LegalXML's Statement of Organizational Vision, Mission & Scope

- **Vision**
- LegalXML's vision is to provide core Document Standards and Protocol Standards to assist in increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the legal system and the organizations which support it.

- **Mission**
- LegalXML's primary *mission* is to define Document Standards and Protocols Standards. These standards support *data interchange*. It shall use the markup (XML) and other needed standards as documented by W3C Recommendations. It shall create an environment where standards are *defined* and *maintained* in an efficient and effective manner. A secondary but important mission component is cooperate with the consumer, vendor and open-source communities so the standards may be effectively employed.

- **Scope**

- LegalXML's *scope* is the data, which directly effects the operation of our legal system. This includes but is not limited to private law material. (used to define, regulate, enforce, and administer relationships among individuals, associations, and corporations), public process material(used in various types of regulatory filings or in civil or criminal judicial or quasi-judicial processes) and public reference material (used by legal professionals to determine the law of a particular jurisdiction).

- Some subject areas (justice integration) may cross all of these. In areas where other communities jointly own data, LegalXML will partner with those communities to support the creation and adoption of standards. LegalXML will *facilitate* standards conformance validation and verification as a service to the consumers and vendors.

- **Community**
- The standards shall reflect all the legitimate requirements of the community. Where this can not be achieved by consensus, the community will use a well-defined process to bring closure. The community, LegalXML, which will support this work by its members donations of time, resources and talents. The community is made up of members from the public sector (e.g. courts, legislatures, court administration, law enforcement), private sector (e.g. the bar, consultants, vendors, users) and academia. Standards will be protected by defined Change Management and Intellectual Property policies.

- **Mission Explanation**
- **Document Standards**
- The core of LegalXML's efforts is to create document standards. Each standard will define one or more document types with their associated markup used to exchange information between parties using the standard. The XML markup within these documents will be codified using W3C standards.

- The meaning of the elements and attributes will be documented within the standards. Where practical the transmission of the meaning will be exchangeable using W3C standards.

- **Protocols Standards**

- Not all organizations using document standards can accept the full richness of the data that can be described within them. This may be due to technical constraints. However, it is more likely that the constraints are a function of an individual organization's policies or rules. In many cases in the legal area they may be governed by statute.

- Protocol Standards will be *primarily* used to describe agreements on optionality (additions & exclusions) between parties in a data exchange. Constrains shall be clearly defined and documented by each organization. Where practical these constraints shall be communicated using notations supported by applications, which conform to W3C standards.

- Protocol standards *may* also be created for communication transport layer conventions. Additionally standards may be created to support query / response interchanges if the need arises.

- It should be a goal of all LegalXML members to reduce the number of constraints needed.

- **Efficient and Effective Standards Process**
- Standards fail or fall short of adoption for three primary reasons. One, they fail to keep the process moving to create a standard in the time frame in which it needed. Second, they rush the process such that they fail to cover the needed requirements. Third, they fail to maintain or control the standards once they are defined.

- **Consumer, Vendor & Open Source Cooperation**
- Standards are not useful if they are not used. To support their use LegalXML will encourage the active participation by both the Vendor community and the open source community. LegalXML shall coordinate with these communities to demonstrate that the standards can be supported by applications.

- **Standards Compliance**
- LegalXML will *facilitate* standards conformance validation and verification as a service to the consumers and vendors. LegalXML Trademark or Service Mark use *may* be granted based on proof of standards conformance.

- **Scope Explanation**
- **Family of Standards**
- LegalXML like XML itself is *not* a single standard but a family of standards. Each standard will focus on a specific need. In order to facilitate the speedy creation and adoption of needed standards, LegalXML will charter working groups to create standards for a data area. These standards are focus on supporting the operation of the legal system. There are four clusters of working groups.

