**US-EU ICT Standards Dialogue
on e-Accessibility**

Work Plan

October 2007
October 19, 2007

This work plan replaces the April 2006 Activities document. It is up-dated regularly.

The U.S.-EC Dialogue focuses on advancing bilateral cooperation on e-accessibility in the broader context of an exchange of information regarding the planned use of ICT standards in support of regulatory and public policy goals.

A. <u>e-accessibility regulations and policy work</u>

UNITED STATES. The U.S. Access Board update of the requirements of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and Section 255 of the Telecommunication Act is ongoing.

- The EC is participating in the Advisory Committee.

- Monitor progress and accomplishments.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION. The European Commission launched a mandate M376 to the European Standardization Organizations (ESOs) to develop European accessibility requirements for products and services purchased by public procurers in the ICT domain.

- U.S. government representatives are participating in the execution of the mandate M376 which will be complemented via both the bilateral dialogue and through consultation with key stakeholders.

- Monitor progress and accomplishments.

B. Dialogue on e-accessibility conformance issues

- At the March 2006 Dialogue meeting in Brussels the discussion on the different conformance and accreditation schemes was launched with the objective of achieving a better understanding of the their application and impacts.

- U.S. government representatives are participating in the execution of the specific part of mandate M376 regarding conformity assessment which will be complemented via both the bilateral dialogue and through consultation with key stakeholders.

C. Cooperative approach with ISO/IEC JTC1 on identifying relevant e-accessibility standards

- The three main deliverables of the ISO/IEC JCT1 Special Working Group on Accessibility (the User Needs Summary, the Standards Accessibility Inventory and the Guidance on User Needs Mapping) are to be approved at the ISO/IEC JTC 1 October 2007 meeting. They will then be submitted to ballot for publication as a multi-part ISO/IEC Technical Report.

- The work of ISO/IEC JTC 1 SWG-A will be taken into account in the mandate M376 work carried out by the ESOs that started in the fall of 2007.

D. Cooperation on the accessible online toolkit to be developed in the framework of the mandate

- This toolkit is one of the deliverables expected in the mandate M376. Its objective is to facilitate the application by public procurers of the European standard developed in the mandate. The U.S. will share best practices, experiences and appropriate training material for consideration.

- As soon as the work on the mandate reaches the phase of development of the toolkit (phase II), this information shall be submitted as appropriate. This submission may take the form of an international workshop.

- Monitor progress and accomplishments.

E. **Accessibility to the built environment**

- EUROPEAN COMMISSION. The European Commission will launch a mandate to the European Organizations for Standardization (ESOs) to develop European accessibility requirements to the built environment. It is envisioned that U.S. government representatives will participate in the execution of the mandate in a similar way as for M 376.

- Explore ways to cooperate on the exchange of information on accessibility to the built environment.

- Continue to exchange information on each other's regulatory framework for building regulations and how accessibility is incorporated into those regulations.

F. **Measuring progress**

- Discuss how each party approaches measuring progress in providing access to ICT.

- The first report of the survey "Measuring e-accessibility in Europe" (MEAC) will be published on a Commission website by end October 2007, together with the adoption of the European Commission Communication on e-Inclusion. This survey is done on behalf of the European Commission, in response to the commitment in the 2005 Communication on e-Accessibility to review the situation in Europe two years after that Communication. The study reports on policy/legal measures and e-Accessibility in all EU Member Status, the US, Australia and Canada.

G. **Assistive technologies**

- Exchange information on the range of assistive technologies available and how to foster their use and development.