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|  | INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION  **TELECOMMUNICATION STANDARDIZATION SECTOR**  STUDY PERIOD 2022-2024 | | | | TSAG-TD394 |
| TSAG |
| Original: English |
| **Question(s):** | | | RG-WM | | Geneva, 22-26 January 2024 |
| **TD** | | | | | |
| **Source:** | | | Rapporteur, TSAG RG-WM | | |
| **Title:** | | | Justification to propose the deletion of Recommendations ITU-T A.4 and A.6 | | |
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| **Abstract:** | This TD provides the explanatory summary about the reasons for the deletion of Recommendations ITU-T A.4 and ITU-T A.6, as agreed at the RG-WM rapporteur group meeting on 5 Sep 2023 and confirmed at the meeting on 5 Dec 2023. This summary could be used in the TSB Circular to be circulated after TSAG agreement on the deletion of these Recommendations. |

**Action**: TSAG is invited to agree this document.

According to [WTSA Resolution 1](https://www.itu.int/pub/T-RES/publications.aspx?lang=en&parent=T-RES-T.1-2022):

**9.8.2.1** At a study group meeting it may be agreed to delete a Recommendation, either because it has been superseded by another Recommendation or because it has become obsolete. This agreement shall be unopposed by the Member States and any Sector Members acting on behalf of Member States under No. 239 of the Convention. Information about this agreement, including an explanatory summary about the reasons for the deletion, shall be provided by a circular. If no objection to the deletion is received within three months, the deletion will come into force. In the case of objection, the matter shall be referred back to the study group.

Since at least year 2014, TSAG has been discussing the different use cases for Recommendations ITU-T A.4 (2012) and ITU-T A.6 (2012), and RG-WM came to the following conclusions:

1. There is no reason to keep a difference between Rec. ITU T A.4 dedicated to "forums and consortia", and Rec. ITU-T A.6 dedicated to "national or regional SDOs".

NOTE – For some organization, it is not immediate to assess whether it is a national or regional organization (relevant to Rec. ITU-T A.6), or a forum or consortium (relevant to Rec. ITU-T A.4). This distinction is unnecessary as it does not change anything to the relationship between the study group and the other organization.

1. When an external organization needs to be qualified (for normative references as per ITU-T A.5, incorporation of texts as per ITU-T A.25, or recognized communication process as per ITU‑T A.4 or ITU-T A.6), it has to be qualified according to ITU-T A.5, Annex A. Recommendation [ITU-T A.5](https://itu.int/ITU-T/A.5) has been recently updated, and the accuracy and safety of its process is recognized by TSAG and by all ITU‑T study groups.

NOTE – The A.4 and A.6 qualification processes implied an evaluation of the intellectual property rights (IPR) policy of the candidate organization. Some of these organizations do not develop standards, therefore such an assessment was not appropriate.

1. Incorporation (or transposition) of texts from another organization (covered in ITU-T A.6 but not in ITU‑T A.4) now relies on ITU-T A.25 (and on ITU-T A.5 for the qualification of the organization). Recommendation [ITU-T A.25](https://itu.int/ITU-T/A.5) has been recently updated, and the accuracy and safety of its process is recognized by TSAG and by all ITU‑T study groups.
2. The communication process between an ITU-T study group and an external organization (described in Recommendations ITU-T A.4 and A.6) is described in [Supplement 5 to the ITU-T A-series of Recommendations](https://www.itu.int/itu-t/recommendations/rec.aspx?rec=13023) "Guidelines for collaboration and exchange of information with other organizations".

In summary, this table shows that all topics covered in Recommendations ITU-T A.4 and A.6 are covered by a more recent Recommendation (or Supplement):

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| **Topic** | **Covered (2012) in** | **Now covered in** |
| Qualification of an external organization | A.4 (Annex A) A.6 (Annex A) | A.5 (Annex B) (2022) |
| Formal communication process (for information and document exchange) | A.4 (clause 2, 2nd para) A.6 (clause 2, 2nd para) | A Supp.5 (clauses 7.3 and I.2) (2024) |
| Incorporation of texts by ITU-T (including copyright arrangements) | A.4 (clause 2.4 on copyright arrangements) A.6 (clause 2.2.2) | A.25 (2022) |
| Incorporation of texts by the other organization (including copyright arrangements) | A.4 (clause 2.4 on copyright arrangements) A.6 (clause 2.2.1) | A.25 (2022) |

*Editor's note: The yellow-highlighting will be removed if the revision to Supplement 5 to the A-series of Recommendations is agreed by TSAG at its meeting on 22-26 January 2024.*

Regarding the history of organizations already qualified according to Recommendations ITU-T A.4 or ITU-T A.6, TSAG agreed that, once these Recommendations are effectively deleted:

1. Organizations currently A.4-qualified will be moved to the [archived list of qualified organizations](https://www.itu.int/net4/ITU-T/lists/sdo_archive.aspx). If needed, these organizations can be proposed for A.5-qualification by a study group if there is a need to make a normative reference to, or to incorporate text from, a specification of the external organization.  
   NOTE – In [TD 181 [2013-2016]](https://www.itu.int/md/T13-TSAG-140617-TD-GEN-0181/en), TSB listed the reason why A.4-qualified only organizations requested their qualification and in almost all cases, the objective was to establish a formal communication process, now covered by [Supplement 5 to the ITU-T A-series of Recommendations](https://www.itu.int/itu-t/recommendations/rec.aspx?rec=13023).
2. Organizations currently A.6-qualified are also A.5-qualified, therefore they will stay on the [list of qualified organizations](https://www.itu.int/net4/ITU-T/lists/sdo.aspx) as organizations.

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