Guidelines for the working methods of the Radiocommunication Assembly, the Radiocommunication Study Groups and related groups

**2016**

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# 1 Background

The working methods of the Radiocommunication Assembly (RA) and the Radiocommunication Study Groups are contained in Resolution ITU-R 1[[1]](#footnote-1)\*. In turn, Resolution ITU-R 1 notes that the Director issues *Guidelines* on working methods which complement and are additional to this Resolution.

This edition of the Guidelines complements Resolution ITU-R 1-7 approved by RA-15.

# 2 Meeting arrangements

## 2.1 Meetings

### 2.1.1 Radiocommunication Assembly (RA)

Article 13 of the Constitution and Article 8 of the Convention describe the duties and functions of Radiocommunication Assemblies. The working methods for RAs are given in § A1.2 of Annex 1 of Resolution ITU-R 1.

Soon after an RA, an Administrative Circular (CA) is dispatched to ITU Member States and Radiocommunication Sector Members inviting them to participate in the work of the Radiocommunication Study Groups and their subordinate Groups[[2]](#footnote-2)\*\*. In addition to listing all current Groups, the Circular requests members to consult BR Circular CA/225 dated 6 July 2015 in order to obtain information on how to be notified by email when BR Administrative Circulars and Circular letters, as well as other ITU documents of interest, have been posted on the ITU website.

## 2.1.2 Conference Preparatory Meeting (CPM)

As indicated in § A1.5 of Annex 1 of Resolution ITU-R 1, Resolution ITU-R 2 describes the duties and functions of the CPM, its Annex 1 details its working methods and its Annex 2 provides the Guidelines for the preparation of the draft CPM Report. Furthermore, § 11 of Annex 1 to Resolution ITU-R 2 stipulates that the other working arrangements of the CPM shall be in accordance with Resolution ITU-R 1.

Therefore, unless otherwise indicated, information provided in §§ 2.4, 3, 4.4 and 7 below also applies to the CPM.

## 2.1.3 Study Group Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen (CVC)

Section A1.6.1.1 of Annex 1 of Resolution ITU-R 1 provides information on the holding of these meetings.

### 2.1.4 Study Groups, the Coordination Committee for Vocabulary (CCV), their subordinate Groups (Working Parties (WP), Task Groups (TG), Joint Working Parties (JWP), Joint Task Groups (JTG), Rapporteur Groups (RG), Joint Rapporteur Groups (JRG), Correspondence Groups (CG)) and Rapporteurs

Articles 11 and 20 of the Convention describe the duties, functions and organization of Radiocommunication Study Groups. The working methods for Study Groups and their subordinate Groups are described in § A1.3 of Annex 1 of Resolution ITU-R 1. In particular, §A1.3.1.8 and §§ A1.3.2.6 to A1.3.2.10 of Annex 1 describe in detail the difference between, and the provisions applying to Rapporteurs, Rapporteur Groups, Joint Rapporteur Groups and Correspondence Groups.

It should be noted that Rapporteur Groups, Joint Rapporteur Groups and Correspondence Groups are subject to limited budgetary and secretarial support.

## 2.2 Participation at meetings

Member States and Radiocommunication Sector Members are entitled to participate in the meetings referred to in Resolution ITU-R 1. Member States and Radiocommunication Sector Members have full rights of participation (see Article 3 of the Constitution), but with certain limitations on the involvement of Radiocommunication Sector Members in the adoption and/or approval of texts such as Resolutions, Recommendations, Reports, Handbooks, Opinions and Questions.

Associates are permitted to participate in the work of a selected Study Group (including its subordinate groups) without taking part in any decision-making or liaison activities of that Study Group; (see No. 241A and 248B of the Convention). The rights of Associates are detailed in Resolution ITU-R 43.

Colleges, institutes, universities and their associated research establishments concerned with the development of telecommunications/ICT (referred to as “Academia”) may participate in the Working Parties of the Study Groups within the Radiocommunication Sector. The admission of academia to participate in the work of the Union is detailed in Resolution 169 (Rev. Busan, 2014).

