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|  | INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION**TELECOMMUNICATIONSTANDARDIZATION SECTOR**STUDY PERIOD 2022-2024 | TSAG-TD123 |
| TSAG |
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| **Question(s):** | RG-WM | Geneva, 12-16 December 2022 |
| **TD** |
| **Source:** | Editor, A Suppl. 4 |
| **Title:** | Proposed draft revised Supplement 4 to ITU-T A-series Recommendations "Supplement on guidelines for remote participation" |
| **Contact:** | Olivier DubuissonOrangeFrance | Tel: +33 6 74 95 46 37E-mail: olivier.dubuisson@orange.com  |
| **Abstract:** | This TD is an attempt to retrofit the output of AHG-GME (TD110) into the existing Supplement 4 to ITU-T A-series Recommendations. |

**Action**: This TD is proposed for discussion in RG-WM.

This TD takes [A Suppl.4](https://www.itu.int/ITU-T/recommendations/rec.aspx?rec=12580) as a basis and tries to integrate the output of AHG-GME as found in [TD110](https://www.itu.int/md/T22-TSAG-221212-TD-GEN-0110/en), also taking contribution [C1](https://www.itu.int/md/T22-TSAG-C-0001/en) (United States) and [C11](https://www.itu.int/md/T22-TSAG-C-0011/en) (Canada , Ciena Canada , Ericsson Canada, Inc.) into account.

The following copy of Annex B (of TD110) shows how the clauses listed in [TD110](https://www.itu.int/md/T22-TSAG-221212-TD-GEN-0110/en) have been inserted in [A Suppl.4](https://www.itu.int/ITU-T/recommendations/rec.aspx?rec=12580). Mandatory language (i.e., use of "shall") has been avoided as the target document is a Supplement.

Copy of Annex B of [TD110](https://www.itu.int/md/T22-TSAG-221212-TD-GEN-0110/en) explaining the retrofit

1 General

1.1 The collective letter, or calling notice, for a meeting shall indicate the status of the meeting, whether physical meeting, physical meeting with remote participation, or virtual meeting. For physical meetings with remote participation, the notification shall indicate whether, and for which sessions, remote participation can be requested. Where the meeting is a physical meeting with remote participation, the notification shall also indicate that the decision making is with those physically present in the room. Where the meeting is a virtual meeting, the notification shall indicate that decision making is by consensus. 🡺 Merged in §6.4

1.2 The guidance for the provision of accessibility capabilities is provided in [b-FSTP.ACC-RemPart]. 🡺 See §10.2

1.3 The times of opening and closing of sessions during a meeting shall normally be adhered to. Amendments to the timings of meetings, and of sessions within meetings shall be notified to all participants as soon as practically possible after the decision to change the timings has been taken. 🡺 New §6.1bis

1.4 In a plenary meeting, the Chairman will create an agenda that prioritize the work items that are planned for consent and agreement during the meeting. Work on items not planned for consent or agreement at the meeting, including the presentation of contributions on those topics, may be deferred to subsequent interim meetings. 🡺 New §6.4bis

[C1](https://www.itu.int/md/T22-TSAG-C-0001/en): Clause 1.4 should indicate “consent, determination, approval or agreement”, in the interest of being more fully applicable to the work of the sector. We observe that the text proposed by the AHG was based upon current procedures of a study group that had not used TAP for its approval of Recommendations. 🡺 New §6.4bis.

2 Remote Participation

[C11](https://www.itu.int/md/T22-TSAG-C-0011/en): The following comments are of an editorial nature concerning the titles of the three sections after the "General" section. This is followed by "Remote Participation", "[Physical Meeting with] Remote Participation", and "Virtual Meeting". It would appear that the initial "Remote Participation" section could be subsumed under the "General" section. If the "General" part is numbered as "1", then the following paragraph could be "1.1". This would mean keeping the next section as "Physical Meeting with remote Participation" as "2", followed by section "3" as "Virtual Meeting". The main reason for this would be to keep the same terminology as in the revised PP Resolution 167. 🡺 To be discussed as A Suppl. 4 does not have the same structure and titles.

