Gas Industry Standards Board

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HOME PAGE www.gisb.org

October 18, 1998

TO: GISB Members, Interested Industry Participants, Posting on the GISB Home Page

FROM: Rae McQuade, Gas Industry Standards Board Executive Director

RE: Requests for Industry Comment on Proposed Standards & Interpretations

The industry comment period for a set of recommended standards regarding general standards for EBB Internet Implementation and two interpretations begins today and ends on November 13. The recommendations can be accessed from the GISB Home Page for Request Nos. C98008, C98009 and the EII Recommended Standards. All comments received by the GISB office by end of business November 13 will be posted on the home page and forwarded to the Executive Committee members for their consideration. The Executive Committee members will consider all comments before voting on the recommended standards, planned for November 19 in Salt Lake City. The minutes of the meetings in which the recommended standards were defined can be accessed from the home page in the subcommittee areas of EBB Internet Implementation Task Force and Interpretations Subcommittee. If you have difficulty retrieving these documents, please call the GISB office at (713) 757- 4175.

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C98008 **Request**

When a Transportation Service Provider has posted a particular Offer, Bid, or Award (as identified by its “number”) and then any one or more of the values, contained within: a) the quantity(ies) data elements, b) rate data elements, c) any of the date/time elements (i.e., effective begin/end dates, award dates, bidding period dates, etc.), d) location data elements, or e) data elements containing codes for the parties to that Offer, Bid or Award, is different in a subsequent posting of information on that Offer, Bid, or Award, shouldn't the value of the ANSI X12 Transaction Set Purpose Code data element be the code associated with “change” (Offer) or “re-submission” (Award)?

Interpretation Text:

It is misleading and unclear to communicate information that was previously posted, and has been subsequently revised and re-posted, with a code value that states that the information is "original". Once a capacity release transaction has been posted, where there is a change to any value contained in particular offer, bid, or award, and the revised transaction has been posted, the value of the ANSI X12 Transaction Set Purpose Code data element should denote that the data set contains a revision(s).

In the GISB Capacity Release Related Implementation Guides, the following values are available to populate the ANSI X12 data element Transaction Set Purpose Code:

Data Set		Segment Value	ANSI X12 Code	Description
Offer	(5.4.1)	BQT	00	Original
Offer	(5.4.1)	BQT	04	Change
Bid	(5.4.2)	BQR	00	Orginal
Bid	(5.4.2)	BQR	04	Change
Award	(5.4.3)	BQR	06	Confirmation
Award	(5.4.3)	BQR	15	Re-submission

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C98009 **Request**

Request clarification related to the use of only central clock time values in the date/time data elements for all Capacity Release related datasets (e.g. Offers, Bids, Awards, Upload to Pipeline of Prearranged Deal, UPPD Validation, Bidder Confirmation, Final Disposition, Operational Available, Unsubscribed FT, and Critical Notices). Should all time values be provided as central clock time?

Interpretation Text:

Yes, all values contained within date/time data elements should be central clock time values. GISB Standards version 1.2 et. seq. removed the time zone qualifier for all date/time data elements. GISB Standard No. 5.3.2 expresses that the time deadlines in Capacity Release data sets should be in central clock time. GISB business standards universally express that central clock time should be used. There are no longer any time zone qualifiers within the datasets and therefore only time values which are central clock time should be present. In addition, GISB Standard No. 1.3.1 expresses that the standard time for gas day should be expressed in central clock time (i.e., 9 a.m. - 9 a.m. Central Clock Time).

