

Tribute to Richard (Dick) Barton

It is with great sadness to announce the passing of Richard (Dick) Barton on 21st April 2021.



Mr Barton's dedication to the broadcasting industry was instrumental to the development of the digital television standards from his participation in the development of the digital coding standards for standard definition television in 1983; to him being called upon by the United Nations International Telecommunications Union to Chair the 1999 preparatory meeting for the World Radio Conference in 2000.

Through his acute knowledge of broadcast engineering issues; to his representation on behalf of Australian television broadcasters in both Australian and international standardisation, radio frequency planning and coordination forums for equitable sharing of radiofrequency spectrum.

He set a great example of the high values for accuracy required in science and technology to ensure standardisation achieved the intended scope and objectives for the end users.

He displayed great foresight in the the Australian proposal for the global HDTV picture format and the intense debates which followed.

He will be remembered internationally as an excellent ambassador for Australia in his ITU activities and a dear friend to many in the broadcasting industries in many countries, particularly in the Asia Pacific region.



Mr Richard Barton pictured with Professor Mark Krivocheev in 2000 at the meetings of ITU Study Group 11

Notable Career Achievements

- 1983 – Australian representative on the Drafting Group developing ITU Recommendation BT.601 (Digital TV) – the first step in the development of digital television standards
- 1988 – Chaired ITU Working Group on BSS feeder link plan
- 1988 – Australian delegate to ITU Second Session WARC for the planning of satellite services using the Geostationary Orbit
- 1992 – Australian delegate to World Administrative Radio Conference for Dealing with Frequency Allocations – attempts to establish global frequency allocations for television broadcasting
- 1992 – Chaired WARC 95 ad-hoc committee on the development of HDTV and digital sound broadcasting – commencement of determining globally agreed HDTV picture formats for television systems i.e. cameras and television receivers
- 1999 – first Australian to Chair an ITU World Radio Conference Preparatory Meeting in preparation for WRC-2000– a significant honour and recognition of Dick's respect representing Australia in ITU.

Tributes from Colleagues

“Dick was a gent of the first order and a fine engineer.”

“Dick was a true gentleman, a quiet expert, and a credit to his profession.”

“He was a person who made his mark and did so forcefully and respectfully.”

“Dick was indeed a stalwart supporter of broadcasting interests but was also respected and well regarded by many non-broadcasters. It was an honour to have known him.”

“As a young engineer working in Australia and later in ITU Geneva, I always looked to Dick as a leading light and inspiration in the international radiocommunications field. I will also miss his personal warmth and sharp sense of humor.”

“We have lost a dear colleague in both the ITU and the IREE where Dick was also a big contributor. Most people who refer to the “Australian Method” are probably unaware of the fact that Dick was the one to introduce the concept in ITU meetings.”

“One of Dick’s greatest achievements was at the CPM-99 Conference when he created the “Australian method”. That is when conference delegates can’t agree on something and are offering competing alternative texts Dick just crossed them both out and moved on.”

“Dick was very good at bringing people together and getting agreements.”

.....and so many more.

In his Memory

“Once you have met him, you never Forgot him.”

Let him rest in peace.
