

# Sponsor Ballot and RevCom Tutorial

Steve Carlson, High Speed Design, Inc.  
[scarlson@ieee.org](mailto:scarlson@ieee.org)

David Law, HPE  
[dlaw@hpe.com](mailto:dlaw@hpe.com)

# Sponsor Ballot

---

- Sponsor ballot is the final balloting stage for projects in IEEE 802.3
- Sponsor ballot is conducted by the IEEE Balloting Center and uses the MyBallot on-line tools
- From the standpoint of the IEEE Standards Association, sponsor ballot is the ONLY ballot
  - Task Force review and Working Group ballot are part of the IEEE 802.3 WG process
- A Sponsor Ballot pool is formed prior to the ballot start
- Balloters are IEEE-SA members or other individuals who pay a balloting fee to participate
  - Balloters may be unknown to the Task Force and not part of IEEE 802.3
- The project Task Force becomes the “Ballot Resolution Group” (aka the “Comment Resolution Group”) for sponsor ballot
- The CRG does what the TF has always done---respond to received comments
- Initial sponsor ballot is 30 days
- Recirculation ballots are 15 days

# RevCom

---

- RevCom – Standards Review Committee for standards that have completed sponsor ballot
- Reviews the sponsor ballot package (comment history and other balloting records) to ensure that IEEE-SA rules have been followed and makes a recommendation to IEEE SASB if the draft should or should not be approved as an IEEE Standard

For definitive rules on ballot process see IEEE-SA Standards Board Operations manual subclause 5.4.3 'Conduct of the standards balloting process' at [http://standards.ieee.org/develop/policies/sa\\_opman/sect5.html#5.4.3](http://standards.ieee.org/develop/policies/sa_opman/sect5.html#5.4.3)

- RevCom provides sponsor ballot commenting and review guidance

For definitive guidance on sponsor ballot commenting and review see 'IEEE-SA RevCom Comment Resolution Preparation Guidelines' at <http://standards.ieee.org/about/sasb/revcom/guidelines.pdf>

# Guidelines

---

- Sponsor ballot has 3 types of votes
  - Approve
  - Disapprove (comments must be provided to support the DIS vote)
  - Abstain (time, expertise, conflict of interest, other)
    - Not sure why people join a ballot pool to abstain...
- Sponsor ballot has 6 types of comments
  - Editorial
  - Technical
  - General
  - Editorial Required
  - Technical Required
  - General Required
- As with the Working Group ballot, the comment type designation is that of the commenter.
- Editorial and Technical comment types are familiar and mean the same as in TF review and WG ballot
- General is harder to define, but usually means something that may be global to the draft
  - “The copyright year should be 2017, not 2106, please update?”
- Required = “must be satisfied” in order to change from DIS to APP

# Commenting

---

- There is an obligation for the Sponsor (802) to provide evidence of consideration of each comment via approved IEEE-SA balloting tools regardless of whether the comment is associated with a Do Not Approve, Approve, or Abstain vote
- There is a corresponding obligation on the part of the voter (balloter) to use the IEEE-SA balloting tools for submitting comments. Comments are to be submitted on the comment form in myBallot (part of myProject), or alternatively, in an electronic file in one of the formats indicated in the myBallot comment system
- Each comment must relate to a specific line, paragraph, figure, or equation in the balloted draft. The comment resolution group (CRG) of the Sponsor must be able to address each comment as a single issue
- If necessary, an individual comment submitted in myBallot may be supplemented by an electronic attachment (file). Such an attachment must relate to a single issue and to a specific line, paragraph, figure, or equation in the balloted draft so that the CRG can address the comment as a single issue

# Comment attachments

---

- Some examples of acceptable attachment files are:
  - A marked-up copy of a figure, table or equation indicating corrections or changes needed
  - An electronic file of a figure, table, or equation that the comment suggests be added or suggests as a replacement of an existing such item in the balloted draft
- Unacceptable attachments
  - All or part of the balloted draft that has been marked up with comments (e.g. by hand and then scanned, or using Word/FrameMaker change tracking, or by inserting PDF comments) that relates to multiple issues or relates to multiple lines, paragraphs, figures, or equations in the balloted draft
  - Any other attachment that does not allow the CRG to address a comment as a single issue or does not relate to a specific line, paragraph, figure, or equation in the balloted draft

# ACCEPTED

---

- **ACCEPTED – IEEE 802.3 uses “ACCEPT”**
  - Means: The CRG agreed **exactly** with comment and change proposed by the commenter
  - Prerequisite: The changes proposed in the comment contains sufficient detail so that voters can understand the specific changes that satisfy the commenter and the editor can make the change
  - The disposition detail field should be left **blank**.
- Be careful to ensure that an **ACCEPTED** comment follows these rules **EXACTLY**. The comment must be clear and unambiguous, and the proposed remedy followed with no changes.
- Do not add **anything** to the disposition detail field! For example, “This is the greatest comment in the history of commenting,” or “Finally! We’ve been arguing about this for 3 years” is not acceptable.