Gas Industry Standards Board EBB Internet Implementation Task Force
Recommended Standards from Industry Comment
Due November 13, 1998

#	Minutes Meeting Date	Group	**IN GROUP ORDER** Language
5A	14-Aug-98	d1	"Standard Client Configuration" is the term used to describe the configuration that allows simultaneous access to multiple industry Web sites.
17	14-Aug-98	d2	“Customer Activities" is the term used to refer to the business function categories relating to Nominations, Flowing Gas, Invoicing, Capacity Release, Contracts and other business functions on industry Web sites.
4.2.A.i	20-Aug-98	d3	"GISB EDI/EDM" is the term used to describe ANSI ASC X12 computer-to-computer electronic data interchange of information in files as mapped from the x.4.z GISB standards in the GISB Implementation Guides and communicated between trading partners over the Internet using the GISB Electronic Delivery Mechanism.
4.3.A.ii.a	20-Aug-98	d4	"GISB FF/EDM" is the term used to describe a standardized flat file computer-to-computer electronic data interchange of information in files as mapped from the x.4.z GISB standards. GISB FF/EDM is communicated between trading partners over the Internet using the GISB Electronic Delivery Mechanism.
4.3.A.iii	20-Aug-98	d5	'GISB EBB/EDM" is the term used to describe the GISB standardized electronic interchange of information for Customer Activities Web site presentations. GISB EBB/EDM is communicated between trading partners over the Internet using the GISB Electronic Delivery Mechanism for GISB EBB/EDM.
4.2.8	3-Sep-98, 16-Oct-98	d6	"Content Area" is the term used to describe the area directly to the right of the Navigational Area of the browser display. When the Navigational Area is not displayed the entire browser display is content area. [This a recommended replacement of GISB Standard No. existing 4.2.8]
54	17-Sep-98	d7	“Header” is the term used to describe the area at the top of the Content Area of the browser display.
55	17-Sep-98	d8	“Detail” is the term used to describe the area directly below the Header in the Content Area of the browser display.
4.2.7	16-Oct-98	d11	"Navigational Area" is the term used to describe the area on the left side of the browser display providing links to the Content Area and other navigational links. Navigational Area is not required to be displayed on Customer Activities Web pages where data entry, reporting or inquiry are displayed. [This a recommended replacement of GISB Standard No. existing 4.2.7]
4	14-Aug-98	p1	Web site standards should not preclude various levels of user response and inter-activity. Minimum levels of user response or inter-activity should be developed.

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#	Minutes Meeting Date	Group	**IN GROUP ORDER** Language
5	14-Aug-98	p2	Web site standards should not dictate or limit back-end development technology or systems. Industry Web sites should be accessible by a Standard Client Configuration.
12	14-Aug-98	p3	A standardized Web site navigational structure should be developed to provide access to business functions. The hierarchical relationship, structure and order for navigation on the Web site should be established in a standardized manner.
13	14-Aug-98	p4	Additional Informational Postings under Standard No. 4.3.6 which are not yet standardized for Web sites should be communicated over the Internet via a "'common look and feel" standardized Web page.
26	14-Aug-98	p5	Customer Activities Web sites should be designed for ease of user interaction.
28	14-Aug-98	p6	There should generally be a one-to-one relationship between data elements used for EDI and/or flat files and the data displayed on Customer Activities Web pages.
30	14-Aug-98	p7	Standard field name descriptors or abbreviations, and navigation and functional screen layouts should be used on all Customer Activities Web pages. There should be no standards for font size, colors, etc. Functional screen layouts should be developed as standards which would divide each transactional screen into separate areas and define which data elements belong in each specific area.
34.3	20-Aug-98	p8	Information that is constant for the displayed Content Area may be placed in the page Header.
34.5	20-Aug-98	p9	Data elements that have default values may be placed last to minimize scrolling.
47	20-Aug-98	p11	There is displayed information on Customer Activities Web sites which does not have a comparable data element in EDI; however, the data (e.g. totals, reports, calculations) is derived from other EDI data elements. Provision of such information does not require the development of an EDI data set to accomplish a one-to-one match. However, any Customer Activities Web function should be derivable from information available in EDI data sets.
4.3.O	3-Sep-98	p12	When standardized, all elements used in standard EBB/EDM, EDI/EDM and FF/EDM should be defined in the related GISB x.4.z standard. [An example and note are associated for illustrative purposes and can be found in the minutes.]
51.2	3-Sep-98	p13	For GISB FF/EDM, the content and usage of flat files should reasonably correspond to the GISB data sets used for GISB EDI/EDM.
51.6	3-Sep-98	p14	If GISB FF/EDM is implemented, flat files should be exchanged via the GISB EDI/EDM site or the Customer Activities Web site.
10A	17-Sep-98	p15	Trading partners should maintain redundant connections to the public Internet for GISB EDM Web sites, which include all GISB standardized Internet communication. These redundant connections should be topographically diverse (duality of) paths to minimize the probability of a single point of failure.

