# Core Identifier Workgroup Charter

**Version 1.01**
**Approved 30 March 2005**

**Workgroup Name:**
Core Identifier (cident) Workgroup

**Area:**
identity

**Chair(s):**
The acting chair of the workgroup is Skip Slone of Lockheed Martin. When the charter is complete, the workgroup will appoint a permanent chair or chairs.

**Sponsoring organizations**
The organizations sponsoring this work are the members of the DMTF, the NAC, and the Directory Interoperability, Messaging, and Security forums of The Open Group. The DMTF, the NAC, and The Open Group are known as the sponsoring consortia. Members of other consortia, or individual organizations, may be invited to join the effort by general agreement of the existing parties.

Parties interested in participating in this workgroup may do so by joining one of the sponsoring consortia, and then discussing workgroup participation with the appropriate Responsible Contact, listed below.

**Sponsor Contacts:**
Persons named in this section are Subject Matter Experts within the workgroup, on behalf of the respective Sponsoring Consortium.

Email addresses will be provided in the final version, using HTML to protect against harvesting the address for spam or other malware purposes.

DMTF: Andrea Westerinen
NAC: Marty Schleiff
TOG: Chris Harding

**Responsible:**
Persons named in this section are concerned with governance issues for the workgroup, from the perspective of the respective Sponsoring Consortium.

Email addresses will be provided in the final version, using HTML to protect against harvesting the address for spam or other malware purposes.

DMTF: Paul Agbabian
NAC: Merl Ferguson
TOG: Skip Slone

**Mailing Lists:**
The workgroup keeps track of its activities and collaborates on development of new work products by exchanging email through mail lists. Other contact mechanisms, such as, face-to-face meetings may also be used.

General Discussion: Work is conducted via mail list coreid@opengroup.org. This is a restricted list. Members of the DMTF, the NAC and The Open Group are entitled to participate in this list.

To Subscribe: To be placed on this list, interested parties should write to coreid-interest@opengroup.org stating their organization relationship and which of the sponsoring consortia they belong to, with a request to be added to the list.

Archive: Available via the Web Page listed following.

**Web Page:**

Web page http://www.opengroup.org/projects/coreid/ is used to broadcast information about the Core Identifier work. It also provides an archive for email discussions, and a publication mechanism for draft material. Members of the *coreid* mail list can log into the page in order to view or post working documents, and access archived material (documents, email, etc.).

The workgroup may consider other web-based mechanisms for collaboration. If any such are set up, they will be listed in the charter, with directions for access.

**Vision**

IT systems rely heavily on the concept of identity. For any given IT system, this includes the need to identify users, resources, and a variety of other "things of interest" to the system. It is recognized that different types of IT systems have different perspectives of what constitutes a "thing of interest" and how such things should be identified. However, it is also recognized that there are broad categories of IT systems that share a common view of "things of interest" and of the essential nature of how those things are identified. Where the systems differ is in the format and structure used to represent such things.

Our vision is twofold. First, a framework exists that allows for the grouping of related concepts of identity into useful categories. Second, for a number of widely implemented categories, a common format and structure for the representation of identifiers is specified in standards and adopted by makers of IT systems. This standardization provides a reduction in complexity, leading to increased usage, and improved interoperability and reliability with reduced costs.

**Mission**

Our mission is to set the stage for wide-spread usage of a common, standard way of representing identities of people and things. We do this by stating and explaining requirements, by working with standards bodies and product vendors to ensure that a framework for identifier taxonomies is agreed, that instances of standards for identifier syntax and semantics are defined and approved, and that these standards are reflected in and used by other relevant standards, and are widely implemented in products that are successful in the marketplace.

**Background**

Organizations need to manage the identities of several classes of people, including their members or employees, employees of their business partners, and their customers. These identities are stored in and managed by software programs. Often, mission-critical components rely on the identities for their operation.

