISO/IEC rules? The answer should be clear, not China.

This is another evidence of IEEE’s malicious intention.

9. Lack of common sense

The documents demonstrate IEEE’s lack of common sense of ISO/IEC rules and

procedures. For example, IEEE criticizes WAPI for mentioning Chinese algorithm SMS4 in the text saying that it is enforcing the international community to endorse Chinese algorithm. In fact 1N7904 doesn't force to adopt any specific cryptographic algorithms, even China's algorithms. Security protocol and cryptographic algorithms are relatively independent, and WAPI security protocol is applicable to multiple cryptographic algorithms. Cryptographic algorithms are only adoptable modules. Which algorithm to be applied is subject to the user's requirement and national/regional regulations. We believe that there is nothing wrong with WAPI listing Chinese SMS4 in informative annex as a reference, thus giving more choices to international community. It is not only a common practice in international standardization, but also complies with relevant ISO/IEC requirements.

IEEE should spent more time to study ISO/IEC standardization rule books before making this kind of ridiculous comments to confuse people.

9. The Contradiction

IEEE's document spent a lot of pages listing the contradictions between WAPI and 11i and IEEE is asking national bodies to approve 11i and reject WAPI because of the differences. Does IEEE understand that if WAPI has many problems in conflicting with 11i, it also means that 11i has as much problems as well?

Why IEEE is asking national bodies to only look at WAPI's "problems" and completely ignore the problems and serious defects of 11i? Who is going to benefit? It is IEEE. Who is going to suffer? It will be the international community.

10. The Responsibility

IEEE alleges that China has not been cooperative and has turned down IEEE's suggestions to "harmonize" the proposals. IEEE therefore claimed that WAPI should be rejected so as to force China into negotiation tables.

China wish to point out that IEEE distorted the facts. It was IEEE who opposed to form a study group in SC6 to reconcile the two proposals in the Beijing meeting. It was IEEE who turned down Chinese proposal to form a group to edit the two proposals in the Saint Paul de Vance meeting. It was also IEEE which declared in SC6 Orlando plenary meeting in Nov. 2004 that "the two proposals are not mutually exclusive, both can reside in ISO/IEC 8802-11 as alternative and invoked when needed".

It is clear that IEEE is taking an uncooperative attitude and destroying consensus and then shift blames to others (just like they blame ISO/IEC senior leadership). IEEE should know how to take responsibility for what it does.

11. The Confusion

ISO/IEC Directives prohibits activities that would cause confusions in the standardization process. However, IEEE has been continuously attempting to cause confusions among national bodies so to continuously delay WAPI's processing. For example, IEEE had declared the position that WAPI and 11i are not mutually exclusive long time ago, but recently told national bodies that there should be only

one proposal to be approved. There have been rulings and decisions determining that IEEE-SC6 agreement does not apply to WAPI, but IEEE's recent documents continue to claim that WAPI's fast track process violates that agreement.

IEEE should know that confusion creation activities are prohibited in ISO/IEC.

12. The Annoyance

It has been determined in SC6 Orlando plenary meeting (Nov. 2004), in Geneva meeting (May 2005), in Beijing meeting (August 2005) and in SC6 2006 plenary meeting (Sept. 2005), and in orders issued by ISO/IEC leadership, that WAPI will be processed within ISO/IEC. However, IEEE disregards those decisions and keeps demanding repeatedly that WAPI should be processed in IEEE.

This is very annoying and has caused a lot of confusions among people who were unaware of previous proceedings. As a result, not only Chinese National Body, but also the ISO/IEC leadership has been unduly blamed for ignoring the so called "IEEE-SC6 cooperation agreement".

Conclusion

This kind of list can go on and on. However, with above, we believe that we have made a point: IEEE has been untruthful, uncooperative, and unscrupulous in its deliberate campaign against WAPI, trying every means to create an unfair advantage for its 11i, paying no attention to and showing no respect for the rights and interests of national bodies, ISO/IEC and the international community.

We wish that national bodies are aware of the deceptive tactics of IEEE and will carefully study the proposals and make own independent decisions. Chinese national body has been preparing a summary response to IEEE's most recent document, refuting IEEE's allegations against WAPI. A more detailed response will be prepared and be ready for the resolution meeting.

China believes that IEEE continued unethical behavior and repeated violation of ISO/IEC rules and principles have not only delayed and endangered China's WAPI proposal, but also obstructs the normal and due process of ISO/IEC, and threatens the integrity and image of ISO/IEC.

China wishes to take this opportunity to register our complaints against IEEE. We will continue to monitor the development, and in the mean time start to compile a detailed report to support and expand what is contained in this document. In the final report, events before the fast track ballot period will also be reviewed and analyzed. We will show that IEEE's unethical activities are far more extensive and far more serious than what have been presented in this document.

Regarding the ballot of WAPI and 11i, Chinese National Body wish to make the following appeal to fellow national bodies in JTC1:

If you agree with China that security is the utmost important factor for consideration in the ballot, then vote for WAPI and reject 11i, because WAPI has the

most reliable and uncompromised security solution, while 11i has so many defects that even National Institute of Standards and Technology(NIST) of U.S expressed concerns on and criticized security mechanism in IEEE 802.11i.

If you agree with China that the ISO/IEC standards should be produced with fair, open, impartial, due process, and responsible ways, and that no monopoly is allowed in ISO/IEC standard development, then vote for WAPI and reject 11i, because we need to send an unequivocal message to IEEE that national bodies will stand firm to protect the integrity, image and the fundamental rules and principles of ISO/IEC.

China is open to all comments and suggestions.

Sincerely,