

# ACORD Standards Working Group Proposal

Applicable Steering Committee:

Life	P&C	Reinsurance
X	X	X

<b>WG Name</b>	Joint Architecture Naming & Design Rules
<b>Chairperson</b>	TBA
<b>Start Date</b>	May 2006 – renewed in November 2006 – renewed in May 2007
<b>Objective</b>	Complete standardized XML Naming and Design Rules for future ACORD Standards
<b>Sponsor(s)</b>	Joint Technical Subcommittees
<b>Author(s)</b>	Phil Brown and Serge Cayron, ACORD

Architecture Review Applicable when work completed? Yes / No / Unknown  Yes

When completed, will the work move to a Proof of Concept, or to vote at Subcommittee?  Vote

**Business Case:** What is the business problem being addressed, how can standards help and what potential value is there in solving the problem, for submitter, participants and the industry?

This working group has been initiated from the need of the Joint Technical - ACORD Web Services Profile WG to define XML components that would be reused throughout ACORD's XML standards to support functionality in the messaging infrastructure domain. These cross-domain components initially covered areas like Attachment and document handling and Error reporting, but this requirement will grow over time.

Added to this, ACORD's standards strategy envisions the creation of a single XML standard which each of the ACORD domains could adopt at some point in the future.

To support these requirements, there is a need to develop a set of XML architecture principles upon which new XML designs can be based, which will be in line with approaches being taken within the wider XML user community, and will remain stable for several years. Examples of issues to be addressed are XML naming conventions, standardized data types, code list representation, use of XML schema features, and use of namespaces.

From November 2006 there was a need to continue the working group to address:-

- Generation of XML from "Core Components" (UBL and UN/CEFACT have made significant progress in working together to come up with a single NDR approach that sets rules for generation of XML formats directly from "Core Components", and it was felt this area needed to be considered by the group)
- Some issues within the original scope were not able to finally agreed by the November 2006 target

The target for April 2007 was to ensure all NDR components required to support the design of PCS v2 (AML) and AWSP v1 were defined – and then published by June 2007.

For the period June to November 2007, there is a need for the working group to continue to address unresolved issues that were not required to support the design of PCS V2 (aml) and AML – examples are:-

- Recommendations for validation of extensions to messages
- 2<sup>nd</sup> pass validation recommendations (leading into requirements for schematron-type validation of codes and data)

**Scope:** Describe the expected scope of the project, both in scope and out-of-scope aspects.

The Joint XML Naming and Design Rules specification will be required for XML constructs derived from the Standards Framework and for any new cross-domain ACORD XML components. It is also ACORD's goal that it be used as the target architecture when our current domain standards undergo major redesign.

The outline of this architecture specification would be as follows.

*Note: For relevant parts of the specification, the group will review whether they can reuse rules created by UBL and CEFACT for generation of XML constructs from "Core Components". They will try to align the documentation structure to cross-industry NDR's for easing comparison and enhancing tool support of ACORD NDR.*

1. Guiding principles

2. Relationship with the Core Components dictionary and process service definitions (aka technology neutral models)

What type of XML specification are we delivering with a view to SOA implementation (e.g. data components, messages etc)?

What are the linking points between the technology neutral "models" and the XML specification?

3. General XML standard architecture

3.1. Standard versioning principles

What is versioned in the ACORD standard? Definition of the criteria for incrementing major and minor standard version numbers.

3.2. XML namespaces and versioning

Focuses on major versions of the independent ACORD XML vocabularies

Define and standardize the ACORD "semantic" domains that are allowed to evolve independently of each other, for example the data domain and the process domain and their subdivisions.

3.3. XML schema management and versioning

Focuses on minor versions of the independent ACORD XML schemas

Decide whether to go with one schema for all messages or with schemas per groups of messages, with versioning in mind.

Decide on the set of schemas to contain the business data definitions, for ease of maintenance and optimal size of schemas.

Decide on the set of schemas to contain ACORD messages structural elements that are not defined in the business data.

4. Schema design and derivation from the Core Components dictionary and process service definitions (aka technology neutral models).

4.1. Use of XML schema features to translate Core Components and process service

definition into XML.

Review schema features selected in the current NDR with the view of translating technology neutral models accurately into XML (e.g. use of named types, global elements, attributes, extensions, restrictions etc.)

#### 4.2. General XML naming rules

#### 4.3. Base XML data types

Review the ACORD base data types with the view of mapping them to the Core Components base data types.

#### 4.4. Code Lists

How should ACORD code lists be managed and validated? Adopt a cross-industry solution as much as possible.

Confirm code data representation and extensibility as stated in the current NDR.

#### 4.5. Data schema rules

Focuses on the structure and rules to specify XML data components from the Core Components dictionary, independently of their assembly for a message.

#### 4.6. Process/Message schema rules

Focuses on the structures and rules to assemble XML data components to provide data content to a particular message as defined in a process service definition.

In particular, decide on the technique used for XML element referencing. If key/keyRef is chosen, finalize definition of the implementation rules (as of November 2006 key/keyref rules are an appendix to the draft NDR specification – more review is required to come to conclusion on these rules so that they may be incorporated into the main NDR document).

### 5. Extensibility

Harmonize XML extensibility methods with a view to cross-industry practice.

### 6. Miscellaneous schema language rules

### 7. Rules for XML instance documents

For example, rules for empty elements

**Deliverables:** What are the expected deliverables or outcomes from this effort. Expected outcomes include: A Maintenance Request for new messages in the standard, transactions, UML diagrams, Implementation Guide(s), sample XML business messages, etc.

A standardized set of Naming and Design Rules to be followed on Cross Domain Standards, and to be the basis of the single future ACORD XML messaging standard envisioned by our strategy.

**Project Plan:** Include expected number and dates of face-to-face meetings and conference calls. Supply rough schedule (including milestones) from approval until next subcommittee (expected next MR deadline to be 8 weeks prior to subcommittee).

November 2006:– Approval of expansion of NDR scope and renewal of working group  
January 2006:- ACORD recommendations and pre-reads to be provided to the working group regarding generation of XML constructs from Core Components  
Ongoing:– Working group meetings (via teleconference) 2-3 times per month  
April 2007:- Share conclusions at April Plenary and get feedback from wider

June 2007:-	community (Face to face meeting was held as an extension to Plenary) Completion of candidate recommendation NDR document with all components needed to support the design of PCS v2 (AML) and AWSP v1
September 2007:-	Re-commence weekly meetings of the working group
November 2007:-	Resolve issues that remain outstanding and publish new version of Candidate Recommendation (it is not envisioned that this will go to “final” version publication until PCS v2 (AML) and AWSP 1.0 go to “final” also).

**Commitments & Resources:** Define level of interest and initial commitments. Who will and who may participate in this group? What carriers, distributors and/or vendors have committed to implementing the solution. What other factors are helping to insure success of the initiative? What is expected concerning resources and support from ACORD Staff?

A balanced participation of companies from the 3 constituencies is required to review requirements.  
In addition to the ACORD moderator, one ACORD staff liaison in each constituency is expected.

**Requirements:** What resources are required for the group, what are the expectations of participants? For example, teleconferences, face-to-face meetings, virtual meetings, etc.

Weekly meetings of the working group from September to November 2007. The group will need facilitation as well as technical support from several members of the ACORD Technical Architecture team.

**Impact:** Who is the target audience and what is the expected impact on the existing ACORD Standard? Include pro's, cons and risks.

PCS v2 (AML) will instigate changes based on the June 2007 NDR candidate recommendation document. Each domain will evaluate and recommend adoption and transition timelines.

Date Proposal Reviewed by Steering Committee: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposal Review Result: