
**IEEE P802
LMSC Executive Committee**

802 EC

Signs of Dominance Toolkit

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Abstract

This document contains a set of “signs” by which potential dominance in an LMSC subgroup might be recognised.

Introduction

Revision History

Date	Description
2017-06-07	First revision compiled. This is a personal contribution from the 802.11 WG chair, but it also includes input from 802.11 participants and the results of consultation with 802.11 officers.
R0 2017-06-30	Reviewed and posted.
R1 2017-07-17	Added line numbers

Purpose

This document is intended to be used by IEEE 802 Working Group (WG) or Task Group/Task Force (TG/TF) officers in pursuit of their duties, and specifically the duty to detect dominance.

This document describes signs that have some value (according to context) in diagnosing the presence of dominant behavior. The signs are, in essence, attempting to “unpack” the subjective “fair and equitable” in the dominance definition (below) into criteria that are more observable. However, many of the signs identified below are themselves necessarily subjective, and still require that officers attempting to use this toolkit exercise their judgement.

The IEEE Standards Association Standards Board bylaws state (December 2016):

5.2.1.3 Dominance

The standards development process shall not be dominated by any single interest category, individual, or organization.

Dominance is normally defined as the exercise of authority, leadership, or influence by reason of superior leverage, strength, or representation to the exclusion of fair and equitable consideration of other viewpoints.

Dominance can also be defined as the exercise of authority, leadership, or influence by reason of sufficient leverage, strength, or representation to hinder the progress of the standards development activity. Such dominance is contrary to open and fair participation by all interested parties and is unacceptable.

If evidence of dominance exists, corrective action shall be initiated. If the Sponsor's official P&P contain corrective action(s), the Sponsor shall implement such action(s) and promptly notify the IEEE-SA Standards Board. If the Sponsor's official P&P do not contain corrective actions, the Sponsor shall initiate corrective action(s), but only after such action(s) have been approved by the IEEE-SA Standards Board.

In the absence of effective corrective action(s) by the Sponsor, the IEEE-SA Standards Board shall implement either the corrective action specified in 5.2.1.3.1 or, at its discretion, an alternative corrective action [e.g., withdrawal of the PAR, limiting the number of voting members, one vote per organization, etc.]. The IEEE-SA Standards Board may impose further corrective action(s) if previous corrective action(s) prove to be insufficient.

The IEEE 802 Working Group P&P (2016-07) state among the responsibilities of the WG Chair: “Determine if the Working Group is dominated by an organization and, if so, treat that organizations’ vote as one (with the approval of the Sponsor)”

Recording Observables

Observables related to the diagnostic signs (e.g., “an estimated 20 people entered the room”, “the chair asked for ‘no’ voters to explain their vote, and received no substantive response”) should be entered into the minutes (observing usual caveats about attributing statements or actions to individuals), so that any subsequent investigation can take them into consideration. This means the chair needs to be alert to these diagnostic signs and instruct the secretary to enter any such observations in the minutes.

High Diagnostic Power

The table below lists signs that might have high diagnostic power of possible dominance.

Sign	Notes
The debate of technical issues across multiple presentations during a meeting is limited or non existent.	Might indicate that the debate is taking place elsewhere. ^{1 2}
An individual doesn’t explain their ideas fully and yet they are approved anyway.	The TG is the technical forum where all ideas should be given due consideration. It should not allow into its draft features that have not been properly considered. ³ However, this might also indicate that participants trust the contributor, or they don’t care about topic (e.g., unpopular maintenance activities).
A substantial number of participants are listed as co-authors on a submission. The same author’s list appears on submissions covering disparate topics (e.g., MAC vs PHY).	This sign indicates that a lot of people have worked together on something. However, it doesn’t necessarily mean they did so in a dominant way. A co-author, should be willing and able to explain their individual contribution. The chair might test this, by asking individual co-authors about their individual contribution.
An influx of voting members not normally present in TG meetings	The question here is whether the individuals in the influx are voting as individual experts or not.

¹ This is not related to “adoption” of an external specification as a standard, which is a separate IEEE-SA process.

² The observed fact that discussion during multiple presentations has limited debate and technical decisions are clearly being made externally is itself not a demonstration of dominance. If individuals are disenfranchised by such behaviour (i.e., their proposals are not given due consideration), then it becomes dominance.

³ The TG has an obligation to the WG to exercise due diligence on any inputs to its draft before submitting it for WG ballot.

<p>arrive when a critical vote takes place</p>	<p>If somebody joins the room after the debate and votes on the motion, they have not had the benefit of hearing the arguments. Their knowledge might be incomplete and their fitness to participate questionable.</p> <p>In this circumstance the TG chair could announce a roll-call vote, and could randomly call voters from the influx forward to explain how and why they voted.</p> <p>An individual that votes self-declares their competence to vote, and as such should be willing and able to explain how and why they voted in that way.</p>
<p>The TG agrees to proceed on decisions related to submissions without having allowed sufficient time to review the material.</p>	<p>This might indicate that the material has already been considered in depth in another forum.</p> <p>The TG chair should ensure that sufficient time has been allowed to review submissions and be sensitive to requests to provide adequate time for review. ⁴</p>

Moderate Diagnostic Power

The table below lists signs that may have moderate diagnostic power of possible dominance.

Sign	Notes
<p>Motions on substantial technical, newly presented, material are passed with little discussion or resistance.</p>	<p>Might indicate the group is “rubber stamping” decisions made elsewhere.</p> <p>However might indicate group consensus. Might also indicate that the motions are on topics that almost nobody cares about.</p>
<p>A submission with well-argued ideas fails to result in any debate and motions to adopt fail.</p>	<p>“Well argued” is subjective.</p> <p>An individual voting against a submission should always be capable of explaining why.</p> <p>However, it might be that the arguments are well put, but have been seen before. The same or similar ideas have been tried before and failed. The proposal was given due diligence then, so participants don’t feel obliged to engage now.</p>
<p>A group of individuals appears to always vote the same way.</p>	<p>It might indicate the presence of a dominating organization.</p> <p>However, it might also indicate normal individual participation in response to an individual who repeatedly attempts to advance their own case (that may or may not have technical merit), and is repeatedly rejected for fair technical reasons.</p>

⁴ “Sufficient time” is clearly subjective. It will depend on the complexity and novelty of the submission.

Low Diagnostic Power

The table below lists sign(s) that may have low diagnostic power of possible dominance.

Sign	Notes
The total number of votes (in the room) associated with the same affiliation is $\geq 25\%$ of total votes.	The TG chair should look for openness to hear contributions from all participants, and for healthy Q&A. Just because an individual is affiliated with a particular organization does not mean the individual is failing to meet their obligation of individual participation.

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