Liaison from IEEE 802.11 Working Group to Wi-Fi Alliance re: IEEE 802.11 Standard Reserved values

TO: Edgar Figueroa, President and Chief Executive Officer, Wi-Fi Alliance, efigueroa@wi-fi.org

FROM: Dorothy Stanley, IEEE 802.11 Working Group Chair, dstanley@ieee.org

CC:
- Konstantinos Karachalios, IEEE-SA Standards Board, Secretary, IEEE-SA Board of Governors sasecretary@ieee.org
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SUBJECT: Usage of IEEE 802.11 Reserved fields and values in Wi-Fi Alliance specifications

DATE: 28 January 2019

Dear Edgar,

The IEEE 802.11 WG is aware of certain specifications developed by Wi-Fi Alliance that define the usage of fields and/or values that are marked as "Reserved" in IEEE Std 802.11™-2016 and its approved amendments.

A recent example is usage of bits B14 and B15 of the FILS Discovery frame, which are marked as "Reserved" (and therefore set to 0) in IEEE Std 802.11™-2016 and its approved amendments, but have been defined in the Wi-Fi Alliance Optimized Connectivity Technical Specification section 3.7 (and therefore are set to 1 under certain conditions).

Wi-Fi Alliance is advised that "Reserved" fields and/or values might be redefined at any time in future amendments of the IEEE 802.11 standard. The IEEE 802.11 WG is very concerned about the risk of interoperability issues resulting from mutually incompatible field/value definitions in IEEE 802.11 standards and Wi-Fi Alliance specifications.

The IEEE 802.11 WG maintains an Assigned Numbers Authority (ANA) database and procedure by which field/identifier assignment to external organizations may be approved upon request.

The IEEE 802.11 WG asks Wi-Fi Alliance to provide the IEEE 802.11 WG with a request to allocate reserved IEEE 802.11 standard fields and/or identifiers before using them in Wi-Fi Alliance specifications. Please forward this information to relevant Task Groups within Wi-Fi Alliance.

Please contact me with any questions.

Thank you and Best Regards,

/s/

Dorothy Stanley (dstanley@ieee.org)

IEEE 802.11 Working Group Chair