DR 17-0016 — SML: Reference Sequence (sqref) Examples

Status: Further Consideration Required

Subject: SML: Reference Sequence (sqref) Examples

Qualifier: Editorial defect

Submitter: Charlie Clark Organization: Ecma/Clark Consulting & Research

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Submitter’s Defect Number: None

Supporting Document(s): None

Date Circulated by Secretariat: 2017-06-20

Deadline for Response from Editor: 2017-08-20

IS 29500 Reference(s): 29500:2016, Part 1, §18, SML

Related DR(s): None

Nature of the Defect:

It would be nice to have some examples of SQREF containing multiple cells or cell ranges. This is implicit in the use of the XML list type, but it would be good to see the narrative documentation mention it a couple of times such as in DataValidation (Part 1: §18.3.1.32), ConditionalFormatting (Part 1: §18.3.1.18), and series definitions in charts.

Solution Proposed by the Submitter:

None

Schema Change(s) Needed:

No

**Editor’s Response:**

**2017-09-03 Murata-san:**

ISO/IEC 29500 already provides examples containing multiple values.  For example, sqref="G4 G6 G7 G8" appears in §18.3.1.76 scenarios.

Do you think that this is not good enough?

**2017-11-15 Charlie Clark:**

> Also, there are examples of SQREF in the Primer, L.2.10.3.2.2 and L.2.10.3.4.2, both showing ranges.

The primer doesn't include the examples that caused me problems: "A1:B4 C5".

Having read up on this I'd have to concede that this is covered in the XML specification, I think because an SqRef is a list of ST\_Refs and 18.18.76 ST\_Sqref is quite clear: "(Reference Sequence) A sequence of cell references, space delimited."

However, DataValidation and ConditonalFormatting say:

"Range over which data validation is applied."

"Range over which these conditional formatting rules apply."

Both statements definitely imply a single range. I suggest changing the prose to "Range or ranges over which " to clear up any ambiguity.

**2017-11-14/16 Geneva Meeting:**

Response to Charlie:

We agree that the term "range" is not well-defined in SML, and this leads to confusion in several cases, including those you mention, as to whether "range" means a single cell or a single contiguous range of cells or a list containing several of these. This needs to be clarified and we will investigate further with Microsoft experts.

Question to Microsoft experts:

In SML the attribute sqRef on elements such as dataValidation applies to a "range", but it is not clear whether "range" includes the possibility of a single cell or a list of ranges, e.g. sqRef="A1 B2:C3". Please can you clarify in each case where sqRef is used?

**2018-09-12 MS Experts:**

Excel does not consider the term ‘range’ in the descriptive text to have a specific technical meaning. For ST\_sqRef we support the list of ranges defined in the schema, which includes both single cells and references to multiple cells.

**2018-09-14 Charlie Clark:**

Seems like MS doesn't really mind in which case I propose that we add an example to §18.18.76 something like:

sqref="C3:C8 D3:D8" refers to the ranges C3:C8 and D3:D8

In addition, and I think, this is why I tripped up, §18.3.1.18 says, "Range over which these conditional formatting rules apply." I propose changing this to "Range or ranges over which"

Same for §18.3.1.32

I was also checking for §21.2.2.65, “f (Formula)” because I think that this can also take a sequence of references but it's just an xstring with all the fun of DR 17-0029. Would be great if MS experts could confirm that it is indeed possible to have multiple references here.

I've also recently had first-hand experience of using manualLayout and can confirm that the work I've done with Francis has been invaluable in using this effectively, though we'll probably have to extend our description slightly as a result.

Changes to Part 1: N Part 2: N Part 3: N Part 4: N