



ISO / IEC JTC1/ SC25 WG1 N1148

WG1 (Brussels, UK) 1
Date: March 18, 2005

**ISO/IEC JTC1 SC25 WG1
Interconnection of Information Technology Equipment
Home Electronic Systems**

Title: Comments on “the Broadband Home Network” (SC25 N1140A)

Source: UK

Project: 25.01.09

Requested Action: Consideration by WG1 at meeting to be held March 14-18, 2005

Distribution: P-, L-, O- Members of SC25 WG1

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Comments on “the Broadband Home Network” (SC25 N1140A)

The UK National Committee has three fundamental comments on the above document.

1. It is important to realise that the growth of home data networking in the UK, and we suspect, elsewhere started with the deployment of devices and techniques adopted directly from the commercial environment. This has now developed with the adoption, by specialist manufacturers for the residential market, of commercial high volume chipsets in specialist retail-orientated products. However the management and installation techniques and protocols, and the transmission protocols, used in the residential sector remain substantially identical to those used in the commercial sector.

More importantly devices, such as computers, printers, switches, routers, firewalls, webcams and which are widely available, are often used in both residential and commercial environments and are available with Ethernet interfaces rather than varieties of 1394. Few of these devices require, or would achieve, benefit improvements from the use of 1394.

The proposed broadband network deals with such devices in two manners: either by requiring that they are relegated to a “component network” or that they are re-engineered to include a full 1394-compliant interface. Both have cost and complexity issues without tangible benefits for manufacturer or supplier.

2. Having considered SC25 WG1 N1140A and N1020 (CD 15045-2) the UK National Committee notes that the two are so similar as to be fundamentally in contradiction since they compete “for the same space”. The UK National Committee therefore suggests that, unless a compromise may be found, work cannot proceed on both simultaneously.

Both documents describe a core bus that is used to link a number of clusters of devices running protocols other than that run on the core bus. In the case of the residential gateway this may be the core bus linking half-gateways or half-bridges where the residential gateway is wholly or partially distributed and, in the current state of progress, the protocol for this is to be determined. In the case of the broadband home network this core bus is formed using 1394a, b or c protocols.

Similarly the broadband home network prescribes the use of DHCP and UPnP protocols to commission the core network. The special nature of the residential gateway may suggest that these protocols may or may not prove appropriate and other protocols may need to be developed.

3. The mention of telephony, and digital or VoIP telephony in particular, is irrelevant to the subject under discussion. As the document itself mentions, VoIP runs on any IP-network (as is required in the commercial market) and has no impact upon the choice of Ethernet or 1394.

The UK National Committee regrets that, due to the fundamental nature of these comments, it is not possible to propose a simple set of modifications that, if adopted, would rectify the situation. Further, whilst the UK National Committee does not oppose the use of 1394 in the residential environment where it provides user benefits, the UK National Committee is not prepared to mandate its use in those areas where no such benefits accrue.

The UK National Committee believes that the current proposals for the Residential Gateway and Interoperability in no way preclude the use of 1394 (in all its variants) in the residential environment but that that use is as a “component network” serving only those devices having an A/V capability and not as the central core.

The UK National Committee is therefore unable to accept further progress of SC25 N1140A in its current form.