

((lambda (discussions) (report on x3j13)) (first year report))

by

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This is the report I am submitting to the US Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to ISO/TC97/SC22 (the subcommittee on programming languages) and SPARC (X3's Standards Planning and Review Committee).

US activity working toward a Lisp standard has been going on for some time. It first surfaced in the formal standards organizations in the summer of 1985 when the US TAG to ISO/TC97/SC22 was preparing its report for the first plenary meeting in Paris. At that time the US expressed its interest in working on a Lisp standard both nationally and internationally. I was suggested as a possible convenor for both the domestic and the international work. At the Paris meeting of SC22, I was named convenor of an ad hoc working group to develop New Work Item (NWI) proposals for international standards work in Lisp and Prolog. Those NWIs have been accepted by SC22 and will very likely be accepted by TC97 (or its successor). It has been suggested that a Convenor for the Lisp work come from France and that the US supply the editor. If this turns out to be the case, Richard P. Gabriel and William Clinger have expressed their willingness to serve jointly in the editor's role.

In December of 1985, I met with the Common Lisp community to discuss formal standardization of the language. There was general agreement there to proceed with the formation of an X3 technical committee (subsequently called X3J13) to accomplish this work. It was also decided to participate fully in any international standards work on Lisp.

The formation of X3J13 went through the usual steps during the early part of 1986 with a first meeting date in September, 1986 so that the existence of the committee could be made known to a wide audience and to be after the Boston ACM Lisp conference and the Philadelphia AAAI conference that Summer.

The first meeting of X3J13 was held September 23-24, 1986, at CBEMA headquarters in Washington, DC. There was a presentation on the proposed objects system and some errors (of various types and severities) in the book by Guy L. Steele Jr, *Common Lisp: The Language* (Digital Press, Bedford, MA, 1984). It was agreed to do most of the work via electronic mail and a mailing list was set up (x3j13@su-ai.Stanford.edu).

The second meeting was held in Dallas, Texas, December 10-12, 1986, and was hosted by Texas Instruments. This meeting included a presentation on the Lisp-1/Lisp-2 issue and a presentation on the proposed error system. At this meeting the committee also decided to form sub-committees to work on various topics and report on them to the general meetings. Guy L. Steele Jr agreed to serve as vice chairman and Richard P. Gabriel agreed to serve as international representative.

The third meeting was held in Palo Alto, California, March 16-18, 1987, and was hosted by Lucid. At this meeting there was an extensive presentation on the objects system. Although the committee members wanted to continue looking at the ramifications of the proposal on other parts of the language, there was general agreement that this was the way to go. There were also reports from the other sub-committees. At this meeting X3J13 adopted its own statement of purposes which included using the Steele book as the initial basis for the standard, working toward an ANSI standard for Common Lisp, and cooperating in the international standards work. Digital Equipment Corp. announced its intention to support the work through a technical editor they would make available. Mary Van Deusen agreed to serve as secretary.

The fourth meeting was held in Cambridge, Massachusetts, June 30-July 1, 1987, and was hosted by Goldhill. This meeting featured a report from the cleanup committee on various issues which have arisen with regard to the Steele book specification of the language. There were also reports on windows, multi-byte characters and the other sub-committees.

X3J13 has more than 120 people on its mailing list and more than 50 people at its meetings; from the US, Europe, and Japan. Further information on the work of X3J13 can be obtained from: Bob Mathis, 9712 Ceralene Dr., Fairfax, VA 22032-1704, (703)425-5923, Mathis@Ada20.isi.edu.