The Director may, in consultation with the Chairman of the Study Group concerned, invite an organization which does not participate in the Radiocommunication Sector to send representatives to take part in the study of a specific matter in the Study Group concerned or its subordinate Groups; (see No. 248A of the Convention; see also §6 of these *Guidelines*. Experts and Observers are defined in Nos. 1001 and 1002 of the Annex to the Convention).

## 2.3 Calendar of meetings

Meetings of Study Groups and their subordinate Groups are scheduled in accordance with the plan of meetings prepared by the Director in consultation with Study Group Chairmen. This plan is developed with due consideration to the ITU-R Operational Plan and to the budget allocated to Study Group meetings. An up-to-date calendar of meetings is maintained on the ITU-R website at: <http://www.itu.int/en/events/Pages/Calendar-Events.aspx?sector=ITU-R>.

## 2.4 Announcement of meetings

### 2.4.1 Radiocommunication Assembly

Accompanied by an invitation from the Secretary-General, an RA is announced by Administrative Circular (CACE) well in advance of the event (e.g. at least six months). The Circular is sent to all Member States and Radiocommunication Sector Members and contains, *inter alia*, information on expected documentation, a provisional committee structure, and contributions and arrangements for participation.

### 2.4.2 Meeting sessions of the CPM

The meeting sessions of the CPM are announced by Administrative Circular (CA), at least four months beforehand for the first session, and at least six months beforehand for the second session. The Circulars are sent to all Member States and Radiocommunication Sector Members.

### 2.4.3 Study Group meetings (including CCV)

Study Group meetings (including CCV) are announced by Administrative Circular (CACE) at least three months beforehand. The Circular is sent to all Member States, Radiocommunication Sector Members and Associates (for the relevant Study Group).

### 2.4.4 Subordinate Groups (WPs, TGs, etc.)

Meetings of Working Parties, Task Groups, etc. are announced at least three months in advance by Circular Letter (LCCE) sent to those Member States, Radiocommunication Sector Members, Associates and Academia who have registered with BR their intent to participate in the work of the concerned Group(s). Shorter notice may sometimes be necessary in cases of urgency, (e.g. an urgent Task Group meeting).

The announcement of meetings of several Groups related to one Study Group is normally consolidated in one Circular Letter, with separate Annexes providing particulars for the individual meetings.

## 2.5 Arrangements for meetings held at ITU in Geneva

General information for participants is contained in an information document (INFO) issued at the start of each meeting (or block of meetings).

### 2.5.1 Registration of participants

Registration for ITU-R Study Group activities is carried out exclusively on-line through the ITU-R Event Registration System, (see [www.itu.int/en/ITU-R/information/events](http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-R/information/events)), using Designated Focal Points (DFP).

### 2.5.2 Document availability at meetings

All contributions for ITU-R meetings are made available on the ITU-R website as soon as practicable after their receipt by the secretariat in Geneva, (see §§ 3.1, 3.3 and 3.4 below).

"Temporary" (TEMP) documents are available in electronic form, and can be accessed from the ITU-R website during the course of a meeting and until such time that the corresponding information is included in the Report of the meeting and published on the website (e.g. Annexes to the Chairman’s Report or Summary Record).

Administrative (ADM) and Information (INFO) documents are available in electronic form.

Documents for Study Groups and their subordinate Groups can only be accessed by TIES registered users.

### 2.5.3 Simultaneous interpretation in official languages of the Union

Simultaneous interpretation in all the official languages of the Union is normally provided at all Study Group meetings, based on the announced participation.

## 2.6 Arrangements for meetings held outside Geneva

For meetings held outside Geneva, the provisions of § A1.3.1.11 of Annex 1 of Resolution ITU-R 1 apply.

# 3 Documentation

The guidelines below apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to the preparation and submission of documents to the Radiocommunication Assembly, to both sessions of the CPM and to Study Groups, as well as to related subordinate Groups.

Document 1 of each Study Group provides the assignment of texts to its subordinate Groups. Those texts include ITU-R Questions, Recommendations, Reports, Handbooks, Resolutions, Opinions and Decisions in force, which were developed and are to be maintained by the Study Group as well as the W(A)RC Resolutions and Recommendations related to the work of Study Group.

