

AT&T Comments on the Disposition Report for Exception 51

Summary of

Recommendation: **KPMG should not close Exception 51. It has explained its rationale for closing the Exception but that explanation raises questions that AT&T suggests may ignore pertinent facts that we outline in our comments. At the least, KPMG Consulting should provide answers to AT&T's questions prior to the closure of Exception 51.**

The salient issue for this Exception is whether KPMG Consulting's determination of the response time for CORBA Service Appointment Scheduling Due Date indicates that the response time so calculated is a fair indicator against the PM 2 benchmark. KPMG Consulting submitted CORBA queries and received responses that show the PM2 benchmarks are being missed. Ameritech advises that KPMG Consulting did not and cannot calculate the response time according to the specifications of PM2 and that the method KPMG used is not applicable.¹

AT&T agrees that the methods of timing the responses conflict. The amount of time for transporting the query to Ameritech's system and returning it to KPMG's system should not be counted "against" Ameritech's performance. The question is how much time to allow for the activities which Ameritech terms "network protocol and transmission activities."

It appears in the Disposition Report that KPMG compared the differences between the response times it had calculated for the 14 CORBA query/responses and the times calculated by Ameritech. It found that the difference, i.e., 1 – 2 seconds could account for "network protocol and transmission activities" and gave this period as an allowance. With the allowance applied, KPMG Consulting's recalculation of the response times showed that Ameritech meets the benchmarks of 90% in less than or equal to 1 second and 95% in less than or equal to 2 seconds.

We question the data supplied by Ameritech because it does not appear to be "companion" data to the CORBA queries in one case and in the other 13, there is an unanswered

synchronization issue between the time identified by KPMG Consulting as the time the queries were launched and the time that Ameritech says it received them. These views are discussed in greater detail below.

First, AT&T questions Item 8 in the table on Page 2 of the Disposition Report. This Item cannot be correct. KPMG Consulting shows that it was sent to Ameritech on November 26, 2001 at 12:15:27. Ameritech's corresponding entries show that it received the query on November 7, 2001 at 15:17:28. Obviously, these two time stamps cannot be reconciled. This Item needs to be removed from the discussion on this Exception, unless Ameritech and KPMG Consulting can determine whose data is correct.

Secondly, there is a lack of synchronization that should be explained as regards the date/time that KPMG Consulting establishes its "send" record and the date/time Ameritech records the CORBA query as "received." AT&T understands and does not challenge the Eastern time versus Central time differences between the timing marks. Our concern is the differences and wide variances between the events that, except for part of the "network protocol and transmission activities" allowance, should provide for sending/receiving at the same time. The variances are between 9 and 41 seconds with no apparent pattern.

It is AT&T's assumption that if the parties' system clocks were not synchronized, the differences would be uniform. If the timing marks were properly established and administered to (which we have no reason to believe are not being done reliably and consistently), any differences would also be uniform. The differences are far from uniform and, thus, before this Exception can be deemed "closed," there needs to be an explanation of what causes the differences.

¹ Ameritech's April 1, 2001 Response to Exception 51.

Our question is to find the reason for the inconsistency between the time that KPMG Consulting notes that it has sent the CORBA query and the time that Ameritech notes that it has received the query. The explanation may serve to help understand the “network protocol and transmission activities” and the amount of time incurred for those. The explanation should be provided before Exception 51 is closed.