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|  | | **Document RAG/56-E** |
| **9 January 2023** |
| **English only** |
| |  | | --- | | TSAG | | LiaiSon statement on the new edition of Supplement 4 to ITU‑T A-series Recommendations "Guidelines for remote participation" |  |  | | --- | | Summary The attached document presents a liaison statement from TSAG on the new edition of Supplement 4 to ITU-T A-series Recommendations "Guidelines for remote participation".  RAG is invited to consider and comment the attached liaison statement. | | | |
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| A black and white logo  Description automatically generated with low confidence | INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION  **TELECOMMUNICATION STANDARDIZATION SECTOR**  STUDY PERIOD 2022-2024 | | | | | TSAG-LS04 |
| TSAG |
| Original: English |
| **Question(s):** | | | RG-WM | | | Geneva, 12-16 December 2022 |
| **LIAISON STATEMENT** | | | | | | |
| **Source:** | | | Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group | | | |
| **Title:** | | | LS on the new edition of Supplement 4 to ITU-T A-series Recommendations "Guidelines for remote participation" [to RAG, TDAG, and all ITU-T study groups] | | | |
| **LIAISON STATEMENT** | | | | | | |
| **For action to:** | | | | - | | |
| **For information to:** | | | | RAG, TDAG, and all ITU-T study groups | | |
| **Approval:** | | | | TSAG meeting (Geneva, 12-16 December 2022) | | |
| **Deadline:** | | | | N/A | | |
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| **Abstract:** | As a result of contributions to TSAG (December 2022), revised Supplement 4 to ITU-T A-series Recommendations, detailing guidance on remote participation, was agreed. This liaison statement raises the attention of all ITU-T study groups on this revised supplement, which is also shared with TDAG and RAG for their information. |

TSAG (December 2022) agreed revised Supplement 4 to ITU-T A-series of Recommendations, *Guidelines for remote participation*. The amendments are based on contributions to TSAG and the output of TSAG’s former ad-hoc group on governance and management of e-meetings (AHG-GME).

ITU-T study groups are invited to consider the use of its guidance in meetings when there is remote participation.

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| **Revised Supplement 4 to ITU-T A-series Recommendations**  **Guidelines for remote participation** |

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| **Summary**  Supplement 4 to the A series of ITU-T Recommendations specifies guidelines on the organization and handling of meetings of ITU-T groups with remote participation. |

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**Revised Supplement 4 to ITU-T A-series Recommendations**

**Guidelines for remote participation**

**1 Scope**

Well-documented rules and procedures, including the legal aspects, are useful for electronic meetings of ITU-T groups. ITU-T groups include, but are not limited to, TSAG, study groups, working parties, Questions or Rapporteur groups, focus groups, Joint Coordination Activities (JCAs), correspondence groups, ad hoc groups and regional groups.

NOTE 1 –The rights of remote participants are not covered in this Supplement.

Meetings of ITU-T groups may be conducted in the following formats:

• physical meetings (face-to-face);

• physical meetings with remote observation (i.e., webcast);

• physical meetings with remote participation;

• e-meetings, also called virtual meetings.

NOTE 2 – The first two formats are not covered by this Supplement.

The same format may not apply to all sessions of a given meeting. This Supplement provides guidelines for physical meetings with remote participation and e-meetings. The meeting format (see clause 6.4) to be used for any given meeting or meeting session is beyond the scope of this Supplement.

**2 References**

[FSTP-AM] Guidelines for accessible meetings (2015).  
<https://www.itu.int/pub/T-TUT-FSTP-2015-AM>

[FSTP.ACC-RemPart] Guidelines for supporting remote participation in meetings for all (2015).  
<https://www.itu.int/pub/T-TUT-FSTP-2015-ACC>

[PP GR] Plenipotentiary Conference, General Rules of conferences, assemblies and meetings of the Union (Rev. Guadalajara, 2010).  
<https://www.itu.int/pub/S-CONF-PLEN-2019>

[PP Res.167] Plenipotentiary Conference, Resolution 167 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022), Strengthening and developing ITU capabilities for fully virtual meetings and physical meetings with remote participation, and the electronic means to advance the work of the Union.  
<<https://www.itu.int/pub/S-CONF-ACTF-2022>>

[WTSA Res.32] World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly, Resolution 32 (Rev. Hammamet, 2016), Strengthening electronic working methods for the work of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector.  
<<https://www.itu.int/pub/T-RES-T.32-2016>>

**3 Definitions**

**3.1 Terms defined elsewhere**

None

**3.2 Terms defined in this Supplement**

This Supplement defines the following terms:

**3.2.1 group**: A study group, TSAG, a working party, a Question, a Rapporteur group, a correspondence group, an ad hoc group, a JCA, a focus group, a regional group or any other type of group created in ITU-T.