## 3.1 Submission of contributions to meetings

Sections A1.6.2.2 of Annex 1 and A.2.2.3 of Annex 2 of Resolution ITU-R 1 gives information concerning contributions to Study Group studies. In particular, it should be noted that contributions for meetings of Study Groups and their subordinate Groups should be sent to the BR by electronic mail, the relevant e-mail address appearing in the meeting announcement letter, (see §§ A2.2.3.2 to A2.2.3.5 of Annex 2 of Resolution ITU-R 1).

The mandatory common format for new and revised ITU-R Recommendations can be foundhere: <http://www.itu.int/oth/R0A0E000097>.

## 3.2 Preparation of document contributions

Guidance on the preparation of contributions to meetings are detailed in §§ A2.2.3.2 to A2.2.3.5 of Annex 2 of Resolution ITU‑R 1.

## 3.3 Deadlines for submission of contributions

The deadlines for submission of contributions are given in § A2.2.3.1 of Annex 2 of Resolution ITU-R 1. Specific deadlines are applicable in the case of the second session of the CPM (see also § 2.4 of Annex 1 to Resolution ITU-R 2).

## 3.4 Electronic posting of documents

Contributions are posted “as received” on a webpage established for this purpose within one working day, and within three working days the official versions are posted on the website. Administrations should submit their contributions using the template provided by ITU‑R.

TIES registered participants are advised to make use of the "ITU Web Notification System" (go to <http://www.itu.int/online/mm/scripts/notify>) which will alert them immediately, by e‑mail, of any new circular letters posted on the ITU-R website.

## 3.5 Documentation series

### 3.5.1 Contribution documents

Each Group has its own series of contribution documents, which appear on the webpage of the Group concerned. This series continues throughout a study period, i.e. from one RA to the next, and contains all the contributions submitted to that Group and its Chairman's reports. In the case of the CPM, the document series restarts at each session. After the opening of a meeting, temporary documents are used as described in § 3.5.2 below. Liaison statements submitted after the deadline stipulated in § 3.3 above will be included in the contribution document series of the Group concerned, as can reports from Chairmen of Groups, or from someone designated by a Group (e.g. Rapporteur), although every effort should be made to submit such reports before the deadline. Documents sent to Study Groups from Working Parties and Task Groups will also be accepted after the deadline.

### 3.5.2 Temporary documents (TEMP)

Documents produced during a meeting are designated temporary and posted on the webpage of the Group concerned. As the name implies, they are working documents which provide a means to record thoughts and ideas developed during the course of a meeting and, moreover, to prepare texts for eventual adoption by the Group. At the end of the meeting, those temporary documents containing material for retention are then used for the preparation of output documents, typical examples being:

– draft new or revised Recommendations, Reports, Questions, or any other ITU‑R texts for subsequent consideration by the Study Group;

– draft editorial revisions of Recommendations, Reports, Questions, or any other ITU‑R texts for subsequent consideration by the Study Group;

– preliminary draft new or revised Recommendations , Reports, Questions, or any other ITU‑R texts for further consideration at the next meetings;

– material or working documents for the above preliminary texts for further consideration at the next meetings;

– other elements for the Chairman’s report;

– liaison statements for other Groups.

Once prepared and available on the ITU-R website, it is to these documents that any subsequent reference should be made rather than to the original temporary documents (see also § 2.4.4.2 above). This is important to ensure that the most recent version of a text is carried forward for further study – a version which often contains modifications in relation to the original temporary document. In this context, see § 3.5.6 below concerning Annexes to Chairmen's Reports.

### 3.5.3 Administrative documents (ADM)

This series of documents is used for agendas and for matters of a managerial nature relating to the organization of the work of a group or groups, e.g. terms of reference of sub-groups, meeting schedule, etc.

### 3.5.4 Information documents (INFO)

INFO documents provide general information concerned with a current meeting (or meetings). As indicated in § 2.4.4, they can provide information on organizational matters, e.g. documentation preparation, room reservation, but additionally, they may be used to convey social and domestic information to the delegates. It should be noted that INFO documents should not be used as a means to convey information of a technical, procedural or operational nature associated with the meeting (or meetings) concerned.

