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Introduction

This paper gives an overview about the structure of the ITU Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R) and describes the assignments of tasks of the bodies involved in the preparation process of a World Radio Conference.



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ITU Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R)

Overview

As noted in Document AC09-7.1-1, the ITU Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R) is very important to us.

The **Director of ITU-R** is Valery Timofeev of Russia. He is currently serving his second term and is not eligible for re-election. A new Director will be elected at the 2010 Plenipotentiary Conference. This election is likely to be the item of the greatest interest to the IARU at the Plenipot.

The **Radiocommunication Advisory Group (RAG)** generally meets annually and provides advice to the Director (whether he wants it or not). The IARU participates in the RAG most of the time. While an issue of importance to us does arise occasionally, our attendance is not normally essential but is very helpful in causing the IARU to be regarded as an “insider.”

The **Radio Regulations Board (RRB)** is a part-time body of 12 experts elected at the Plenipot. The Board’s responsibilities do not typically concern us, as they most frequently involve resolving conflicts between administrations regarding frequency assignments. Currently there are two radio amateurs on the RRB: Bob Jones, VE7RWJ and Julie Zoller, KJ4EMJ. Incidentally, Bob’s service on the RRB does not preclude him from serving the IARU in a consulting capacity.

World Radiocommunication Conferences (WRCs) fall within the purview of ITU-R. Another meeting of great importance is the **Radiocommunication Assembly (RA)**, generally held immediately prior to a WRC and in the same location. The work of the ITU-R **Study Groups (SGs)** is conducted within cycles that are delineated by the RAs. The RA has the authority to create, redefine and even to abolish SGs. Working Parties (WPs) are established by each SG to organize its work. An effort is made to group similar services or technologies in the same WP, and also to balance the workload between the WPs. In addition to their WRC preparatory function, described below, the WPs prepare Reports and Recommendations in response to Questions assigned to their SG by the RA. The process is contribution-driven; if there is no activity in response to a Question over two cycles, the Question will be deleted by the next RA.

WRC preparations within ITU-R generally follow this pattern:

First Conference Preparatory Meeting (CPM-1) for next WRC, held immediately following the previous WRC. CPM-1 develops the work plan for WRC preparation by the Working Parties and the organization of the chapters of the CPM Report that will provide the technical basis for the consideration of agenda items at the WRC.

WP meetings to prepare draft text for the assigned sections of the CPM Report. Each WP will meet approximately twice a year while it is working on CPM Report text. CPM-1 identifies a “responsible group” (typically but not exclusively a WP) for each agenda item or sub-item and also identifies “concerned groups” whose interests may stand to be affected and from whom input should be invited. Sometimes the work on an issue overlaps more than one WP to such an extent that a Joint Task Group may be set up to deal with the specific issue. Work also may be progressed by email Correspondence Groups between in-person meetings

The IARU is fortunate to have, in addition to its officers, regional executive committee members and International Secretariat staff, a team of volunteers who are well qualified to represent the IARU at WP and other ITU meetings.

Appropriate regulatory/procedural studies on relevant agenda items are carried out by a **Special Committee on Regulatory/Procedural matters (SC)** on the basis of proposals from the membership of ITU and the relevant ITU-R Study Groups.

The “real” **Conference Preparatory Meeting** occurs approximately eight months prior to the WRC. About 1,000 delegates spend two weeks haggling over every comma in a 500+ page draft report. For a WRC proposal to stand a reasonable chance of adoption, it is necessary (but not sufficient) for the proposal to be one of the options identified in the CPM Report. The options in the CPM Report are not proposals in and of themselves, and they do not become proposals until an administration or regional telecommunications organization (RTO) (on behalf of a group of administrations) submits them as proposals for the WRC.

Speaking of RTOs, each one holds WRC preparatory meetings of its own with the objective of developing regional proposals and positions on the proposals of others. These are conducted outside the ITU structure but sometimes with ITU involvement if the RTO lacks the resources to conduct the preparations entirely on its own.