Organizations also need to manage the identities of "non-human" entities such as software, items of equipment, services (system, network and storage), and virtualizations of these entities.

Unfortunately, there are many different ways of defining identifiers. The differences are due partly to different practices in different organizations and departments, and partly to the adoption of different formats by product manufacturers.

This means that a large organization has to cope with many different representations of identifiers. If the systems that use these identifiers are to interoperate, then the organization must provide mappings between the identifiers. Special products or custom software may be needed to implement these mappings. The whole process of managing identifiers becomes un-necessarily cumbersome and complex.

A common, standard way of classifying and representing identities would significantly improve operational efficiency, and would help organizations to comply with identity and privacy legislation. Joint work by industry bodies and consortia is needed to achieve this aim.

**Operating Procedures**

The workgroup will work primarily through teleconferences e-mail, and the web. These will be supplemented with face-to-face meetings as deemed appropriate by workgroup participants.

**Relationships with other organizations**

The workgroup believes it will be useful to establish relationships with other groups which have related interests. Examples are Technical Committees within OASIS (Organization for the Advancement of Structured Information Standards) and the IETF (Internet Engineering Task Force). Working with these groups is expected to take some time and attention. Some groups have defined memberships, others, including IETF, are open. Members with IETF experience believe that we can establish an effective liaison through participation in appropriate email discussions, possible calling of a Birds of a Feather (BOF) session, submission of Internet drafts, and participation in face-to-face meetings that may follow the BOF.

The workgroup will maintain a list of other organizations and parties that may be of interest to the workgroup. This list will also be available for reference and for validating the workgroup's work products.

**Decision making**

Decisions will be taken by rough consensus. If and when this breaks down, the workgroup will carefully consider whether the topic is really of common interest. It may be that the topic is of concern to only a subset of the sponsoring consortia, and should be handled there. If a formal decision becomes necessary, it will be made by referring the matter back to the sponsoring consortia, where the matter can be voted within their existing structures. If all agree, the joint workgroup can be said to have agreed formally, as well. The workgroup eschews any other formal voting structure.

**Intellectual property issues**

Documents produced by the workgroup will be made available free of charge; there will be no revenue from sales of documents to apportion to members.

Each participating consortium will have due recognition in published documents, and individual contributors may be recognized also.

**External Communications**

Press releases will be made jointly by the participating consortia, not by the workgroup. Press releases should only be made when there is something significant to announce. Any joint release must be approved by the sponsoring consortia.

**Description of Workgroup:**

Before standardized identifiers can become widely used and exchanged among arbitrary systems and users, a significant amount of work must be completed:

- basic characteristics (definition, semantics, and syntax) of identifiers must be agreed in appropriate standards groups,
- relevant draft standards must be developed,
- support for the draft standards must be obtained,
- working implementations of the standards must be built,
- the standards must be approved within the appropriate groups, and
- real products that use the standards must appear in the marketplace.

The primary purpose of this workgroup is to:

1. Develop a scope / needs / requirements statement of common core identifier representation problems within the context in which the identifiers are to be used, recognizing the two complementary aspects of the issue:
    a. The first aspect is the context in which the identifier will be used. This aspect speaks to the organizational context, mode of use, information model, possible mapping(s) for the identifier, and other relevant requirements.
    b. The second aspect is the representation of the identifier and any related communications mechanisms that may be imbedded in it. This may include such elements as, e.g., UUID pair, an

XRI, Principal @ Namespace (looks like e-mail address – RFC 822 identifier), HIP (the Host Identity Payload where the identifier is a hash of a public key), and/or any others.

***Note***, *nothing* stated above implies that the identifier must be self-authenticating or that it should provide information about the entity that it identifies. Authentication or other qualification may be provided by the context in which the identifier is used (e.g., a Kerberos ticket). All such requirements must be spelled out as part of the requirements and standards that satisfy them.