- **Private Law Material**
- Private law material consists of the documents that are used to define, regulate, enforce, and administer relationships among individuals, associations, and corporations. In this connection LegalXML pursues the creation of standards for the markup of contracts, wills, trusts, deeds and other similar documents.

- **Public Process Material**
- Public process material includes items that are produced for use in various types of regulatory filings or in civil or criminal judicial or quasi-judicial processes. Examples are UCC filings, court dockets, briefs or other court filings, and transcripts. This area will often use Document Protocols in addition to Document Standards to support court policies, procedures and rules.

- **Public Reference Material**
- Public reference materials are the documents that contain constitutional, civil, administrative, criminal, and international law. They are used by legal professionals to determine the law of a particular jurisdiction. This is "public law" and examples include constitutions, court or agency opinions, statutes and regulations. LegalXML's scope includes, where it does not conflict with other communities, materials such as records of legislative or agency proceedings, proposed legislation, document drafts and other items developed during the process of the creation of public reference materials.

- **Material Consistency**
- The LegalXML space will become a tower of tag Babel if we do not realize that there are a set of glue elements and vocabulary primitives which cross all these areas. To aid in consistency LegalXML will set up structures and processes with oversight by a Chartering work group (Legal) and a normalizing workgroup (Horizontal) to support interoperability *between* LegalXML standards.

- **Technical & Allied Standards**
- To be successful, LegalXML must embrace the right technical standards at the correct point in their maturity. The technical workgroup and other workgroups focused on specific allied technical standards will guide LegalXML through this challenging and often conflicting area.

- **Partnerships**
- LegalXML can not do the standards effort in a vacuum. Many other organizations are also working in or near the Legal Standards area. LegalXML will compete with them *only* if the standard will not be sufficient or inter-operate with the requirements of the LegalXML community. LegalXML shall partner or defer to the other communities in their creation or adoptions of standards.

- **Community Explanation**

- **LegalXML is a Diverse Community**

- LegalXML is made up of members from the public sector (e.g. courts, court administration, legislature, law enforcement), private sector (e.g. the bar, consultants, vendors, users) and academia. This creates an environment where our individual interests are not the same. Our common interest in the creation of document standards and document protocols must be paramount! For these to succeed we must a set of policies to guide our behavior. They are:

- **Standards Closure and Adoption Policy**

- LegalXML will strive to operate on a consensus basis wherever possible. However, in order to meet the goal of having standards when they are needed LegalXML will have a written closure and adoption process.

- **Change Management and Maintenance Policy**

- LegalXML and its Work Groups shall be responsive both during and after the closure of a standard. Standards must be living documents in order to be effective. However, they must have reasonable stability in order to be successful. The process shall support an expedited process for error correction or issues gating implementation.

- **Intellectual Property Policy**
- LegalXML shall protect its standards via a robust Intellectual Property Policy. The intellectual property policy of LegalXML must serve these needs:

- It shall encourage the broadest and most open participation by al constituents.
- It shall permit the widest adoption and application of the standard.

- It shall protect the standards from being removed in whole or in part from LegalXML to another proprietary organization without the consent of the membership.

- It should be proportional to the scope of work

- It must protect the rights of LegalXML, Inc.

- *Until a revision is complete the current policy shall remain in force.*

- The goal is to protect the standard. If the standard is extended during development there will only be an Intellectual Property breach if there is a claim of adherence or if prior claim has been made, notice is not given to the affected client.

- **Note:** This is an open item. Please see discussion in the open issues section!

- **Open Source Policy**

- LegalXML is not an Open Source community. Members of LegalXML are welcome to participate in separate Open Source communities that implement software, which use LegalXML standards. The scope of involvement in the open source communities is described in the following matrix.

Support Types	In Scope	Out of Scope
• Development Platform & Support		X
• Working Group for Open Source		X
• Intellectual Property Protection & Stewardship for Open Source		X
• Questions in Technical, Horizontal and Legal Working Groups	X	
• Link to Open Source Development Efforts	X	