2.1 Where the Chairman of the meeting is participating remotely in physical meetings, then an acting Chairman shall be identified that is physically present, to ensure meeting continuity should the communication with the Chairman fail. 🡺 Merged in §6.3

2.2 All remote participants shall have the default state of mute when utilising a tool to participate remotely. Remote participants shall only unmute when the Chairman recognises them. Remote participants should take all measures to ensure that their participation is without background noise, so as to be understood and participate in the meeting 🡺 Merged in §6.3 and §8.4

2.3 The requirement for a remote moderator shall be based on the tool that is used to provide remote participation. 🡺 The relationship with the tool being used is unclear. The note on clause 3.2.3 says "A remote participation moderator is not systematically available for each meeting with remote participation.". Moreover, expression "remote participation moderator" is followed by "(when available)" in §7.2 and §8.8.

2.4 During a meeting with remote participants, where remote participants encounter technical problems (e.g., lost connection), their participation may be discontinued without interruption to the physical meeting) The Chairman shall mute, or request muting of, remote participants with bad connections or whose connections introduce too much noise, or ask them to leave the meeting if unable to mute. 🡺 See §7.6 and §8.6

2.5 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 for delegates with slow connections. 🡺 New §7.7 and §8.9

2.6 At the start of every meeting, the Chairman shall state the following “that participants when taking the floor for the first time shall announce their name, that they be brief and clear in their interventions by speaking slowly so that those for whom English is not their native language can understand. Remote participants shall mute their microphone when they are not speaking”. 🡺 See §7.3, §7.4

[*2.7 The use of question e-mail reflectors and the informal FTP area (IFA) should be limited to the ways in which the tools are used during a physical meeting. Specifically, for reporting on tasks that the Rapporteur has asked to be carried out.*] 🡺 Not retained (otherwise could be a new §8.10)

[*2.8 In order to ensure inclusion within the debate, discussions about the substance of a document shall always occur during the actual live meeting, not on the e-mail reflector. Discussion on the e-mail reflector may exclude participants because of the variance of the time zones.* 🡺 Not retained (otherwise could be a new §8.11)

*2.9 Participants should not make new proposals (perhaps inspired by a previous day’s discussion) via the e-mail reflector or IFA. Such inputs will be considered as late contributions, that may have bypassed required national processes, and will not be considered by the meeting.*] 🡺 Not retained (otherwise could be a new §8.12)

3 [*Physical meeting with*] remote participation 🡺 Section title not retained

3.1 The Chairman of a physical meeting with remote participation shall announce that there is such participation, and state the rules governing remote participation in physical meeting 🡺 See §7.3

3.2 Where a physical meeting has remote participation, then the timings of the meeting, including remote participation, shall follow the time zones of the location where the physical meeting is being held. 🡺 See §6.1

3.3 In physical meetings where remote participation is occurring, then the Chairman, or a representative, and the remote participation moderator, if required, should be in the physical room ten minutes before the scheduled start of the meeting to check that the system is working and that documents can be displayed and shared 🡺 See §7.2

3.4 Access to remote participation should be available 30 minutes prior to the start of a meeting to allow remote participants to ensure that they can connect. Participants participating remotely in a physical meeting or in a virtual meeting are recommended to connect at least 5 minutes prior to the start of a meeting to ensure connectivity. 🡺 See §6.5 and §8.2

3.5 For physical meetings with remote participation, when the physical presence is outside of Geneva, then remote participation shall be possible, to the greatest extent practicable through platforms supported by the ITU in Geneva. 🡺 See §6.5

[C1](https://www.itu.int/md/T22-TSAG-C-0001/en): In clause 3.5, it should be clarified that “platforms supported by the ITU in Geneva” is a reference to the use of the same tools as those when the meeting is based in Geneva, and not a requirement to have ITU staff present in a support capacity during the meeting. 🡺 See §6.5, note

