Recommendation of the Evaluation Review Team

In September of 2020, IRIS Data Services and ORFEUS submitted comprehensive documentation for the StationXML specification to Working Group II of the FDSN. This included annotations for elements within the schema and documentation for how to use, create and interpret StationXML documents. The original submission email to the working group is attached below. A comment period was opened to the community and in November of 2021 this review team was formed to evaluate the documentation, resolve the issues reported and make a recommendation to the working group.

We have reviewed the documentation as submitted, considered issues raised by the community and have revised the submission to accommodate those issues. This new documentation addresses a compelling need to explain the use and interpretation of StationXML beyond the basic XML schema structure and eliminates the need to refer to the documentation for the older SEED format. We believe the advantages of this documentation are significant and it should be accepted as a new version of the FDSN StationXML standard.

As part of the review, we have confirmed that the new documentation makes no changes to the schema itself "as a schema." Only annotations and documentation have been added. Thus, aside from the version number, it requires no changes to existing software systems.

Although there are no structural changes, we do feel that it is important that the document be given a new version number for a number of reasons, most importantly so that the previous version 1.1 can be preserved as is. We recommend that systems that generate StationXML update the "schemaVersion" attribute to "1.2" and the corresponding "schemaLocation" at the next convenient opportunity.

The revised proposed documentation is available here:
http://docs.fdsn.org/projects/stationxml/en/doc_issues/
and the schema file is available here:
https://github.com/FDSN/StationXML/blob/doc_issues/fdsn-station.xsd

The issues raised along with their resolution were recorded via issues, and can be seen here:
https://github.com/FDSN/StationXML/issues?q=is%3Aissue+is%3Aclosed

The review committee recommends approval of the specification as revised.

Thank you,
Philip Crotwell
Petr Kolínský
Jonathan Schaeffer
Rob Casey

IRIS and ORFEUS have supported the development of comprehensive StationXML format documentation, which was carried out by ISTI. This effort, combined with a parallel effort to define "source identifiers" already being considered by the WG, supersedes the need for SEED documentation as a reference for StationXML metadata.

A draft of the documentation is available here:
http://docs.fdsn.org/projects/stationxml/en/draft/
The documentation source has been developed in a branch (draft) of the FDSN's canonical StationXML repository and is ready to be merged back into that repository for long term stewardship by WG II.

To avoid duplicating the documentation of each element/field, the canonical XSD (XML Schema) definition has been modified to embed documentation in the schema document itself. An audit process has been used to ensure that no structural definitions have been changed.

We anticipate that there will be comments from the WG membership and we suggest that all comments be addressed and applied in a single batch of changes after the comment period closes.

Best regards,

IRIS Data Services and ORFEUS