CCUF Incorporation WG meeting notes

For the teleconference held on October 3, 2014. 8:00AM PDT

# Attendees

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| Erin Conner | Douglas Gelbert |
| Mike Grimm | Petra Manche |
| Andy Nissen | Alicia Squires |
| Brian Smithson | Ashit Vora |

# Agenda

1. Open discussion about the general concept
2. Open discussion about current alternatives
3. Action items / next steps

# Notes

We had a productive discussion about agenda item #1, and didn’t quite get to the other items.

We discussed what the benefits of incorporation are. Primarily, the motivation to incorporate comes from a need to get collaboration tools that are designed for our purposes and are professionally supported. However, the current concept and alternatives are also designed to outsource some administrative work to a third party. Some of that administrative work is created by incorporation, but much of it (member management and such) is currently a volunteer activity performed by the Management Group. Incorporation would also make it possible for the CCUF to make its own arrangements for meeting space and hotel block reservations for the CCUF-CCDB Workshops, so as not to rely on the benevolence and ability of a CCRA member nation to provide meeting space and other services for the Workshops. Farther in the future, incorporation would make it possible for the CCUF to share some of the burden of organizing and conducting the ICCC.

One of the general concerns about incorporation is that it is a “one-shot deal” that we must do correctly because it would be difficult to change after being set up and agreed to by member organizations.

Other concerns fell largely into one of three categories:

## Cost

Once concern was that the membership fee might be set too low at the outset, which would make it difficult to significantly increase it later.

Another concern is that some organizations who are not particularly active in CCUF WGs or the TCs that it supports might leave the CCUF if they are required to pay even a small annual fee. If such organizations find so little value in the CCUF, then perhaps they might not be missed. However, any assumptions about how many industry members would pay an annual fee should be considered carefully, because an unexpectedly large defection could violate assumptions that are used to set annual fees, making it necessary for annual fees to be increased and possibly causing a spiral of further defections.

One group that might defect from the CCUF is the smartcard community. Since they have their own processes and means of collaboration, and since the CCUF is largely focused on iTCs and cPPs, it is understandable that they could see little value in continuing their membership.

We also discussed some options for making participation in iTCs available for free or for a very small annual fee (see Barriers, below), but that raised the question of whether participants would simply opt for the easiest membership option.

## Legal

No matter how small the annual fee might be, any membership agreement for organizations would likely need to be reviewed by a legal department and signed by someone authorized to sign for such things. This is quite different from the current model, in which individual members join without a signed agreement and represent their organization.

Many associations operate on an organizational membership basis and require a signed membership agreement. However, there are other examples:

IEEE Standards Association requires an individual membership for balloting on standards, but aside from that, individuals are able to freely participate without any membership or signed agreement (but, then, they sell those standards to fund the IEEE-SA operation). IETF allows individual participation without formal agreement, but it is funded by organizational contributions and revenue from meeting and conference fees and sponsorship. Both organizations are incorporated entities.

Interestingly, most of the concerns about cost and legal issues were expressed by two of the largest vendors who, presumably, have neither shortages of cash nor lawyers ☺.

## Barriers to participation

A specific concern about cost or legal is that it creates a barrier to entry for iTC participants. Some participants who are not currently involved in CC activities may find it onerous to need to join the CCUF and pay a fee in order to participate in an iTC. We discussed the possibility of having a reduced- or no-fee option for participation limited to one iTC, perhaps to join the iTC but not the CCUF and therefore not requiring a signed membership agreement. This raised the question mentioned above in “Cost” about participants opting for the cheapest, easiest route.

Since the new iTC/cPP process requires some public comment facility already, this may or may not really be a problem for the CCUF to solve. The public comment mechanism might satisfy the need for a no-fee, no-agreement way to participate through the CC portal, as it is today, or through a limited public-facing capability provided by a new CCUF toolset.

In any case, as long as the CCRA doesn’t require that iTCs are hosted by the CCUF, iTCs would have the freedom (as they do now) to find other means of communicating and collaborating. If they wish to use the CCUF’s tools, they would need to agree to join as CCUF members.

Another concern about the barrier to participation had to do with the Workshops. Members have said that they value the opportunity to work with CC schemes during the Workshops, but a fee-paying membership requirement might be seen as preventing access to those government agencies. However, if the CCUF is paying for meeting arrangements for the Workshops, it is not unreasonable to charge admission. We could, as many other organizations do, allow non-members to join the Workshops by paying a non-member admission fee.

Much of this discussion raised the issue of “what is the value of joining the CCUF”, whether or not it requires an annual fee and a membership agreement. Many CCUF members already spend a significant amount of time and travel expense to participate because:

* They invest a lot of money in certifying products, and the target market for certified products is a significant source of revenue
* It provides opportunities to coordinate with CC schemes and others in the CC community
* It is a way to learn about what’s happening in the CC and to influence it

# Next meeting

The next teleconference will be held on Friday, October 17, 2014, at the same time (8AM PDT). Details and agenda will be announced.