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X3T9.2/90-107

Date: 6 July 90
From: Kurt Chan, X3T9.2 Principal, Hewlett-Packard
To: X3T9.2 Membership
Subject: High Density Connector Specification Issues

At the June plenary, HP described some quality issues regarding the Shielded High-Density connector retention mechanism (Fig 4-5, 4-6) that question whether or not our implicit acceptance of the design was premature. I believe this to be valuable data, and also believe further testing and evaluation is needed.

I also don't recall that the retention mechanism was ever explicitly approved by the committee. In light of other vehement arguments brewing at the time and a lack of experience with this new design, it's understandable that this item never came under scrutiny. However, in not fully describing the retention mechanism we're doing a disservice to the SCSI-2 industry. Even among those vendors in agreement on the basic design, we've already seen varying implementations of the same retention mechanism.

Regardless of whether or not we implicitly or explicitly accepted the design, it is clear that more work needs to be done. I therefore recommend that:

1. We add a statement to SCSI-2 which indicates that the clip retention depicted in Figures 4-5 and 4-6 is to be used for reference only, provided that we also add a forward reference to a document that fully specifies a retention mechanism which has been thoroughly reviewed and tested by the committee.
2. We understand the criteria used by our brethren X3T9.3 standards (IPI, HPPI) in specifying their retention mechanism, given the similarity of our connectors.

It will detract from our standard if we do not finish what we started. My objective with this proposal is not to delay forward progress, but to provide the the industry with a high-quality, compatible specification and to complete any unfinished work before divergent implementations proliferate.