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#	Minutes Meeting Date	Group	**IN GROUP ORDER** Language
1	14-Aug-98	s1	Internet protocols should be used for accessing all industry business functions.
2	14-Aug-98	s2	Web browser interface should use Internet compatible common browser software.
3	14-Aug-98	s3	Industry Web sites should be accessible via the public Internet using common browser software.
6	14-Aug-98	s4	Each implementation of a current proprietary business function category on EBBs should remain available until such time as that business function category is tested and implemented via a Customer Activities Web site.
14	14-Aug-98	s5	Standard navigation should be used to access all business functions on industry Web sites.
16	14-Aug-98	s6	Navigation through the industry Web site menus should be consistent for location and technique.
19A	14-Aug-98	s7	The categories and the labels for Customer Activities Web sites should appear, if applicable, in the Navigational Area as follows: • Nominations • Flowing Gas • Invoicing • Capacity Release • Contracts • Informational Postings • Site Map Links supporting Mutually Agreeable categories should precede Informational Postings.
27	14-Aug-98	s13	A Customer Activities Web page may display information (data elements and code values) from multiple functionally related EDI data sets (i.e. nominated quantities and scheduled quantities may appear on the same Web screen).
29	14-Aug-98	s14	GISB standard code value descriptions should be displayed for code values where appropriate.
32	20-Aug-98	s15	The Customer Activities Web Site should include the name, nickname, or name abbreviation of the Transportation Service Provider in the browser title bar. The name of the business function should be displayed in the Header.
33	20-Aug-98	s16	Where they exist for the same business function, flat files and EDI should use the same nomenclature for data set names, data element names, code values and/or code value descriptions, abbreviations and message text. Corresponding Web pages should use data set names, data element names, code value descriptions, abbreviations and message text that correspond to those used in flat files and EDI, where they exist.
34.7	20-Aug-98	s17	Totals, when appropriate, should be displayed within the Content Area of the Web page in a manner which distinguishes them from the data.
34.8	20-Aug-98	s18	Where navigation and/or processing functions exist for a Customer Activity, the Content Area should contain navigation in the Header on the left and processing functions in the Header on the right.

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#	Minutes Meeting Date	Group	**IN GROUP ORDER** Language
34.9	20-Aug-98	s19	Navigation for input data lookups, if provided, should be placed near the field being looked up. Navigation for informational lookups, if provided, should be included in the Header.
38	20-Aug-98	s20	GISB Common Codes for entity and location should be available for data validation or selection (viewing) on a Customer Activities Web site and in a standardized downloadable format for use by customers and third party service providers. Cross-references to proprietary codes may be provided on a mutually agreeable basis.
4.3.A/L	17-Sep-98	s21	A Transportation Service Provider which determines to provide new features utilizing existing transaction sets via GISB EBB/EDM, for each transaction upon inception of support for such service, should: If GISB EDI/EDM or FF/EDM standards exist for the transaction set, provide the service via EDI/EDM, or FF/EDM or both, utilizing modifications defined by the Transportation Service Provider to the existing file structures; and, submit a request for modification or enhancement of the transaction set to GISB including details of the interim EBB/EDM, EDI/EDM and/or FF/EDM implementation.
4.3.Q	3-Sep-98	s22	Where a Transportation Service Provider (TSP) utilizes a subset of available GISB code values for specific data elements for inbound documents to the TSP, the TSP should make available a list of the supported code values in a download utilizing a GISB electronic format.
49	3-Sep-98	s23	With regard to navigational links on Customer Activities Web sites, when using abbreviations, the following should be used: [Please refer to the table in the appenidx for the abbreviations]
50A	3-Sep-98 10-16-98	s24	On the Nominations Web page, data should be organized in the Form in logical groupings. The logical groupings of data are specified in the nominations data dictionary.
52	3-Sep-98	s29	Where display information on a Customer Activities Web site is derivable from data provided in a previous upload or download, the information should not be included in the EDI/EDM standards [or FF/EDM standard, for later consideration] that directly correspond to the EBB/EDM Web page being displayed.
53	17-Sep-98	s30	The industry should use common codes for location points and legal entities when communicating via EDI/EDM, EBB/EDM and/or FF/EDM. The corresponding common code name should also be used in EBB/EDM.
57	17-Sep-98	s31	Customer Activities Web pages should support entry of the maximum length for valid data, however, display can be done in a manner to minimize left to right scrolling.
58	17-Sep-98	s32	On Customer Activities Web pages, informational display fields can be displayed with related data.

