thorough airing of the outstanding issues and approaches to their resolution. One important step forward was agreement on the criteria for evaluating the various proposals. Another was the adoption of the mechanical specification submitted by Paul Borrill and the agreement that his proposal for the electrical specification would form the basis of that portion of the proposed standard.

It became clear that the committee does not have sufficient information in two areas: the trade-off between ECC and parity (across the bus) and the optimal distribution of the intra-bus ground lines. The present proposal for the latter (not yet voted on by the committee) has two rows of two grounds separating the three more or less synchronous parts of the bus, and a third row halfway across the address/data and control section. This proposal is based on the premise that this distribution facilitates the use of bus bars to beef up the return paths. Other proposals have the grounds distributed equally, either across both rows or on the one closer to the daughter-board ground plane. (This for the Level 1 configuration, which employs the two outside rows of the DIN 41612 connector.)

Significant progress has been made since the workshop; the committee has now agreed to proceed with a Level 1 specification incorporating five bus priority lines, separate data and address acknowledge lines, and use of the two low-order address lines in the control coding (refer to the February issue, pp. 67-82, for details). The addition of the second acknowledge line necessitates some rethinking of the control coding, which was not complete at the time of writing, hence the question marks in the figure below.

Other standards

A new working group (P854) has been set up, under the leadership of W. J. Cody, to develop a standard for radix and format-independent floating-point arithmetic. The new standard is to be upward-compatible with the P754 proposal.

The P755 specification has been approved for publication by the Microprocessor Standards Committee and appears in this issue of *IEEE Micro* on page 70.

The P695 working group has completed the development of evaluation criteria for relocatable object code and is reviewing currently available implementations. We hope to have a report on this review in the August issue.

At the February 26 meeting of the Computer Society Computer Standards Committee, a subcommittee was established to investigate the issue of common terms and concepts for bus standards. The objective of the subcommittee is to seek a standard nomenclature for describing busses. Additional information may be obtained from Glen Langdon, Jr., IBM K54-282, 5600 Cottle Road, San Jose, CA 95193; (408) 256-6454.

We encourage readers to make standards-related contributions to this section.

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