NOTE – A workshop or a seminar is not considered a group in the context of this Supplement.

**3.2.2 remote participation**: Participation in a meeting from a separate geographical location, using communication technologies.

**3.2.3 remote participation moderator**: A person in charge of monitoring the remote participation tool, ensuring that remote participants know what is taking place in the meeting and allowing remote participants chances to contribute (in case of a meeting with remote participation).

NOTE – A remote participation moderator is not systematically available for each meeting with remote participation.

**4 Abbreviations and acronyms**

This Supplement uses the following abbreviations and acronyms:

JCA Joint Coordination Activity

TIES Telecommunication Information Exchange Service

TSAG Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group

**5 Conventions**

None

**6 Organization of a meeting with remote participation**

This clause gives guidelines for the group chairman and secretariat who are organizing a meeting with remote participation.

**6.1** When scheduling the time for meetings with remote participation or for e-meetings, consideration should be given to the different time zones of the expected remote participants. Times for the scheduling of meetings are stated in the invitations to such meetings as both UTC and Geneva times. Consideration should also be given to, when practical, scheduling relevant agenda items identified by a remote participant to better accommodate the remote participant's time zone.

**6.1.1** In the case of a physical meeting with remote participation, the timings follow the time zone of the location where the physical meeting is being held.

**6.1.2** In the case of e-meetings, it is recommended to organize them between 1200 and 1500 hours, Geneva time. If the meeting extends over two weeks, there should be no sessions on Saturdays and Sundays. An e-meeting should normally limit itself to sessions of 1 hour and 15 minutes, interspersed with breaks of a minimum of 10 minutes.

**6.1.3** The times of opening and closing of sessions during a meeting should normally be adhered to. Amendments to the timings of meetings and of sessions within meetings are notified to all participants as soon as practically possible after the decision to change the timings has been taken.

**6.2** If remote participation is to be arranged for participation in a group meeting, TSB should be informed at least twelve calendar days before the group meeting, to allow for enough time for logistics arrangements.

**6.3** If the group chairman is expected to participate remotely, the group should identify an acting chairman to ensure meeting continuity should the communication with the chairman fail. In the case of a physical meeting with remote participation, the acting chairman should be identified among physical participants.

**6.4** The collective letter, or calling notice, indicates the format in which the meeting will be conducted:

• physical meetings (face-to-face);

• physical meetings with remote observation (i.e., webcast);

• physical meetings with remote participation (see also clause 7.1): the notification indicates whether, and for which sessions, remote participation can be requested; it also indicates that the decision making is with those physically present in the room;

• e-meetings, also called virtual meetings (see also clause 7.1): the notification indicates that decision making is by consensus.

NOTE – The first two formats are not covered by this Supplement. The meeting format could be based on a variety of criteria, including, but not limited to, the nature of the meeting, whether the meeting is held inside or outside Geneva and technical capabilities available for the meeting.

**6.5** It is recommended that the technologies used for remote participation are those available from the ITU, even for meetings held outside Geneva. Access to remote participation should be available thirty minutes prior to the start of a meeting to allow remote participants to ensure that they can connect.

NOTE – This is not a requirement to have ITU staff present in a support capacity during the meeting.

**6.6** For meetings held outside Geneva with remote participation, it is recommended that hosts be supplied with guidelines in order to minimize possible technical issues related to remote participation. These guidelines (e.g., in the form of a checklist) should be accessible for the host well in advance before the event, and should include all the technical and logistics requirements for providing the remote participation facility.

**7 Guidelines for the group chairman**

This clause gives guidelines for the group chairman to help chairing a meeting with remote participation.

**7.1** All remote participants should mute themselves when utilizing a tool to participate remotely. Remote participants only unmute when the chairman recognizes them. man

**7.2** In the case of physical meetings with remote participation, the group chairman and the remote participation moderator (when available) are encouraged to meet in the room ten minutes before the scheduled start of the meeting to check that the system is working and that the group chairman can display and share documents.

