Standards Working Group IEEE P802.15
Wireless Personal Area Networks (WPANs)
Homepage at http://grouper.ieee.org/groups/802/15

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Subject: IEEE P802.15 Reply to the EUI-64 Mandate
Re: Mandatory Use of EUI-64 for New Designs, 21 Jan 2000

Dear Geoff,

The IEEE P802.15 will not be able to implement the RAC proposal prior to Sponsor Ballot. The 48-bit address is specified in the P802.15.1/D0.6 Draft Standard and used throughout the lower-layer protocols and visible by higher-layer software applications. We feel the OUI space is relatively unused at the moment and the volume of initial products will not create a significant drain rate.

Regarding the term "new technology", we are wondering whether or not the IEEE/RAC classifies P802.15 wireless technology as a "new" technology. As you know the first Project of the 802.15 WG is a standard derived from the Bluetooth™ Special Interest Group (SIG) v1.0 Specification.   This Project is proving to be a major growth area for IEEE 802 standards. We are aware that the Bluetooth SIG approached the IEEE/RAC about the use of IEEE OUIs back in 1998 and the Bluetooth Specification 1.0 was published in 1999. We too are concerned that the proposed requirement of having new technologies use 64-bit EUIs will damage the effort within the 802.15 working group to transform the Specification into an IEEE Standard until the Specification is updated to use 64-bit addresses.

The IEEE P802.15 WG is aware of that the Bluetooth SIG has directed their Bluetooth Architecture Review Board (BARB), the technical advisory group within the SIG, to investigate possible 64-bit migration strategies. Once their investigation has produced a recommendation, the timeframe for implementing that recommendation will heavily depend on the costs as well as the depletion rate of the OUI space. The goal of any migration strategy is to maintain both forward and backward compatibility without compromising ease-of-use and the end-user experience. The BARB has been instructed to work with the IEEE 802.15 leadership to develop proposals that meet these goals. As part of that cooperation, the SIG will send a representative to participate in any EUI discussions held at the next IEEE Plenary meeting in LaJolla, CA USA or the next meeting of the IEEE/RAC.

The IEEE P802.15 Working Group (WG) develops Personal Area Network standards for short distance wireless networks. On November 4th, 1999 the first P802.15.1 Draft was published and submitted to the WG for letter ballot.

Yours sincerely,

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Chairman, IEEE 802.15 Working Group for WPANs

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