linux-media patch and review process: how to improve this?

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Sub-maintainers

• In 2012, at the Barcelona's Media Summit, it was agreed to create sub-maintainers, in order to allow more patch reviews. The sub-maintainers were (from http://linuxtv.org/news.php?entry=2012-12-29.mchehab:

  – “Michael Krufky: frontends/tuners/demodulators. In addition he'll be a reviewer for DVB core patches.
  – Hans Verkuil: V4L2 drivers and video A/D and D/A subdev drivers (aka video receivers and transmitters). In addition he'll be a reviewer for V4L2 core patches.
  – Laurent Pinchart: sensor subdev drivers
  – Kamil Debski: codec (aka memory-to-memory) drivers
  – Hans de Goede: non-UVC USB webcam drivers
  – Guennadi Liakhovetski: soc-camera drivers”

• Two developers (one at TI and one at Samsung) would be “sub-maintaining” the drivers for their company's hardware.

• Core patches would be reviewed by sub-maintainers and by me.
Sub-maintainers current status

- Michael didn't have time to review DVB patches, and stopped being a sub-maintainer. We asked Sakari last year to help submaintaining webcams.
- We never found a replacement for DVB sub-maintainership and never found a sub-maintainer for Remote Controllers.
- Unfortunately, only nowadays, most sub-maintainers don't send pull requests on each new Kernel version, with seems to be a signal that something's wrong:
  - Lack of time?
  - Lack of interests?
  - The area they maintain are now stable?
- Sometimes, patches take a very long time to be applied. How to handle lack of responsiveness on sub-maintainers/reviewers?
  - How much time a patch without review should wait to be merged?
How can we fix it?

• Some alternatives:
  – 1) we could find sub-maintainers for DVB, Media Controller and Remote Controller;
    • Wow? Place a RFC at the linux-media asking for volunteers?
    • How to handle unresponsive sub-maintainers?
  – 2) sub-maintainers for “stable” areas could step up to help on areas lacking sub-maintainership.
  – 3) We could attract reviewers. How?
    • Projects with academy?
    • Hire some reviewers? If so, where to get money?
  – Some other ideas?