4 Virtual meeting

4.1 Where the meeting is a virtual meeting, the timings of the meeting [*is recommended/should normally*] only occur between 1200 and 1500 hours, Geneva time. Times for the scheduling of meetings shall be stated in the invitations to such meetings as both UTC and in Geneva times. 🡺 See §6.1, new §6.1.1, new §6.1.2

4.2 In a virtual meeting that extends over two weeks, it is expected that all delegates are at home on the weekend, and therefore there shall be no working over the weekend. 🡺 New §6.1.2

[C1](https://www.itu.int/md/T22-TSAG-C-0001/en): Relative to clause 4.2, it is observed that the days of the week that constitute a “weekend” vary with cultures. Greater specificity could improve the clarity. 🡺 New §6.1.2

4.3 A virtual meeting should normally limit itself to sessions of 1 hour 15 minutes, interspersed with breaks of a minimum of 10 minutes. 🡺 New §6.1.2

4.4 Remote participants whose quality of voice communication is such that they cannot be understood should be prepared to provide their comments and questions by text through the remote participation tool, in particular if so requested by the Chairman of the meeting. Any other comments entered in a chat window are not considered as a part of the discussion. 🡺 See §8.5

4.5 Where technical issues impact a number of [*remote*] participants, then the Chairman shall decide whether to continue the meeting, or to suspend it until a solution can be found. 🡺 See §8.6 and §8.7

[C1](https://www.itu.int/md/T22-TSAG-C-0001/en): Although not mentioned previously relative to clause 4.5, the [remote] text should be removed because technical issues, e.g., microphone outages in a conference room, could impact those physically present as well as those participating remotely. 🡺 See §8.6

Reference in Bibliography:

[b-ITU-T FSTP.ACC-RemPart] Technical Paper ITU-T FSTP.ACC-RemPart (2015), *Guidelines for supporting remote participation in meetings for all*. 🡺 See §2

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| **Revised Supplement 4 to ITU-T A-series Recommendations****Supplement on 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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| **History**

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| Edition | Recommendation | Approval | Study Group | Unique ID[[1]](#footnote-1)\* |
| 1.0 | ITU-T A Suppl. 4 | 2015-06-05 | TSAG | [11.1002/1000/12580](http://handle.itu.int/11.1002/1000/12580) |
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**Revised Supplement 4 to ITU-T A-series Recommendations**

**Supplement on 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, regional groups.

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 (active) remote participation;

 NOTE – The case of physical meetings with (active) remote participation where remote participants would have the same rights as physical participants is not covered by this Supplement.

• e-meetings, also called virtual meetings.

The same format may not apply to all sessions of a given meeting. This Supplement provides guidelines for physical meetings with active 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.

NOTE – Depending on the group meeting, remote participation may be active or in an observing capacity (in case of webcast), but only active remote participation is considered in this Supplement.

**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 active 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 zones of the location where the physical meeting is being held.

**6.1.2** In the case of virtual meetings, it is recommended to organize them between 1200 and 1500 hours, Geneva time. If the meeting extends over two weeks, it is expected that all delegates are at home on Saturdays and Sundays, and therefore there should be no working on those days. A virtual meeting should normally limit itself to sessions of 1 hour and 15 minutes, interspersed with breaks of a minimum of 10 minutes.

**6.1bis** 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 is 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 (active) remote participation (see also clause 7.1): the notification also 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 also 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.

**6.4bis** For a plenary meeting, the chairman creates an agenda that prioritizes the work items that are planned for consent, determination, approval or agreement during the meeting. Work on other items, including the presentation of contributions on those topics, may be deferred to subsequent interim meetings.**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 (active) 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 have the default state of mute when utilizing a tool to participate remotely. Remote participants only unmute when the chairman recognises 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. They shall be brief and clear in their interventions by speaking slowly so that those for whom English 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 for delegates with slow connections.

**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 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 for delegates with slow connections.

**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. \* To access the Recommendation, type the URL http://handle.itu.int/ in the address field of your web browser, followed by the Recommendation's unique ID. For example, [http://handle.itu.int/11.1002/1000/
11830-en](http://handle.itu.int/11.1002/1000/11830-en). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)