### 3.5.5 Executive report to the Study Group

Each Working Party and Task Group prepares an Executive report for consideration at the next meeting of the parent Study Group. It is a document in the Study Group's contribution document series. The Executive report should describe the status of work within the Group, highlighting progress and conclusions achieved since the previous Study Group meeting. The Executive report should be concise in nature (typically less than 5 pages), omitting details of documentation, arrangements and deliberations during meetings of the subordinate Group.

### 3.5.6 Chairman's report to the next meeting of the Group

The Chairman's report to the next meeting is a document in the Group's contribution document series. This report should be made available to BR for posting on the ITU-R website within one month after the close of a meeting. As well as a detailed account of the status of the Group's work, the Chairman's report contains Annexes comprising material for further consideration at its next meeting, e.g. PDNRs, and material for preserving a permanent record of the Group's activities. The annexing of unmodified document contributions should be avoided and the appropriate ITU-R website address should be used instead.

The Chairman's report, wherever possible, should be prepared within one month of the end of the meeting concerned. BR should post on the ITU-R website, within two weeks of the end of the meeting, the Annexes to the Chairman's report. The Annexes are posted separately to allow selective downloading.

The Chairman may wish to update the report with an Addendum prior to the next meeting of the Group which reports on further progress made in the intervening period. For other matters or significant developments since the last meeting, the Chairman should make a separate contribution.

### 3.5.7 Summary records of Study Group meetings

For every meeting of a Study Group, a summary record is prepared by the Chairman with the help of a rapporteur appointed from the delegates present at the meeting. The main purpose of the summary record is to record the decisions taken during the meeting but not to provide a verbatim record of each intervention. The summary record should be prepared within 30 days of the meeting and posted on the ITU-R website for comments. It is a document in the Study Group’s contribution document series. It may also include annexes/addenda resulting from the discussion (e.g. a statement of a Member State) or the development of temporary documents during the meeting, as appropriate.

Editorial amendments and confirmation of statements made by the membership during the meeting could ideally be submitted to the Chairman within 15 days. However, the summary record will remain open for formal comments from the membership until the subsequent meeting of the Study Group concerned, at which time the record and the comments may be noted.

### 3.5.8 Liaison statements

Liaison statements may be prepared to convey important information to, or request information from, other ITU Groups or non-ITU Groups. They should clearly indicate the source and recipient Group(s), the subject of the liaison and the action needed, if any. In the case of multi-destination liaison statements, it is helpful to indicate, when appropriate, i) any "principal" recipient Group, ii) those Groups from which action is required, iii) those Groups to which the document is sent for information only. It is also helpful if the statement includes a date by which the recipient Group(s) should respond and a contact point for informal discussions.

### 3.5.9 Study Group/1000 document series

This series of documents is used for contributions to the RA from a Study Group and Study Group Chairmen. They typically contain draft Recommendations and draft Questions for approval, as well as draft versions of ITU-R Resolutions associated with the specific work of a Study Group.

### 3.5.10 "PLEN" document series

This series of documents is used during RAs for all documentation other than those appearing as Study Group/1000 documents. In particular, it is used for contributions from the membership.

### 3.5.11 Documents on the Group Sharepoint sites

A document exchange area, called a Share Folder, has been set up on a Sharepoint website for each Group. These sites are used as a means to allow working documents to be shared amongst participants. Participants having an ITU TIES account are able to upload and/or download any electronic files used for discussions and the development of draft texts during the meetings, before submitting the draft texts to the BR Secretariat to be prepared as formal TEMP documents.

# 4 Procedures related to Study Group meetings

## 4.1 Consideration of draft Recommendations

### 4.1.1 Adoption of draft Recommendations at a Study Group meeting

The procedure for adoption of draft Recommendations at a Study Group meeting is described in § A2.6.2.2.2 of Annex 2 of Resolution ITU-R 1.

### 4.1.2 Adoption of draft Recommendations by correspondence

The procedure for adoption of draft Recommendations by correspondence is described in § A2.6.2.2.3 of Annex 2 of Resolution ITU-R 1. Furthermore, if there is no objection by any Member State attending the meeting and the Recommendation is not incorporated by reference in the Radio Regulations, the procedure for simultaneous adoption and approval (PSAA), as described in § A2.6.2.4 of Annex 2 of Resolution ITU-R 1, shall be applied (see also § 5.1 below).

