DRAFT: Revised working process for developing standards

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1 Introduction

At a meeting of the Working Party and Working Group chairmen of the IPTC right after the working sessions of the Autumn Meeting 2004 in Amsterdam it was felt an intensified collaboration in developing the various IPTC Standards could improve their quality by reusing high quality common elements and derived from that providing easier implementation.

This paper provides a first draft how the work on developing IPTC standards could be organized in future.

This document should be the starting point for discussing any sort of collaboration as well as creating and specifying common elements.
As a tight schedule for the development of NewsML 2 is established a period until mid November is the only current “window of opportunity” to either reorganize the standardization process of the IPTC or to stick to completely independent standards in technical terms or – as a last resort – to revise the development schedule and the schedule for the Roadmap 2005.

A comment on the naming:

- As it was discussed in Amsterdam such a “thing common to several standards” could be called an “object” as data and functionality is related to, or it could be called “abstract class” if it is understood to be even more related to object oriented programming.
  As this document is focussing on the process of the work and not on the standards or “things” that should be made common the more neutral word “element” was used to name this “thing”.
- Standards are shown in an abstract way as “Standard A” etc. to emphasize this document does not relate to any current specific standard but to a basic way how to develop standards.

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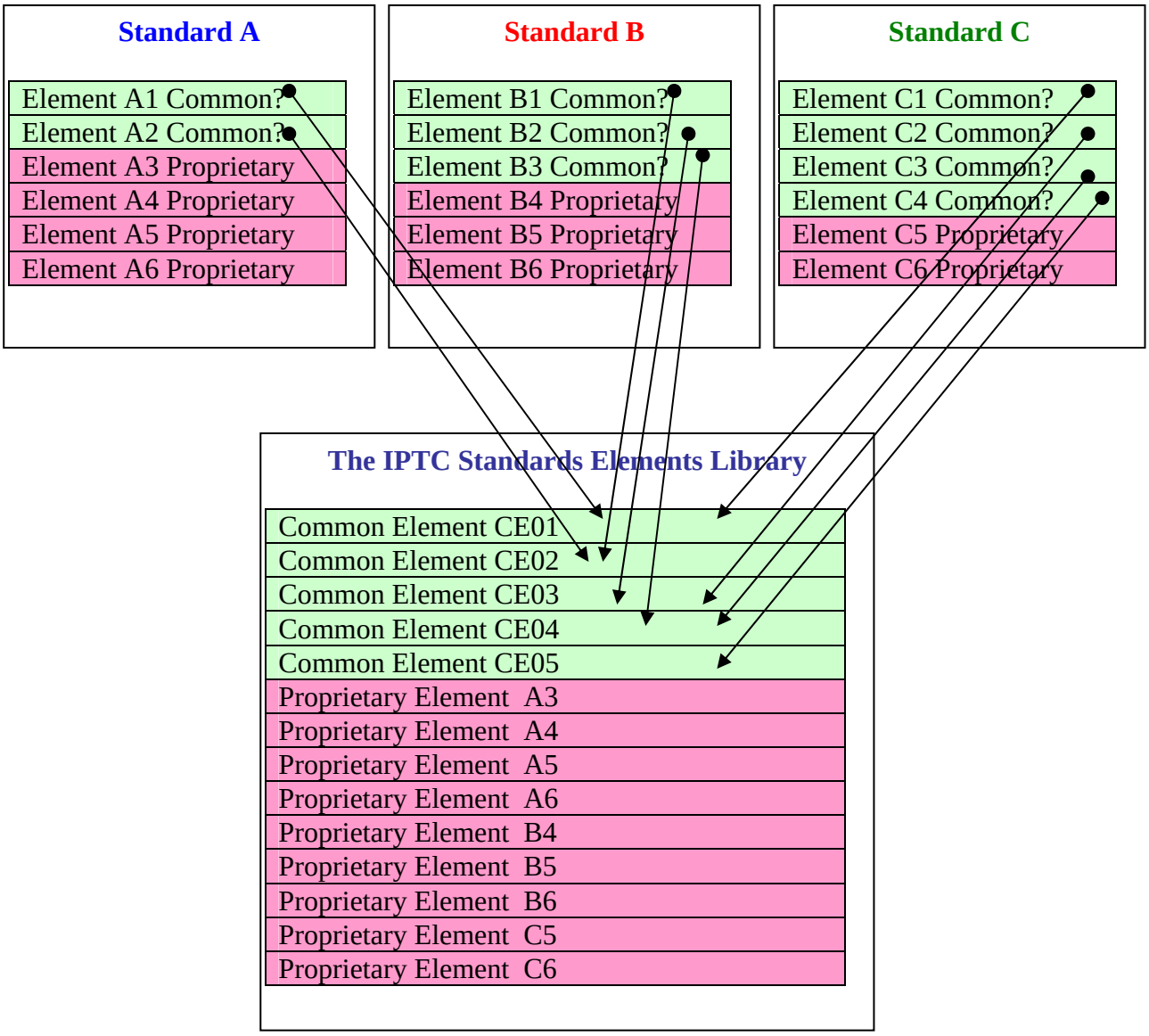
2 Graphics

Find the proposed process in writing in section 3.

