In response to suggestions that OASIS reform its e-Government community into as a Member Section rather than a single technical committee, we held a focus group meeting for interested stakeholders at the recent OASIS Symposium in San Diego, California. Eighteen participants from four continents, present for the San Diego meetings, contributed suggestions and feedback over two days (18 and 19 April) to critique and improve a draft [3] charter ("rules of procedure") for the potential new activity. Additional feedback is welcome, especially from those unable to join us in San Diego.

Our focus group members discussed and agreed with the basic conclusions and goals of the first draft:

- OASIS continues to have a strong e-Government and public administration presence. The e-Gov community has supplied many of the early adopters and use cases for a number of key OASIS standards. However, OASIS members with public administration interests now distribute themselves across multiple specific projects. One omnibus technical committee for government work no longer serve their needs.
- However, the community still wishes to organize as a community, in support of e-Gov needs discussions, standardization plans and public input. Our members with e-Gov needs discussions, standardization plans and public input likely will be better served by a general discussion forum.
- A number of specific opportunities for standards projects are likely, and may generate specific technical committees to respond to discrete needs.

The San Diego participants expressed interest in moving forward with the above projects, and quickly forming a new forum for further the work. However, they also pointed out several additional goals and concerns, which were widely held, and should be reflected in OASIS' plans:

- Future spec-writing committees should be more project-based, and focused on a specific use case or technical need. Projects identified by the group as probable areas for early progress, based on implementation needs & government interests, include:
  - Governmental identity management for citizen records and access
  - Sharing of computing capacity management among governmental units
  - Interjurisdictional sharing of data (from both resource & availability, and access control, perspectives)
  - Sharing reports of public administration use of standards, in production environments, to solve specific use cases
- There is a strongly-felt need for more neutral information on the way that various standards work together, and how these options and combinations may be linked to architectures.
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• Governmental agencies also strongly desire opportunities to share results and compare notes on their practical experiences. Their needs may include sensitive issues, such as the shortcomings of specific installations. This kind of conversation, while inevitable and useful, isn't really designed for standardization bodies. Standards groups generally have open, transparent conversations, and do not segregate sellers and buyers. The group agreed that OASIS members should work to encourage appropriate intergovernmental forums for private information sharing, perhaps seeking coordination assistance from appropriate global agencies such as OECD; and help to define a clear distinction between open standardization activities and that latter type of exchange.

• Our governmental members from a variety of nations expressed concern that there is a growing tendency to set up parallel e-government activities at multiple organizations. These activities may have overlapping or unclear charges, and may lack a commitment to share or re-use work across group boundaries. Participants expressed the view that proliferation of parallel committees, with little explicit cognizance of each other, does not meet public administration needs well. The group agreed that OASIS should design its programs to encourage cross-fertilization, permable conversations, and genuine cooperative work across standards bodies. Our consortium may also wish to consider how it can best induce that cooperation in peer organizations.

After discussing a number of other possible issues and strategies, the group reaffirmed its interest in using an OASIS member section as a forum for identifying shared use cases and standardization needs. A second draft of the proposed scope document ("rules of procedure") will be circulated in early May, for comment from a broader group of stakeholders including remote participants.