### 4.1.3 Decision on approval procedure

At its meeting, the Study Group shall decide on the eventual procedure to be followed for seeking approval for each draft Recommendation in accordance with § A2.6.2.3.3 of Annex 2 of Resolution ITU‑R 1.

### 4.1.4 Scope of Recommendation

Each Recommendation, when proposed for adoption and/or approval, should include a “scope” text clarifying the objective of the Recommendation. The scope should remain in the text of the Recommendation after its approval.

## 4.2 Treatment of Questions by a Study Group

### 4.2.1 Guidelines for Study Group Questions

Guidelines to be used by Study Groups when reviewing the Questions assigned to them are contained in §§ A1.3.1.16 of Annex 1 and A2.5.2.1.2 of Annex 2 of Resolution ITU-R 1. The guidelines (§ A1.3.1.16 of Annex 1) address two issues: i) that the Questions are within the mandate of the ITU-R (in accordance with CV150-154 and CV159), and ii) that the Questions do not duplicate studies undertaken in other international entities. Moreover, the Resolution (§ A2.5.2.1.2 of Annex 2) asks Study Groups to evaluate draft new Questions proposed for adoption against these guidelines and to include such evaluation when submitting the draft Questions to Administrations for approval.

To satisfy this requirement, each draft new Question submitted for approval should be preceded by a brief text justifying the adoption of the draft Question in accordance with the aforementioned guidelines.

It would be wholly appropriate for subordinate groups to address the guidelines in §§ A1.3.1.16 of Annex 1 and A2.5.2.1.2 of Annex 2 when developing draft new Questions. In addition, it would be useful for them to draft the brief text providing justification for eventual approval.

### 4.2.2 Adoption and approval of Questions

In accordance with §§ A1.3.1.2 of Annex 1, A2.5.2.1.1, A2.5.2.1.3, A2.5.2.1.4, A2.5.2.1.5 and A2.5.3.1 of Annex 2 of Resolution ITU-R 1, new or revised Questions, proposed within Study Groups, may be adopted by a Study Group and approved either by a Radiocommunication Assembly, or by consultation amongst the Member States.

## 4.3 Approval of Handbooks

In accordance with § A2.8.2 of Annex 2 of Resolution ITU-R 1, Study Groups may approve Handbooks. In order to expedite the procedure, it is recognised practice for a Study Group to give authority to the subordinate Group preparing the Handbook to approve the final text, subject to the agreement of the Chairman of the Study Group and of the subordinate Group concerned. This is especially the case when the material is in an advanced stage of preparation.

## 4.4 Treatment of draft Resolutions, Decisions, Opinions and Reports by Study Groups

The provisions of § A2.3.2.1 of Annex 2 of Resolution ITU-R 1 apply for the adoption of draft Resolutions. The provisions of §§ A2.4.2, A2.9.2 and A2.7.2.1 of Annex 2 of Resolution ITU-R 1 apply for the approval of Decisions, Opinions and Reports.

## 4.5 Liaison Rapporteurs to the CCV

Section A1.3.2.11 of Annex 1 of Resolution ITU-R 1 describes the manner by which Study Groups may nominate liaison Rapporteur(s) to the CCV.

## 4.6 Updating or deletion of Recommendations, Reports and Questions

Resolution ITU-R 1, §§ A2.6.2.1.9, A2.6.2.5, A2.6.3, A2.7.2, A.2.7.3, A2.5.2.1.6, A2.5.2.4 and A2.5.3 of Annex 2, directs each Study Group to review their maintained Recommendations, Reports and Questions, particularly older texts, and, if they are found to be no longer necessary or obsolete, propose their revision or deletion. In addition, §§ A2.6.2.5.1 and A2.5.2.4.1 of Annex 2 of Resolution ITU-R 1 also encourages Study Groups to editorially update maintained Recommendations and Questions. Those editorial revisions should not be regarded as draft revisions of Recommendations and Questions as specified in §§ A2.6.2.5.2 and A2.5.2.4.2 of Annex 2 of Resolution ITU‑R 1. The results of the reviews should be reported to the subsequent Radiocommunication Assembly.