2.1 How to make a Standard Elements Library from the individual elements of various standards



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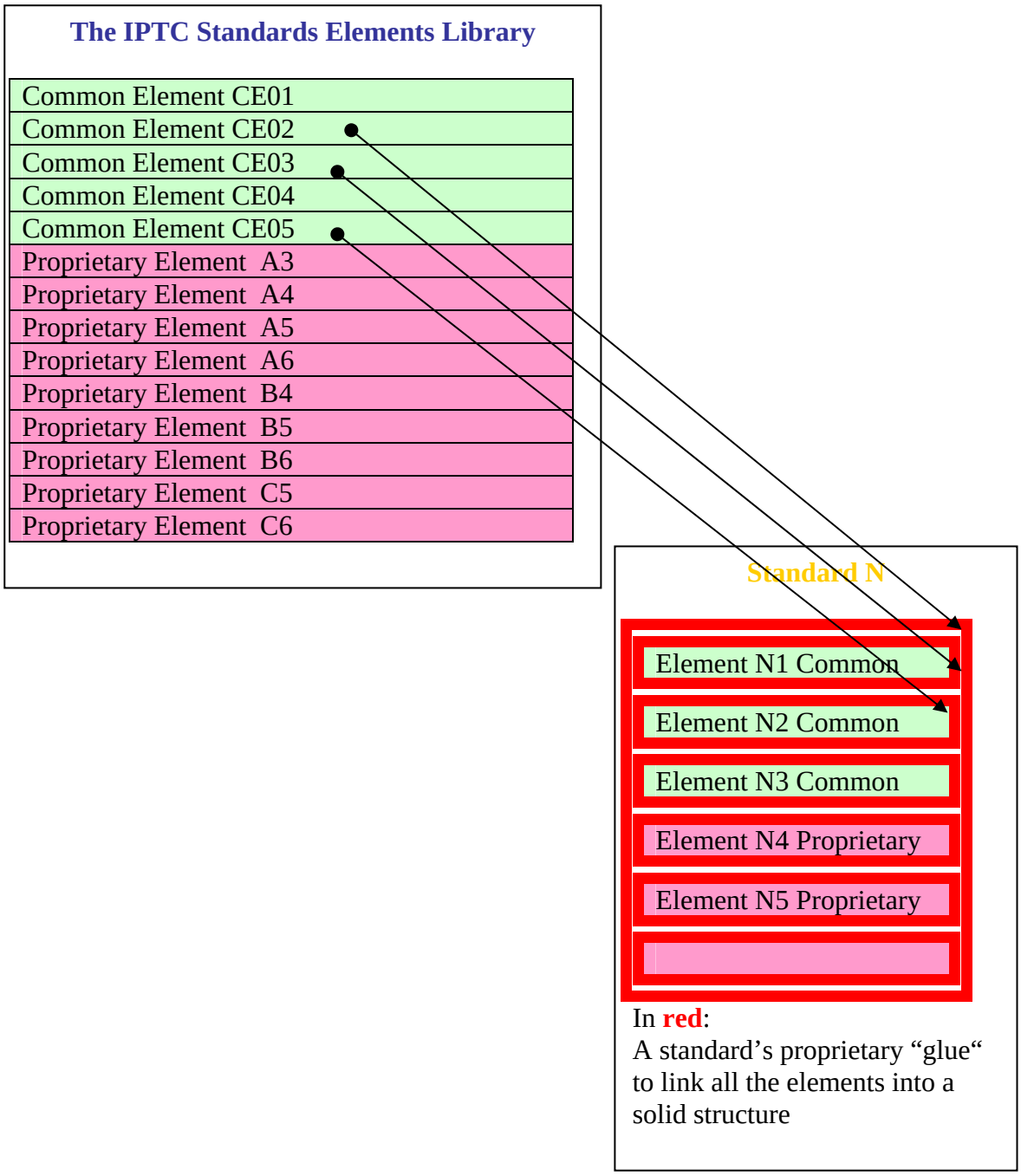
2.2 Making a (new) standard from library elements



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3 Building a Standards Element Library – and reuse its elements. Step by step

3.1 Identify nature of elements

(The Working Group of developers of a certain standards should …) Walk through the structure of each individual IPTC Standard and identify:

- whether an element is a "common element candidate"
- or it is a rather proprietary element to this standard

3.2 Propose "Common Elements"

(The Working Group of developers of a certain standards should …) Propose all elements identified as "common element candidates" to an IPTC Standards Framework group.
Deliveries:

- Document: Requirements covered by this element
- Technical specification: expressed either as XML Schema or DTD
- Document: technical description/documentation of this element
- Document: functional specification(s) related to this element describing its behaviour

3.3 Reconcile proposals – build library

The Standards Framework group assesses each proposed element, compares proposals for "potentially equivalent" elements in depth and merges proposals as deemed sensible.
Deliveries: as set of

- Document: Requirements covered by this element
- Technical specification (either as XML Schema or as DTD)
- Document: technical description/documentation of this element
- Document: functional specification(s) related to this element describing its behaviour
- Backward references to "proposed common elements"

for each approved element.

3.4 Build a standard by reusing library elements

- Start from scratch
- Add elements from the Standards Element Library
- Develop/specify proprietary elements as deemed necessary
- Develop/specify some "glue" – as deemed necessary! - to make all these elements a consistent standard of its own

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4 Considerations – open issues

4.1 Maintenance of Standards Library elements

A process to update and maintain elements of the Standards Elements Library has to be defined.
It has to take into consideration:

- evolving requirements for certain elements in the context of a specific standard
- not breaking any existing standard employing this element by updating it.

4.2 "Private Extensions" to common elements

As these common elements could be understood as abstract base classes in term of object oriented programming a way to specify private extension to the implementation of this common element in a certain standard should be considered.
Example:

- a "person" common element comprises several elements but not the shoe-size
- a "CelebritiesML" standard might require "shoe-size" to be included.
- Considerations:
  - either extend the common "person" element by "shoe-size" for this standard only
  - or make a completely new proprietary element
  - or extend the common element with an optional "shoe-size" value.

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