P1450.4 meeting minutes - 06/06/07

Attendees: Doug Sprague, Bruce Parnas, Ernie Wahl, Jim O'Reilly

Not present: Doug Sprague, Ajay Koche, Greg Maston, Brian Johnson, Tony Taylor, Carol Dowding, Daniel Fan, Yuhai Ma, Bob Roberts, Oscar Rodrigues, Jim Mosley, SB Thum, Jose Santiago

Agenda/Summary:

- P**reamble:**
  - Record Meeting (*2)
    - To listen to the meeting recording, do the following:
      - Call the (US) dial-in numbers 1-877-421-0003 (toll free) or 1-770-615-1374 (toll)
      - Enter the passcode code 747464
      - Once dialed in with the proper access code, enter *3 (star 3)
      - Then enter the file number 73477001 for this conference (this number will change each week).
      - Press 1 to listen to the conference.
  - IEEE Meeting Preamble (No discussion of proprietary information).
  - Review latest syntax changes (doc file from Jim attached)
    - Pointed out the 3 types of TestExec calls on line 194 in the TestType block.
    - A fair amount of discussion occurred related to the differentiation between entrypoint_stmt (line 56) and execute_stmt (line 66) and whether there should just be one execute_stmt.
    - Jim noted that entrypoint statements should not probably not allow for dynamic creation of tests or flows. However, under certain circumstances, this could be useful, and I heard no real reason for disallowing this capability in the EntryPoints block. If we DO allow this capability, the syntax and semantics need to be worked out.
    - A fairly lengthy discussion was had on having a default FlowType and how this relates to TestBase and whether there is a need for a default FlowType in the language.
    - Much discussion on allowing cross inheritance from TestTypes to FlowTypes and visa versa. It was decided that for now this would not be allowed, and that we will determine if this is something that is truly needed in the future as the spec matures. This discussion very much relates to the conceptual model's representation of Flows and Types being similar concepts. They need to be allowed to be used in the same contexts, but they are very different concepts and most all languages treat them as such today. Bruce pointed out that Tests and Flows need to be "flowable" but that is the major attribute they must share.
      - The main reason for wanting to derive a Test from a Flow (TestType from FlowType) is to allow creation of user-defined tests which can consist of multiple "primitive" test types from a particular tester's OS. There are at least two ways to accomplish this goal.
        - Allow derivation (inheritance) of Flows (FlowType) from Tests (TestType), and vice versa. While this fits neatly with the conceptual model's implied interchangability of Tests and Flows (to the point where a Flow is simply a specific TestType which knows how to sequence through a list of FlowNodes), it does add additional complexity to the language semantics, and there may be a better way to accomplish this goal.
        - A second way to allow creation of user-defined tests which consist of multiple "primitive" TestTypes would be to allow the TestType's TestExec statement to invoke a previously-

instantiated Flow (or perhaps dynamically create a Flow from a previously-defined FlowType). This option should be discussed at next week's meeting.

- Miscellaneous syntax fixes
  - Line 205 has an extra set of braces that need to be removed.
  - Fix line 241 comment to read "end FlowType"

- Discuss recent emails to the reflector (Ernie's comments arising from parser development)

Actions:
For next meeting, update syntax document based on ideas from recent meetings, and provide some code examples.

Next meeting:
- Next meeting 06/13/2007.

For reference STIL .4 information can be found at the IEEE STIL website:
http://grouper.ieee.org/groups/1450/ (select the P1450.4 link from the table) or use the direct link
http://grouper.ieee.org/groups/1450/dot4/index.html