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EXPERT CONTRIBUTION ON ISO 1073 PART 2 (OCR-B)

This contribution is submitted by the editor for the revision of the OCR-B standard (K I Larsson, Sweden).

The technical revision of ISO 1073 Part 2 was initiated by the ISO/IEC JTC 1/SC 2 /WG 3 meeting 1994. Its primary purpose was to complement the OCR-B repertoire with a number of new glyphs to better cover European-origin languages.

The revision has now progressed through three CD stages, whereby the needed glyph repertoire has been established. The third CD received sufficient support for the revision to progress to the DIS stage. However, the detailed design of the many new glyphs added to the standard will need extensive OCR testing of their shapes. This requires participation from manufacturers and/or research institutions, and that has not been possible to arrange. It was therefore resolved in the 1997 SC 2 meeting that the revision shall be terminated, and the third CD turned into an ISO/IEC Technical Report.

The Euro work within CEN/TC304 has however indicated a need to add the Euro sign to the present OCR-B repertoire of glyphs, even if the more extensive revision of adding a large number of new characters is not proceeded with. A resolution to this effect was taken in the TC304 Plenary 1998-02-04.

Adding only this single glyph to the repertoire calls for quite limited testing of its shape, and such testing appears possible to arrange. A new planning for the continued OCR-B work should therefore be discussed in the SC 2/WG 3 Seattle meeting.

To satisfy the requirements of both incorporating the Euro sign and publishing the agreed repertoire, the best solution appears to be to restart the revision, using the latest CD text with the Euro glyph added to the repertoire, but with all the other new glyphs transferred from the actual standard into a new informative annex.

This approach is therefore hereby proposed, to be discussed in the WG 3 meeting.