Working Group Charter:
XML Schema Work Plan

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This Working Group will produce Administrative and non-Material documents which are needed to define a plan for XML Schema work within WS-I.

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1. Goals and Mission

There seems to be general agreement that there are problems when using XML Schema to describe SOAP messages in WSDL documents during the development of Web services, but there is not necessarily a consensus as to what should be done about it. Thus, the XML Schema Work Plan Working Group will develop a plan for XML Schema work within WS-I. This work plan will be based on scenarios, use cases and interoperability issues which have been encountered during actual experience with using XML Schema to describe SOAP messages in WSDL documents when developing Web services.

2. Working Group Chair, Co-Chair and Membership

Chair: Erik Johnson (mailto:ejohnson@epicor.com)

The Chair will be appointed by the WS-I Board.

Membership will be determined as a part of the WS-I community activity.

3. Team Composition and Responsibilities

Participation in this Working Group is open to the entire WS-I member community. In order to explore a range of issues regarding XML Schema, it should be a good mix of end-user companies (i.e. those who create XML Schema instances to describe SOAP messages), software vendor companies (i.e. those who decide whether or not an XML Schema feature is included in Web services tools and/or infrastructure), and subject matter experts (i.e. XML Schema experts who can identify when XML Schema features are used appropriately). Also, the prior experience of members of previous or existing Working Groups would be helpful as well.

4. Scope of Effort

This Working Group will focus on the development of a plan for XML Schema work within WS-I. Any such work would be scoped to the usage of XML Schema for the description of SOAP messages in WSDL documents. Any features of XML schema not related to Web Services are outside the scope of this Working Group.

Furthermore, features in XML Schema that are currently unspecified by these documents, or "implementation-defined" interpretations of existing features are specifically excluded. Other XML syntax definition languages are also outside of the scope of this working group.

Finally, features in XML Schema will be considered from two perspectives: capabilities and constructs. A capability is the ability to realize a particular goal using XML Schema. A construct, on the other hand, is a specific syntactic mechanism defined by XML Schema.

The work plan will be based on the following specifications:
- a. XML Schema 2001 Part 1: Structures
- b. XML Schema 2001 Part 2: Datatypes

To achieve its goals, the Working Group will:
1. Identify the various mechanisms and features in the XML Schema specifications.
2. Collect XML Schema documents and WSDL descriptions that represent real-world use cases for Web services, especially ones which demonstrate interoperability issues.
3. Analyze the usage of the various XML Schema mechanisms and features in the collected XML Schema documents and WSDL descriptions, especially as they pertain to interoperability issues.
4. Based upon the above analysis, determine what work should be done by WS-I. If it is determined that an XML Schema profile is necessary, draft a charter for a Working Group to develop such a profile.

5. Duration of Working Group

This Working Group will produce deliverables for circulation to the Board for approval on or before the dates specified in section 6 (below). The Working Group will then remain active through the "Adoption of Material" process as per Article VII, Section 6 of the WS-I Bylaws. The Board may, at its discretion, extend the Working Group's term to accommodate proposed changes from Working Group members, the Board, and the WS-I Membership.

6. Required Deliverables

All of the required deliverables defined below shall be presented to the Board on or before 10 March 2005:

1. Work plan for future XML Schema work within WS-I. (Non-Material Document)
2. At the discretion of the Working Group, a draft charter for a proposed Working Group to profile XML Schema. (Administrative Document)

The work plan document will include a set of use cases which demonstrate interoperability problems with using XML Schema to describe SOAP messages in WSDL documents. The use cases will serve to support a recommended course of action to the Board for what work should be done by WS-I.

The work plan document should also identify a basic philosophy for any XML Schema work to be done by WS-I: should WS-I identify a "core" set of XML Schema features necessary for the development of Web services and work "out" from that core, or should all of XML Schema be considered valid unless a certain feature is shown to cause interoperability problems.

Finally, if it is deemed that interoperability can be increased by defining a subset of XML Schema, then the work plan document, and potentially a draft charter for an XML Schema Profile Working Group, should define the criteria for identifying that subset. In other words, what criteria should be used for either including an XML Schema feature in the subset or excluding something from the subset?

7. Relationships with Other WS-I Working Groups and External Organizations

The Working Group will work with the Requirements Gathering Working Group to gather end-user requirements, use cases and usage scenarios, as well as to solicit feedback from a broader audience.

The Working Group will solicit input, including sample XML Schema documents, advice as to commonly-used features and constructs, and problems encountered, from end-user organizations such as RosettaNet, OAGIS, and others as may desire to participate. However, it should not be expected that soliciting XML Schema documents from other organizations implies a commitment to preserving compatibility with those documents in any potential profile recommendations.

The Working Group may choose to establish an informal liaison with the W3C XML Schema Working Group to both provide feedback about issues encountered, and to gather interoperability issues, requirements and use cases encountered by that Working Group.