

To: OASIS Tax XML Technical Committee
From: Eduardo Gutentag, Chair, OASIS Board of Directors
Date: April 6, 2006

Dear Tax XML Technical Committee members,

On behalf of the OASIS Board of Directors, I would like to address some of the concerns you expressed recently in a letter to the Board dated February 23, 2006.

The Board read your message carefully, and deliberated on it at length during its last meeting on March 17.

One of the salient characteristics of the OASIS TC Process, and the spirit that informs our organization throughout, is openness and transparency. This involves not only openness as regards who can participate in TCs deliberations, but also as regards how those deliberations are conducted. Our rules attempt to fulfill a simple goal: members can assume safely that if something has been contributed to OASIS, or has been developed at OASIS, it is safe to use, and there are only a few finite types of restrictions that may apply to it. It is in that spirit that our IPR Policy insists that no confidentiality is attached to any submission; it is in that spirit that the Board has recently decided to experiment with opening Board face to face meetings; and it is in that spirit that our TC documents, mail lists, minutes and deliberations are open to all. Our current rules leave no doubt about that.

A second salient characteristic of the OASIS process in general is that it is member driven. It is possible that our members may have ideas about some conversations or projects that ought to proceed under different ground rules than the rest. We would be happy to discuss that, and would like to better understand the needs of your TC. These new considerations would require rule changes, and so far we have not seen widespread member demand for it, but of course we might be wrong.

Please keep in mind that there is some limit to the "privateness" of a "TC only" list. Given that basically any OASIS member can join any given TC (and anybody can join OASIS), it could be argued that the differentiation between "TC only" and "public" is mostly an artificial one, or at least one that does not justify a change to our approach of openness. Similarly, we have a commitment to preserve all our documents, whether trivial or not. Excision of archived email items can be done with the President's approval in extreme cases, but we cannot permit the removal of other archived items. Our policy warns users that we publicly archive; triviality is in the eyes of the beholder, and the preservation of all components in TC deliberations is part and parcel of our commitment to openness.

Your concern about spam generated through the exposure of raw email addresses in the archives and other locations throughout OASIS is shared by many, and it has been brought to the attention of OASIS Administration in the past. I'm happy to report that trying to find a solution to this issue is already part of our IT department's to-do list. We all hope that this can be resolved soon.

Let me express, on behalf of the Board, first our thanks for bringing this matter to our attention, and second our hope that you will understand how important openness, and the preservation thereof, is for us, and that you will continue working within our walls, as you have done magnificently for the past

three and a half years. If you still feel that you have needs that can be accomplished within the general OASIS framework of openness, the Board and Staff are open to member suggestions. We will have member discussion time at our Annual General Members meeting in San Francisco on 10 May 2006. We will also have most of the Board meeting on 11-12 May open for members to attend and provide feedback to the Board.

Eduardo Gutentag, Chair
on behalf of the OASIS Board of Directors