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| **TD****(Ref.:** [**SG2-LS3**](https://www.itu.int/ifa/t/2025/ls/sg2/sp18-sg2-oLS-00003.docx)**)** |
| **Source:** | ITU-T Study Group 2 |
| **Title:** | LS/i/r on Proposal for a Joint Working Party on OTT Definitions (reply to SG3-LS35) [from ITU-T SG2] |
| **LIAISON STATEMENT** |
| **For action to:** | ITU-T Study Group 3  |
| **For information to:** | Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group (TSAG) |
| **Approval:** | ITU-T Study Group 2 meeting (Geneva, 14 February 2025) |
| **Deadline:** | - |
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| **Abstract:** | This LS/o/r shares ITU-T Study Group 2 (SG2) concerns with the proposed joint working party (JWP) on OTT definitions, and, rather than a JWP, instead proposes a virtual joint meeting between Q3/2 and Q9/3.  |

ITU-T Study Group 2 (SG2) thanks ITU-T Study Group 3 (SG3) for its proposal to establish a joint working party (JWP) between our two study groups on OTT definitions. We fully appreciate SG3’s increasing interest in this important topic. However, SG2 considers the proposed JWP substantively and procedurally infeasible, for the following reasons:

* The proposed purpose and specific tasks fall squarely within the mandate of SG2. In particular, at WTSA-24, Q3/2 has been newly tasked to “establish the principles of service provision by OTT applications, their operational requirements, capabilities, and impact on other services.” According to clause 2.1.5 of Rec. ITU-T A.1, JWPs should only be created “exceptionally.” (Moreover, according to clause 2.1.4, “proliferation of working parties, sub-working parties or any other subgroups should be avoided.”) Therefore, there is currently no need for this JWP; rather, interested SG3 experts are already able to participate directly in the ongoing work in SG2 (and vice versa).
* Likewise, pursuant to WTSA Resolution 2 (Rev. New Delhi, 2024), SG2 is the lead study group on telecommunication/ICT service definition. A JWP on OTT definitions with SG3 (rather than SG2) as the lead study group, as proposed, contradicts WTSA Resolution 2 and would only introduce unnecessary confusion regarding the division of responsibilities on this topic.
* Relatedly, in terms of authority, this proposal suggests a parallel approval process, whereby SG2 and SG3 would each consider the JWP outputs at their respective plenaries. This approach risks the adoption of competing outcomes (*e.g*., what happens if SG2 agrees and SG3 does not, or vice versa?), which would undermine the collaborative goal of the proposal.
* Regarding the proposed time limit, it would be impossible for a JWP to conclude its work by December 2025, given the timing of anticipated upcoming SG2 and SG3 meetings. To this point, we note that seven months have already passed since SG3 made its original proposal. Given the cadence of ITU-T Study Group meetings, it would likely take quite some time to jointly finalize the procedural/bureaucratic details of any proposed JWP, time that could be better spent on discussing the issues at hand (*e.g*., by attending each other’s existing meetings).
* Regarding the proposed composition, clause 2.1.5 of ITU-T Rec. A.1 maintains: “The contributions used as a basis for discussion in the joint working party shall be sent exclusively to those registered in the joint working party.” Therefore, a JWP could have unintended negative consequences, in that it may inadvertently limit the participation of a broad range of SG2 and SG3 experts, contrary to the goals of the proposal.

In line with the spirit of the proposal, however, clause 2.1.5 of ITU-T Rec. A.1 recognizes that “two or more study groups may decide to progress work on topics of common interest through joint meetings of their rapporteur groups.”

Therefore, **instead of a JWP, SG2 proposes a virtual joint meeting between Q3/2 and Q9/3** (the relevant Questions), which can more efficiently and effectively achieve the same underlying goals motivating the original proposal.

Should SG3 agree to this alternative approach at its next meeting (8-17 April 2025), the SG Chairs, in consultation with their respective management teams and TSB Secretariats, could coordinate to identify a mutually agreeable date, which could then be announced via the SG2 and SG3 mailing lists.

This initial joint meeting could provide SG2 and SG3 experts the opportunity to exchange information on relevant work items within each Study Group, identify areas of common interest, and discuss ways to strengthen collaboration moving forward (*e.g.*, possible additional joint meetings, if needed).

On a related point, we note that Q3/2 has agreed a new work item to revise Rec. ITU-T E.100 on terms and definitions (please refer to SG2-LS1), to include OTT service definition. We trust that this new work item will provide further assurance to SG3 of SG2’s commitment to advancing work in this area.

We look forward to your positive reply, and to continued cooperation and coordination throughout the 2025-2028 Study Period.

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