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#	Minutes Meeting Date	Group	**IN GROUP ORDER** Language
7A	17-Sep-98	s33	Providers of Customer Activities Web sites should ensure that the site operates within the guidelines of the “Technical Characteristics of the Client Workstation” described in the Appendix of the Electronic Delivery Mechanism Related Standards Manual. This appendix, listing examples of hardware and software configurations that providers should meet, should be reviewed and updated by the Future Technology Task Force, at a minimum, by the spring of each year and presented to the GISB Executive Committee for adoption by the June meeting of that committee.
8A	17-Sep-98	s34	Access to the Customer Activities Web Site should be protected by HTTP Basic Authentication or similar logon/password mechanism(s) using 40-bit encryption. A Customer Activities Web site should typically require a single logon/password pair for each user session.
8B	17-Sep-98	s35	At a minimum, data communications for Customer Activities Web sites should utilize 40-bit encryption. Where possible, 128-bit encryption is strongly recommended.
8C	17-Sep-98	s36	Custom downloadable modules presented by a Customer Activities Web site should be signed by the author. The signatures on these modules should be communicated in advance to Web site users.
8D	17-Sep-98	s37	In the Navigational Area of the Informational Postings Web Site, the navigational link for "Customer Activities" should appear directly above the navigational link for "Site Map."
9A	17-Sep-98	s38	Private network connections to GISB EDM Web sites which include all GISB standardized Internet communication may be at any point on the Transportation Service Provider's (TSP's) firewall boundary at the TSP's discretion on a non-discriminatory access basis. The specific type and speed of these connections should be mutually agreed. It is at the discretion of the TSP on how multiple private network connections should be managed, so long as such management is done on a non-discriminatory access basis. TSPs are not responsible for any additional security exposures when using these private network connections.
66	1-Oct-98	s42	The Transportation Service Provider's Customer Activities Web Site should include the name, nickname, or name abbreviation of the parent company and/or Transportation Service Provider so that it will appear first in the browser title bar.
68	1-Oct-98	s43	Columns and data fields that would contain data not supported by the Transportation Service Provider should be eliminated on display and/or entry, and left empty on download. [REPLACEMENT TO GISB STANDARD NO. 4.3.34]
73	16-Oct-98	s48	A Transportation Service Provider which determines to provide new services which do not utilize existing transaction sets via GISB EBB/EDM, should, prior to implementation submit a request for standardization to GISB including descriptions of the EBB/EDM, EDI/EDM and, as applicable, FF/EDM implementation.
74	16-Oct-98	s49	On Customer Activities Web pages, information which is not part of the data dictionaries may be displayed.