# REVISED

- **REVISED – IEEE 802.3 uses “ACCEPT IN PRINCIPLE”**
  - Means: CRG agrees in principle with the comment and/or proposed change, and one or more of
    - the CRG disagrees with all or part of the specific details in the proposed change in the comment
    - the proposed change in the comment does not contain sufficient detail so that the CRG can understand the specific changes that satisfy the commenter, or
    - the changes made by the CRG contain additions or modifications to what was proposed by the commenter
  - The disposition details field should contain sufficient detail so that voters can understand the specific changes determined by the CRG and the editor can make the change
  - Don't refer to the resolution of another comment here for resolution text. Make sure that the EXACT change text is captured in the comment disposition field. It is acceptable to refer to similar or identical comments here to help voters understand the specific changes and that similar comments were received. Do not refer to TF review or WG ballot comments for background.

# REJECTED

---

- REJECTED
- Used when one or more of these applies:
  - the CRG disagrees with the comment
  - the comment is out of scope
  - the proposed change in the comment does not contain sufficient detail so that the CRG can understand the specific changes that satisfy the commenter
  - the CRG cannot come to a consensus to make changes necessary to address the comment
  - the comment is in support of an unsatisfied previous comment associated with a disapprove vote and does not provide substantive additional rationale
  - the comment includes an attachment that does not meet the criteria indicated by the myBallot system; that the CRG cannot address as a single issue; or that does not relate to a specific line, paragraph, figure, or equation in the balloted draft
  - the commenter has indicated to the CRG chair that they wish to withdraw the comment

# REJECTED

---

- The disposition detail field should explain why the comment is being rejected using one or more of these reasons:
  - an explanation of why the CRG disagrees with the comment,
  - a statement that the comment is out of scope, and the rationale,
  - a statement that the proposed change in the comment does not contain sufficient detail so that the CRG can understand the specific changes that satisfy the commenter
  - a statement that the CRG could not reach consensus on the changes necessary to address the comment, along with the reason
  - a statement that the CRG has previously considered the comment (or a substantively similar comment), along with identification (by reference or copy) of the original comment and its disposition detail and status
  - a statement of why the CRG considers the attachment does not meet the criteria indicated by the myBallot system; or cannot be addressed as a single issue; or does not relate to a specific line, paragraph, figure, or equation in the balloted draft
  - a statement that the commenter has withdrawn the comment

# REJECTED

---

- Don't refer to the resolution of another comment here for resolution text. Make sure that the EXACT change text is captured in the comment disposition field. It is acceptable to refer to similar or identical comments here to help voters understand the specific reasons for rejection and that similar comments were received. Do not refer to TF review or WG ballot comments for background.
- Referencing an external document does not meet the requirement to use IEEE-SA Ballot Center tools. RevCom expects comment responses to be contained within documents associated with myBallot
- However, if the disposition detail contains something that cannot be easily and unambiguously represented in plain text, (e.g., graphics or extensive markup edits), it is acceptable to either reference the disposition detail as a separate document that is easily available to Sponsor balloting group members via inclusion in myBallot materials that are shared with balloters during a recirculation ballot, or identify where the change can be found in the Draft during the recirculation required for such a change.
- Try to avoid this if possible as it causes extra work for RevCom and can be RevCom comment bait
- If external documents are required, it is preferred that document references are to URLs housed on a valid public document server and that does not require a fee for access, e.g. a reference to another standard

# WITHDRAWN

---

- A commenter may indicate to the CRG chair that they wish to withdraw a comment
- In that case, a disposition of “Rejected. Commenter has withdrawn the comment.” may be used
- Note that the CRG is not required to use this form of rejection. The CRG can also deal substantively with the comment as an accepted, revised or rejected with some other rationale
- Withdrawal of a comment has no effect on the need to recirculate. New valid “must be satisfied” comments that are subsequently withdrawn require recirculation, as they would for other reject reasons

# Changes to the draft

---

- It is not unusual to have hundreds of comments that are reviewed by the Sponsor and which result in changes to the Draft. These comments and responses are also reviewed by RevCom. It is important that the comment disposition detail provided to balloters correctly describes the changes incorporated into the Draft on the next recirculation. Occasionally, during RevCom review, it is discovered that these changes are not fully implemented. Depending on the nature of the change, such omissions may result in a delay in approval. It is the responsibility of the Sponsor (or the Sponsor's designee) to ensure that the disposition detail is accurately implemented into the Draft before a recirculation is launched. While it is the responsibility of the Sponsor balloting group to carefully examine the Draft to ensure that it is correct with respect to the disposition detail, it is the responsibility of the Sponsor (or the Sponsor's designee) to ensure that the disposition detail is accurately implemented into the Draft.
- IEEE 802.3 provides clean and change bar versions to the sponsor ballot group to make it easy to compare. Failure to implement all changes in a recirculation may delay approval.

# Summary/Conclusions

---

- Sponsor Ballot comment resolution is similar to that of task force review and working group ballot
- The ballot is run by the IEEE-SA balloting center and uses the on-line MyBallot tools
- The TF is designated as the “Comment Resolution Group”, the CRG
- Definitions of acceptable responses are somewhat different than in TF and WG review/ballot and must be followed precisely
- When sponsor ballot is complete, the standards review committee (RevCom) will review the comment resolution
  - RevCom may contact the CRG if it feels that the comment review package or the process used during sponsor ballot did not meet RevCom guidelines
- RevCom recommends to the IEEE-SASB whether the draft should or should not be approved as an IEEE Standard

---

# Q & A

---

# Thank You!