

International Telecommunication Union

ITU-R
Radiocommunication Sector of ITU

Recommendation ITU-R V.2130-0
(09/2019)

**Guidelines for the preparation of
terms and definitions**

V Series
Vocabulary and related subjects

Foreword

The role of the Radiocommunication Sector is to ensure the rational, equitable, efficient and economical use of the radio-frequency spectrum by all radiocommunication services, including satellite services, and carry out studies without limit of frequency range on the basis of which Recommendations are adopted.

The regulatory and policy functions of the Radiocommunication Sector are performed by World and Regional Radiocommunication Conferences and Radiocommunication Assemblies supported by Study Groups.

Policy on Intellectual Property Right (IPR)

ITU-R policy on IPR is described in the Common Patent Policy for ITU-T/ITU-R/ISO/IEC referenced in Resolution ITU-R 1. Forms to be used for the submission of patent statements and licensing declarations by patent holders are available from <http://www.itu.int/ITU-R/go/patents/en> where the Guidelines for Implementation of the Common Patent Policy for ITU-T/ITU-R/ISO/IEC and the ITU-R patent information database can also be found.

Series of ITU-R Recommendations

(Also available online at <http://www.itu.int/publ/R-REC/en>)

| Series | Title |
|------------|--|
| BO | Satellite delivery |
| BR | Recording for production, archival and play-out; film for television |
| BS | Broadcasting service (sound) |
| BT | Broadcasting service (television) |
| F | Fixed service |
| M | Mobile, radiodetermination, amateur and related satellite services |
| P | Radiowave propagation |
| RA | Radio astronomy |
| RS | Remote sensing systems |
| S | Fixed-satellite service |
| SA | Space applications and meteorology |
| SF | Frequency sharing and coordination between fixed-satellite and fixed service systems |
| SM | Spectrum management |
| SNG | Satellite news gathering |
| TF | Time signals and frequency standards emissions |
| V | Vocabulary and related subjects |

Note: This ITU-R Recommendation was approved in English under the procedure detailed in Resolution ITU-R 1.

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RECOMMENDATION ITU-R V.2130-0

Guidelines for the preparation of terms and definitions**Scope**

This Recommendation provides Guidelines for the preparation of terms and definitions.

Keywords

Terms and definitions

Related ITU Recommendations

Recommendation ITU-R V.573-6 – Radiocommunication vocabulary

The ITU Radiocommunication Assembly,

recognizing

- a) the adoption by the Plenipotentiary Conference of Resolution 154 (Rev. Dubai, 2018), on use of the six official languages of the Union on an equal footing, which instructed the Council and the General Secretariat on how to achieve the equal treatment of the six languages;
- b) the decisions by the ITU Council centralizing the editing functions for languages in the General Secretariat (Conferences and Publications Department), calling upon the Sectors to provide the final texts in English only (this applies also to terms and definitions);
- c) Resolution 1386, adopted by the Council at its 2017 session, on the ITU Coordination Committee for Terminology (ITU CCT) that consists of ITU-R Coordination Committee for Vocabulary and ITU-T Standardization Committee for Vocabulary functioning in accordance with relevant resolutions of the ITU Radiocommunication Assembly and World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly, and representatives of ITU-D, in close collaboration with the secretariat,

considering

- a) that the individual Radiocommunication Study Groups have a responsibility for the proposal of terms and definitions in English language;
- b) that there is sometimes a wide diversity of approach in the implementation of these procedures;
- c) that there is a need for conformity in their implementation;
- d) that there are definitions contained in the Annexes to the ITU Constitution and Convention and in the Administrative Regulations,

recommends

that, when proposing terms and definitions, the Radiocommunication Study Groups should use the guidelines given in the Annex hereto,

invites

the ITU General Secretariat to review these guidelines and provide any useful comments to ITU CCT for implementation by the Study Groups.

Annex

Guidelines for the preparation of terms and definitions

1 Introduction

A considerable amount of time is spent by study groups on terminology and definitions but the results can be duplicative and of inconsistent quality. Greater consistency is needed in the way definitions are drafted. This Annex provides guidance to help study groups to adopt a consistent approach to terminology and definitions.