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Appendix

Abbreviation Table for Recommended Standard 49

Full Name	Abbreviation
Customer Activities	Customer Activities
Nominations	Nominations
Flowing Gas	Flowing Gas
Invoicing	Invoicing
Capacity Release	Capacity Release
Contracts	Contracts
Informational Postings	Info Postings
Site Maps	Site Maps
Nomination Area	Nominations
Nomination	Nom
Nomination Quick Response	Nom QR
Request for Confirmation	Req for Conf
Confirmation Response	Conf Resp
Confirmation Response Quick Response	Conf Resp QR
Scheduled Quantity	Sched Qty
Scheduled Quantity	Sched Qty Oper
Flowing Gas Area	Flowing Gas
Pre-determined Allocation	PDA
Pre-determined Allocation Quick Response	PDA QR
Allocation	Allocation
Shipper Imbalance	Shipper Imbal
Measurement Information	Meas Info
Measured Volume Audit Statement	Meas Vol Audit
Invoicing Area	Invoicing
Invoice	Invoice
Service Requester Level Charge/Allowance Invoice	Svc Req Invc
Payment Remittance	Pmt Remit
Statement of Account	Stmt of Acct
Capacity Release Area	Capacity Release
Offers	Offers
Bids	Bids
Awards	Awards
Contracts Area	Contracts

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Appendix

Implementation Guide Recommendations -- September 17, 1998
Amended October 1, 1998

Implementation Guide Content under Customer Activities Sites

Minimum Technical Characteristics of the Client Workstation
Configuration* Description:
Hardware:
CPU >= 166 MHz
Memory >= 64 MB Physical
Display Resolution >= 800 x 600
Operating Systems:
Multi-threaded and preemptive
Connection:
>=56KB (V90)
Browser Characteristics (includes defined GISB current versions):

Features as supported by both Netscape®[1] v4.06 and Internet Explorer®[2] v4.0 sp1 including:

- Frames and nested frames
- Tables and nested tables
- Style Sheets
- HTML
- Cookies
- JavaScript
- SSL®[3] (40 Bit RSA)

- JAVA®[4] 1.1.6 Sun®[4] JDK (plug-in)
- ActiveX®[2] (Plug-in for Netscape®[1])
- ICA®[5] v4 (Plug-in)

*configuration shown indicates a minimum except where a specific level is established. "Minimum" implies a level where a reasonable experience for the user may be achieved. These levels also indicate the level that a user may expect that a client has been tested. Results may be less than satisfactory or may preclude use of a site if the user chooses to use anything less than those levels shown.

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1 Netscape® is a registered trademark of Netscape Communications Corp.
2 Internet Explorer® and ActiveX® are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation.
3 SSL® is a registered trademark of Solid State Logic Limited.
4 JAVA® and Sun® are registered trademarks of Sun Microsystems, Inc.
5 ICA® is a registered trademark of Citrix Systems, Inc.

Appendix

Implementation Guide Recommendations -- September 17, 1998
Amended October 1, 1998

Example Configurations of Client for Accessing Customer Activities Sites[6]

EXAMPLES BELOW REPRESENT A NON-COMPREHENSIVE SET OF CONFIGURATIONS WHICH A CLIENT MAY USE. THIS EXAMPLE LIST IN NO WAY SHOULD BE CONSTRUED AS AN ENDORSEMENT BY GISB OF ANY SPECIFIC PRODUCTS. OTHER PRODUCTS MEETING THE MINIMUM TECHNICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CLIENT WORKSTATION MAY BE MAY BE USED.

Hardware:
CPU: P166 MHz or higher
Memory >= 64 MB Physical
Display Resolution >= 800 x 600
Pointing Device with left and right click capability
Operating Systems:
Windows®[7] 95
Windows®[7] 98
Windows®[7] NT 4.0 service pack 3
Connection:
56KB (V90) modem
ISDN
Direct Connect (T1, Fractional T1…)
Browser:
Netscape®[8] Communicator/Navigator v4.06
Microsoft Internet Explorer®[9] v4.0 service pack 1
Plug-ins:
JAVA®[10] 1.1.6 Sun JDK (Activator)
ActiveX®[9] (Plug-in for Netscape)
ICA®[11] v4 (Plug-in)

SPECIFIC PRODUCTS SHOULD BE REVIEWED PRIOR TO IMPLEMENTATION FOR YEAR 2000 COMPLIANCE.

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[6] **Note to EII Task Force from the Future Technology Task Force (9/11/98):**
There is still a review of port numbers possibly needed to be opened on the client-side for certain protocols to be used. We want to arrive at a limited list on which users may rely to be able to access many TSP sites. Along with this, will be some other firewall administration notes addressing items such as applets. We intend to complete this draft in our October FTTF meeting.

