Space Services Department

E-COMMUNICATIONS

1   Introduction

The **e-Communications** tool is an online communication platform to allow Administrations and the Radiocommunication Bureau to send and receive administrative correspondence related to space services, through an online interface instead of via emails or faxes. This tool was developed by the Bureau under Resolution **907 (Rev.WRC-15)**.

2   Background

Resolution **907 (Rev.WRC-15)** resolves "that modern electronic means of communication shall be used whenever possible in the administrative correspondence between administrations and the Radiocommunication Bureau related to the advance publication, coordination, notification and recording processes, including correspondence related to Appendices 30, 30A and 30B, for satellite networks, earth stations and radio astronomy stations". It instructs the Radiocommunications Bureau "to provide administrations with the necessary technical means to ensure that the modern electronic correspondence between administrations and the Radiocommunication Bureau is secure" and "to automatically acknowledge receipt of all electronic correspondence". It also urges Administrations "to use, to the extent possible, modern electronic means of communication in the administrative correspondence between themselves related to advance publication, coordination and notification of satellite networks, including that related to Appendices 30, 30A and 30B, and to earth stations and radio astronomy stations, recognizing that other means of communication may still be used if necessary".

In response to the Resolution and following a period of successful testing by Administrations, the online communication platform "e-Communications" commenced its operation at the end of October 2019. All types of administrative correspondence related to space services between Administrations and the Bureau, as well as between Administrations, can be communicated using this online communication platform available at: https://www.itu.int/ITU-R/go/space-communications.

3   Operation of e-Communications

During an initial period of operation, outgoing correspondence from the Bureau are sent by the traditional means of communication (via email and telefax), and at the same time through the "e-Communications" system. During the same initial period of operation, correspondence from

Administrations to the Bureau can be sent either using the traditional means of communication or using the "e-Communications" system.

When Administrations and the Bureau have gained sufficient familiarity with the system, the Bureau envisages that relevant Rules of Procedure may be adopted by the Radio Regulations Board to make the "e-Communications" system the sole means of communications between the Bureau and those Administrations having registered in the system.

Administrations wishing to use "e-Communications" as the only means of communication between the Administration and the Bureau and wishing to discontinue other means of communication (e.g. email, telefax and postal mail), are invited to inform the Bureau of their willingness to discontinue such use pursuant to *resolves* 3 of Resolution **907 (Rev.WRC-15)**.

It should be noted that the "e-Communications" application is intended only for sending and receiving administrative correspondence. For submissions of satellite filings and SpaceCom comment files, the online system "e-Submission for Satellite Network Filings" shall be used (see Circular Letter CR/434).
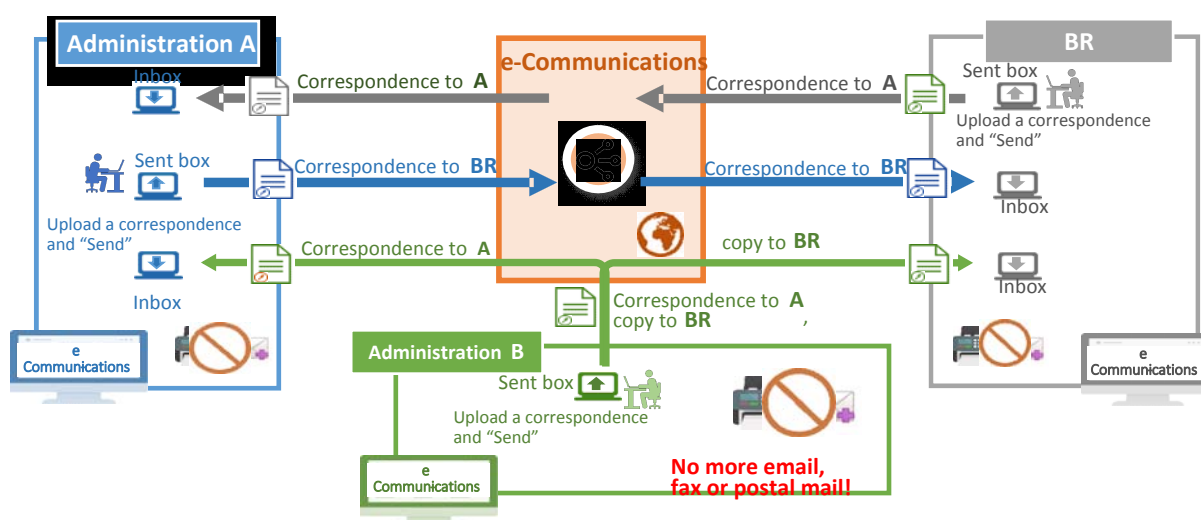
4   Overall System Workflow

Fig.1 General description of e-Communications

Using a simple and intuitive interface, the users of e-Communications can read, draft and send correspondence with any types of attachments to the Bureau and other Administrations.