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**7.3** At the beginning of each meeting with remote participation, the group chairman announces that there is a remote facility and state the rules governing remote participation in physical meetings. The group chairman also states the following: "When taking the floor, participants shall announce their name and affiliation. They shall be brief and clear in their interventions by speaking slowly so that those for whom English[[1]](#footnote-1) is not their native language can understand. Remote participants shall mute their microphone when they are not speaking."

**7.4** (deleted)

**7.5** The General Rules of conferences, assemblies and meetings of the Union [PP GR] apply to meetings with remote participation, in particular clauses 20.2 (Order of debates), 20.8 (Limitation of speeches) and 20.9 (Closing the list of speeches).

**7.6** Where supported by the remote participation tool, the chairman or the remote participation moderator is permitted to mute remote participants with bad connections or whose connections introduce too much noise, or may ask them to leave the meeting if the situation cannot be remedied.

**7.7** While a remote participation tool may support video, it is recommended that the group chairman does not use the share video option and turn off their camera to avoid creating bandwidth problems.

**8 Technical guidelines for remote participants**

This clause gives guidelines for remote participants.

**8.1** Remote participants are encouraged to use the remote facility through a landline (when available), or to use a headset (and not the microphone and speaker of their machine). Remote participants should make sure that the loudspeaker on their machine is muted when they call from a landline.

**8.2** It is recommended that remote participants connect at least five minutes before the start of a meeting to avoid disturbance. This will also allow for the group chairman and/or the remote participation moderator to check sound levels.

**8.3** Remote participants are encouraged to announce their name and affiliation clearly before making any intervention (see also clause 7.4).

**8.4** Remote participants should speak from a quiet place without background noise. They should speak slowly and clearly to allow the other participants to compensate for any audio problem. They are encouraged to end their remarks with the phrase "This concludes my intervention."

NOTE – Clauses 8.3 and 8.4 are particularly useful in the case of a meeting with interpretation, or with participants with disabilities or specific needs (see clause 10).

**8.5** If the connection is poor, and if requested by the chairman, remote participants should be prepared to type their question or comment in the chat window of the remote participation tool. Any other comments entered in a chat window are normally not considered as a part of the discussion.

**8.6** During a physical meeting with remote participation, remote participants accept that, in case of technical problems (e.g., lost connection), their participation may be interrupted (see also clause 8.8) while the physical meeting will continue, whereas in case of onsite technical issues (e.g., headphone failure), the chairman may decide to suspend the meeting until the problem is solved.

NOTE – Remote participants recognize that an important part of any meeting are the informal discussions during breaks and lunch where delegates can informally explain, understand, and forge the compromises needed for the consensus processes to work. Remote participants recognize that they will not have this type of interaction with the other participants.

**8.7** Remote participants accept that in case of technical problems (e.g., lost connection) during an e-meeting, the chairman will assess whether enough participants are still connected and will decide whether to continue the meeting (see also clause 8.8) or to suspend the meeting until the problem is solved.

**8.8** Remote participants may report problems to the remote participation moderator (when available) who should determine where the cause lies and should either take direct remedial action or offer advice as appropriate. A remote participant who experiences problems in joining the meeting should preferably discuss with the remote participation moderator in a private chat window so that the main chat window is reserved for discussions of interest to all participants.

**8.9** While a remote participation tool may support video, it is recommended that participants do not use the share video option and turn off their cameras to avoid creating bandwidth problems.

**9 Technical guidelines for in-person participants**

This clause gives guidelines for participants physically present in a meeting with remote participation.

**9.1** In order to increase voice quality, only one microphone should be on (open) at a given time in the meeting room, and physically present participants are asked to speak close to (and in front of) the microphone.

**10 Guidelines for persons with disabilities or with specific needs**

This clause makes reference to guidelines applying to remote participants with hearing or visual impairments, in particular.

**10.1** Guidelines for users with hearing or visual impairments are available from the Joint Coordination Activity on Accessibility and Human Factors (JCA-AHF at <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf>).

**10.2** Requirements and good practice for supporting remote participation in meetings for all are contained in [FSTP.ACC-RemPart]. Guidelines for accessible meetings are contained in clause 8.1.3 of [FSTP-AM].

**10.3** Persons with disabilities can mention their specific needs (for example, captioning) on the registration form. Provision of specific facilities is done in accordance with *resolves* 3 of [PP Res.167].

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1. In case the working language of the meeting is not English, this statement is adapted accordingly. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)