2 Terms and definitions

A term is simply a word, or group of words that is used to express a specific concept. A definition is a clear, concise and accurate statement that expresses the precise meaning of a term or concept.

3 Best practices for writing definitions within ITU-R Recommendations

3.1 Use of existing terminology

Developers of Recommendations spend a great amount of time on terminology development. While it is important that definitions accurately capture the subject concept or term, experience has shown that terminology discussions frequently consume significant technical meeting time. One way to reduce unnecessary discussion is to use already-defined terms.

New terms should not be developed where an acceptable definition already exists. Also, already-existing terms should not be redefined. Existing definitions should be consulted before any new definition is developed to check if the term/concept has already been defined. Only if no satisfactory definition exists should development of a new definition be considered. When defining a new term/concept, the name used for the term should not duplicate the name used for an already-defined term/concept.

ITU provides an online database, "ITU Terms and Definitions"¹, to assist in discovering existing terms and definitions in ITU-R and ITU-T Recommendations.

3.2 Structure

A formal definition is a concise, logical statement that comprises three essential elements:

- i) the term (word or phrase) to be defined;
- ii) the class of object or concept to which the term belongs; and
- iii) the characteristics that distinguish it from all others of its class.

An example of a complete definition is:

| | | |
|-------------------------------|---|--|
| spectrum redeployment: | a combination of administrative, financial and technical measures | aimed at completely or partially removing users or equipment of the existing frequency assignments from a particular frequency band. |
| (The term) | (The class of object) | (The distinguishing characteristics) |

¹ <http://www.itu.int/ITU-R/go/terminology-database>.

3.3 Conciseness

Definitions should be concise and should include only the necessary information. To avoid complexity and confusion, each definition should describe only one concept.

Definitions should contain only information that makes the concept unique and should not contain detailed explanations or extraneous material. Any additional descriptive information or other supplementary (i.e. non-normative, non-essential) information that is necessary to differentiate the concept from other concepts may be included as notes, figures or equations.

Figures, equations and tables should not replace the verbal representation of the defined term but may form useful supplementary information.

NOTE – It is recognized that, for mathematical terms, equations may be the most effective and efficient way of defining the term.

3.4 Clarity and accuracy

Definitions must be accurate, clear and positive. Inaccurate and negative definitions are not acceptable. Nor should definitions be circular or include, or paraphrase, the term being defined. The language used in a definition must either be common English language terms or defined elsewhere in the text.

3.5 Independence

Definitions must be able to stand alone. In other words, the meaning should be understandable without requiring reference to other parts of the Recommendation. This is particularly important since the terms and definitions are being extracted for use by delegates, and consumers on the web.

3.6 Grammatical form

The form of the definition should also be the same part of speech² as the term or concept being defined. For example, if the term being defined is a noun, the definition should not be expressed as a verb or other part of speech.

3.7 Illustrations within definitions

While figures or equations can assist with the understanding of the meaning of a term, they should not form the essence of the definition. In other words, they are best applied as supplemental, informative material to enhance the presentation of the concepts involved. In general, they should not replace the textual representation of the basic definition.

3.8 Symbols and abbreviations

Where abbreviations are used within a definition, an explanation or expansion of those abbreviations must be included. Standard symbols for measurement units should not be defined.

3.9 Protocol elements

Formal or detailed descriptions of protocol elements should be avoided within the “Definitions” clause; these are best handled within the main body of the Recommendation (clause 6 or later).

3.10 Variables and special notations catalogued within definitions

Definitions should be limited to concepts related to terms and not the method of representing information within a Recommendation. The latter group is more appropriately documented within clause 5, “Conventions”.

² "parts of speech" are verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, etc.

3.11 Undefined terms

Where a term is used but not defined (either explicitly or by reference), it must be assumed that common English language usage (i.e. the dictionary definition) of the term is intended. Recognized English language dictionaries include: The Concise Oxford Dictionary, The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, The Collins Concise English Dictionary, Webster's New World College Dictionary or Chambers Concise Dictionary.