# 5 Approval of Recommendations

## 5.1 Application of the procedure for simultaneous adoption and approval (PSAA)

Unless otherwise decided by the Study Group and if the Recommendation is not incorporated by reference in the Radio Regulations, the procedure for simultaneous adoption and approval of draft Recommendations according to § A2.6.2.4 of Annex 2 of Resolution ITU-R 1 shall be applied (see § 4.1.2 above) . If during the statutory consultation period no objections are received from Member States, then at the end of this period the draft Recommendations shall not only be considered adopted but also approved.

## 5.2 The procedure for the approval of Recommendations

Once a draft Recommendation has been adopted by a Study Group by either of the two procedures described above in § 4.1.1 and § 4.1.2 (but not by applying the PSAA), there are two procedures for the approval of Recommendations by Member States – approval by consultation and approval at a Radiocommunication Assembly. These are described in §§ A2.6.2.1.7, A2.6.2.1.8 and A2.6.2.3 of Annex 2 of Resolution ITU-R 1.

# 6 Liaison and collaboration of ITU-R with ITU-T, ITU-D and other organizations

## 6.1 Liaison and collaboration with ITU-T and ITU-D

Liaison and collaboration with the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector and the ITU Telecommunication Development Sector are addressed in Resolutions ITU-R 6 and 7, respectively, both available from <http://www.itu.int/pub/R-RES>.

## 6.2 Liaison and collaboration with other organizations

Liaison and collaboration with other relevant organizations, in particular ISO, IEC and CISPR, are addressed in Resolution ITU-R 9. Guidelines developed in accordance with Resolution ITU-R 9 are available from <http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-R/study-groups/Pages/extcoop.aspx>.

# 7 Remote participation

Audio webcasts are available for all Study Group and Working Party plenary sessions when meetings are held in Geneva, for TIES registered users. Participants who only wish to listen to the meeting are encouraged to use the webcast facility. Participants do not need to register for the meeting to use the webcast facility.

In line with guidance provided by the Radiocommunication Advisory Group, provision has been made for remote participants to actively participate during relevant sessions of a Working Party meeting when no formal decision process is involved (e.g. to introduce a contribution or make a presentation remotely). While the Secretariat will make every effort to facilitate such active remote participation, it should be recognized that on some occasions this may not be possible due to factors such as: not all meeting rooms being suitably equipped; the limited number of support staff and many parallel meetings; and the need for the remote participants to have a high quality internet and phone connection. Delegates who are interested in making use of the interactive remote participation services are required to coordinate such participation with the Counsellor for the relevant Working Party at least one month prior to the meeting.

For meetings held outside Geneva, webcasts and active remote participation will only be provided if suitable facilities are available at the meeting venue.

# 8 Captioning

Live captioning in English is provided at all plenary meetings of the RA and Study Groups. Transcripts of the meetings are subsequently made available on the ITU website.

# 9 Policy on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

ITU-R policy on IPR is described in the Common Patent Policy for ITU-T/ITU-R/ISO/IEC referenced in § A2.6.1 NOTE 2 of Annex 2 of Resolution ITU-R 1. Forms to be used for the submission of patent statements and licensing declarations by patent holders are available from <http://itu.int/go/ITUpatents> where the Guidelines for Implementation of the Common Patent Policy for ITU‑T/ITU‑R/ISO/IEC and the ITU-R patent information database can also be found.

# 10 Software copyright guidelines and form

The ITU Software Copyright Guidelines provide guidance to a study group in its consideration of the incorporation of material protected by copyright law in ITU-R Recommendations and is available from <http://www.itu.int/oth/T0404000004/en>. The form to be used for the submission of software copyright statements and licensing declarations by software copyright holders is available from <http://www.itu.int/oth/T0404000005/en>.

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1. \* As noted in *Section* A1.4.3 of Annex 1 of Resolution ITU-R 1, the Radiocommunication Advisory Group (RAG) adopts its own working procedures in accordance with No. 160G of the Convention. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. \*\* For convenience, the term "subordinate Group", or simply "Group", is used in this document to describe such entities as Working Parties, Task Groups, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)