2. Define a set of deliverables that will be used to effectively drive standards-based resolution of defined problems, for example, two basic standards based on existing work (e.g., TOG Conference results, existing DMTF / TOG standards, RFC 3986 / STD 66, and related materials). This could include a framework standard, as well as standards (syntax, semantics) for one or more Core Identifier instances, e.g.:
   a. Standard for Core Identifiers Framework
   b. Standard for general syntax and semantics of Core Identifier instances
   c. Standard for specific syntax and semantics of at least one Core Identifier instance
   d. Supporting material, examples, implementation approach, etc.
3. Lay the ground work for creating the deliverables identified in point 2.

The approach that the workgroup takes is based on the existing collaboration among DMTF, NAC, and TOG. The workgroup expects to identify a small number of people with appropriate knowledge and experience. These workgroup members will cooperate effectively to develop the needed ideas, solve problems as they arise, create the draft standards and supporting materials, and work with appropriate standards bodies for approval / adoption of the resulting standards.

The initial work product will be the scope / needs / requirements statement that clearly lays out the case for developing new standards in this area, and points the way towards implementing products aligned with the new standards.

Follow on work products will be the draft standards, and related supporting materials that link up with the draft standard and point the way to implementation.

**Goals, Objectives, and Milestones:**

The final deliverables from the work will have the following components:

- The Problem(s) to be solved;
- Desired future state;
- Related standards and standards efforts;
- Emerging solutions; and
- Recommendations.

The work products should be:

- Clear and concise;
- Based on business needs;
- Actionable;
- Bounded in scope; and
- Easily consumable as process input by vendors and standards organizations.

The work products should form a foundation for enterprise consortium challenges to vendors and standards organizations, and be useful deliverables to participating organizations.

Milestones: (All indefinite references target the workgroup as a whole.)

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| March 2005 | Agree on workgroup charter.<br>Start work on Scope / Needs / Requirements and Framework documents.<br>Start any other parallel efforts, as agreed. |
| April 2005 | Agree on the requirements statement. |

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| | Open discussions with appropriate IETF area director(s) re hosting a BOF session, and schedule one for July, if appropriate. |
| May 2005 | Approve (DMTF, NAC, and TOG) scope / needs / requirements statement for joint publication. |
| June 2005 | Agree on Framework document, and organize development activities for specific syntax instance standards to begin, as soon as possible. |
| July 2005 | Approve (DMTF, NAC, and TOG) framework document for joint publication.<br>Begin development activities for specific syntax instance standards.<br>Participate in IETF BOF, if scheduled. |
| July 2005 | Schedule joint press release (DMTF, NAC, and TOG) about the Core Identifier Framework, to be distributed following publication of the Framework document. |
| September 2005 | If BOF succeeds, prepare IETF Internet Draft for a Core Identifier Framework. |
| October 2005 | Agree on Core Identifier Syntax standard(s).<br>Begin preparing, if appropriate, an Internet Draft for a Core Identifier Syntax Instance standard. |
| December 2005 | Approve (DMTF, NAC, and TOG) Core Identifier Syntax Instance standard(s) for joint publication.<br>Publish (if appropriate) the Internet Draft for a Core Identifier Framework.<br>Assess progress during 2005, and plan for activities in 2006. |
| December 2005 | Schedule (DMTF, NAC, and TOG) a joint press release covering the Core Identifier Syntax Instance standard(s); to be released following publication of the standard(s). |
| January 2006 | If IETF activity is underway, complete IESG processes for IETF RFC on Core Identifier Framework.<br>If IETF activity is underway, begin preparing an Internet Draft for a Core Identifier Syntax Instance. |
| March 2006 | If IETF activity is moving ahead, publish the Internet Draft for a Core Identifier Syntax Instance. |
| June 2006 | If IETF activity is underway, complete IESG processes for IETF RFC(s) on Core Identifier Syntax Instance(s).<br>If IETF activity is underway, Prepare and schedule a joint press release (DMTF, NAC, TOG), to be released following publication of IETF RFCs. |

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