



To: IEEE-SA Board of Governors
802 Executive Committee
802.20 Chair, Vice-Chairs, and Participants
cc: IEEE-SA Standards Board
From: Steve Mills, IEEE-SA Standards Board Chair
Date: 15 June 2006
Re: Status of 802.20

On 8 June 2006, the IEEE-SA Standards Board directed that all activities of the 802.20 Working Group be temporarily suspended. This suspension is effective immediately and will continue in effect until 1 October 2006. Consequently, the 802.20 plenary in July 2006 and the interim in September 2006 are cancelled. The November plenary is not affected by this decision. The Board also made a number of other decisions, relating to the procedures that it will follow in considering and making further decisions and giving direction to the 802 chair for further handling of the situation.

The decision to suspend 802.20 was made primarily for two reasons. First, the Working Group has been the subject of several appeals from the very beginning of the group, with three appeals now pending at one level or another, and recent activity in the group appears to have become highly contentious – significantly beyond what is normally experienced in IEEE-SA. Second, a preliminary investigation into the group's operation revealed a lack of transparency, possible “dominance,” and other irregularities in the Working Group.

The Standards Board is obligated to ensure the draft standard is developed through a fair and open process. The Standards Board intends, if possible, to remove the barriers to successful completion of the Working Group's mission -- approval of an 802.20 standard. This suspension will give the Standards Board time to consider the pending appeals (and possible additional actions independent of the appeals) and to give the participants in the 802.20 Working Group the opportunity to share their perspectives with the Standards Board and IEEE-SA staff on possible solutions for addressing the Standards Board's concerns. The suspension will also avoid potential waste of participants' time and energy, because, lacking a suspension period, decisions made by the Working Group over the next few months could effectively be undone based on the results of current appeals, possible future appeals, or Standards Board actions.

Membership and participation credits in the Working Group at the time of suspension are maintained until the suspension is lifted. In other words (and subject to any further decision by the Standards Board after it has completed its review), those who are currently members will remain so, and no participation credits will be earned or lost during the suspension.

The Standards Board will further review the facts and consider appropriate action for the Working Group at the September 2006 meeting of the Standards Board. Interested parties will be offered an opportunity to provide input.