When a user sends a correspondence through the e-Communications system, the user chooses an appropriate category of correspondence at first, designates Administrations or the Bureau as recipients, enters a subject, composes a message, and can attach any types of files. A user can also designate concerned satellite networks, earth stations and a IFIC number, as necessary.

A sent correspondence is listed in the "Sent" box on the side of the sending Administration and delivered in the "Inbox" on the side of the receiving Administration. A receiving Administration can reply to a correspondence received in the system.

When correspondence is sent or received, an automatic acknowledgment is sent to the registered e-mail addresses of the sending and receiving Administrations.

> When an Administration sends correspondence to the Bureau via e-Communications, the same correspondence is not required to be sent to the Bureau via e-mail or telefax again.

5 General Functions of e-Communications

This system provides the following functions to facilitate the communication of administrative correspondence related to space services:

- Web-based online application and user-friendly interfaces
- To draft and send all types of administrative correspondence related to space services to the Bureau and other Administrations with any types of attachments
- To reply to a received correspondence and send a further correspondence
- To search and sort received and sent correspondence based on different criteria
- Automatic acknowledgement emails sent when Administrations send or receive correspondence
- Exporting correspondence to PDF file and email
- Indicators of "Unread" and "Handled" on each correspondence
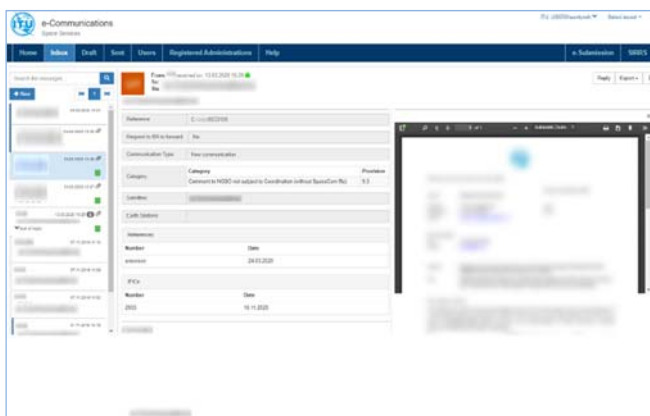- Event history related to each correspondence
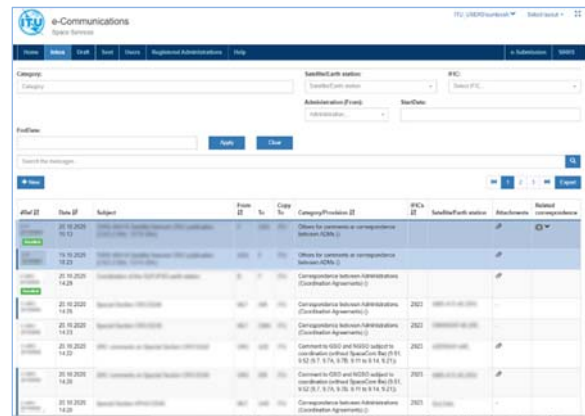

Fig. 2 View of received correspondence

Fig. 3 Table view of Inbox

6 Types of user accounts

All users are required to have a TIES account as a prerequisite in order to hold a role of Administration Manager or User (Instructions for obtaining a TIES account are available at: http://www.itu.int/TIES/).

There are 2 types of user accounts:

1) Administration Manager role: to be held by a member of an Administration having the full set of privileges needed in order to send/receive all types of administrative correspondence to the Bureau and other Administrations , and to manage access rights (i.e. add and/or remove Administration User) of other members of the Administration.

2)   Administration User role: to be held by members of the Administration having the full set of privileges needed in order to send/receive all types of administrative correspondence to the Bureau and other Administrations.

The Bureau is responsible for registering accounts with the Administration Manager role. **To this end, Administrations having not already done so are invited to communicate to the Bureau, via fax number +41 22 730 5785 or email brmail@itu.int, the details of the person entrusted with the Administration Manager role, indicating the person's name, title, email address, telephone number and TIES username**.

7   Conclusion

This paper introduces the online communication platform "e-Communications" for administrative correspondence related to space services. The system allows Administrations and the Bureau to send and receive such correspondence through an online interface instead of via emails or telefaxes.

This online system has been facilitating communications related to space services between Administrations and the Bureau, as well as between Administrations, despite the limitations caused by the COVID-19 outbreak and remote working environments implemented by most Administrations. Therefore, Administrations which have no registered users on the system are urged to nominate one or more Administration Manager(s) to use "e-Communications".

A dedicated email address (spacehelp@itu.int) and a hotline (telephone +41 22 730 6777 from 09h00 to 17h00 hours, Geneva time) are available to help Administrations for any difficulties or questions concerning the use of "e-Communications".

More detailed information for the system are provided in Circular letters CR/447 dated 1 August 2019, CR/450 dated 25 September 2019 and the system website: https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-R/space/e-communications.

The Bureau hopes that the e-Communications system improves communication related to space services between Administrations and the Bureau, while overcoming the limitations of traditional means of communication such as email, telefax and postal mail, and therefore ultimately helps the entire satellite coordination process.

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