[7] Windows® is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation.

[8] Netscape® is a registered trademark of Netscape Communications Corp.

[9] Internet Explorer® and ActiveX® are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation.

[10] JAVA® is a registered trademark of Sun Microsystems. Inc.

[11] ICA® is a registered trademark of Citrix Systems, Inc.

Appendix

Implementation Guide Recommendations -- September 17, 1998

Implementation Guide Content under Security for Customer Activities Sites

THE LIST OF PRODUCTS BELOW REPRESENT A NON-COMPREHENSIVE SET WHICH A CLIENT MAY USE. THIS LIST IN NO WAY SHOULD BE CONSTRUED AS AN ENDORSEMENT BY GISB OF ANY SPECIFIC PRODUCTS. OTHER PRODUCTS MEETING THE MINIMUM TECHNICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CLIENT WORKSTATION MAY BE MAY BE USED.

[The GISB Future Technology Task Force will review this on an annual basis during the version check cycle.]

Minimum
40 bit* SSL® or 40 bit* RSA JAVA®[12] communications or 40 bit* Secure ICA®[13]
*128 bit encryption is strongly recommended where possible.

SPECIFIC PRODUCTS SHOULD BE REVIEWED PRIOR TO IMPLEMENTATION FOR YEAR 2000 COMPLIANCE.

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[12] JAVA® is a registered trademark of Sun Microsystems. Inc.
[13] ICA® is a registered trademark of Citrix Systems, Inc.

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Appendix

Implementation Guide Recommendations -- September 17, 1998

Implementation Guide Content under Redundancy

**In this context redundancy refers to normal operations redundancy (as opposed to disaster recovery contingencies).*

Customer Activities Sites

Users and providers should consider but not be limited to the following possibilities to achieve redundant connectivity:

1. Multiple dial-up connections
2. Multiple leased line connections
3. Multiple Internet service providers
4. Combinations of the above
5. Geographically diverse connections
6. Topographically diverse connections; i.e., connections which result in Internet pathways that do not pass through a single point/service/router
7. Multiple power sources for network equipment

Items 1-5 are potential means of achieving the defining characteristic of item 6. The intent is to eliminate the possibility of a single point of failure.

EDI/EDM Sites

Three possible approaches are:

1 Maintain multiple ISPs and multiple points of connectivity, each of which was identified by the same URL making the process of redundancy transparent to the sender.

2 Maintain different Internet connectivity URLs (presumably on topographically different ISPs). For this to result in communication redundancy, the sender should know of the existence of the secondary URL and have programming in place that will automatically switch batch-browser transmissions to the secondary URL when the primary URL is unavailable.

3 Maintain multiple connections to the same ISP. This involves only one URL but the presumption would be that the ISP would provide alternate diverse paths for the URL.

Receivers may maintain multiple URLs and, if such have been disclosed, the sender should attempt to use these during primary URL outages. The redundant public Internet connections can be through a single ISP or multiple ISPs.

If multiple URLs are provided for EDM access, the following conditions should be met:

1. The information provided by each URL should be exactly the same, although trans-ids can be different.
2. The trading partners should be informed of both URLs and their availability by system wide notice or by TPA.

Appendix

Implementation Guide Recommendations -- September 17, 1998

Implementation Guide Content under Redundancy (Continued)

The URLs should be identified as primary and secondary if either:

1. There is a TSP connection speed difference between the URLs (The faster connection listed as primary).

or

2. One URL is only available when the other is down (primary URL being the most available).

The URLs should be listed as primary and alternate if:

1. The URLs have the same TSP connection speed.

and

2. The URLs are customarily available simultaneously.

Note: A URL is considered available (in the context of communication redundancy) if all the IP facilities are properly functioning up to and including the HTTP service. This would include any TSP provided facilities including firewalls, DNS servers, routers, hubs, LANs, etc. that are between the TSP's HTTP server and the ISP's point of presence.