



Radiocommunication Bureau
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Administrative Circular
CACE/539

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**To Administrations of Member States of the ITU, Radiocommunication
Sector Members, ITU-R Associates participating in the work of
Radiocommunication Study Group 7 and ITU-R Academia**

Subject: Questionnaire on a draft revision of Recommendation ITU-R TF.460-6,
Standard-frequency and time-signal emissions

The Radiocommunication Study Group 7 meeting, held on 7 and 15 September 2009, discussed a draft revision of Recommendation ITU-R TF.460-6 "Standard-frequency and time-signal emissions". Following the discussion that took place at that Study Group 7 and the previous meeting of Working Party 7A it appeared that there were conflicting views on this particular Recommendation as some administrations and international organizations were in favour of eliminating the procedure of introducing leap seconds for adjustment of UTC while other administrations were opposed to this elimination. The Study Group 7 meeting concluded that the Study Group 7 Chairman would prepare and send to the ITU Member States information concerning the proposed draft revision of Recommendation ITU-R TF.460-6 and a Questionnaire asking views of administrations on this matter to be discussed at the next SG 7 meeting in October 2010.

From the responses to the Questionnaire sent by the Director of the Bureau it appeared that 8 Administrations were in favour of the revision of Recommendation ITU-R TF.460-6 while 3 were against it. Since no consensus could be reached at the SG 7 meeting in October 2010, SG 7 decided to send the Recommendation to the Radiocommunications Assembly, as well as sending a new circular letter reminding Administrations to respond to the questionnaire on this issue.

The Attachment contains a second Questionnaire on the draft revision of Recommendation ITU-R TF.460-6 prepared by the Study Group 7 Chairman, Mr. V. Meens, and addressed to the ITU Member States.

Therefore, Member States are kindly invited to respond to the attached Questionnaire and return it to the BR Secretariat (brsgd@itu.int) before 19 September 2011.

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Director, Radiocommunication Bureau

Attachment: 2nd Questionnaire on a draft revision of Recommendation ITU-R TF.460-6
(leap seconds issue)

Distribution:

- Administrations of Member States and Radiocommunication Sector Members
- ITU-R Associates participating in the work of Study Group 7
- ITU-R Academia
- Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Radiocommunication Study Groups and Special Committee on Regulatory/Procedural Matters
- Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of the Conference Preparatory Meeting
- Members of the Radio Regulations Board
- Secretary-General of the ITU, Director of the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau, Director of the Telecommunication Development Bureau

Attachment

Questionnaire on a draft revision of Recommendation ITU-R TF.460-6 (leap seconds issue)

The issue in the draft revision of Recommendation ITU-R TF.460-6 is whether or not to define UTC as a continuous un-interrupted time scale by eliminating the provision for leap seconds. This question was first posed in 1999 and WP 7A has been working on this issue since then. A report of the WP 7A activities on this question can be found in Document [7A/19](#). The major technical consequence of eliminating leap seconds would be a gradual divergence between UT1 and UTC on the order of about 1 second a year.

Since no consensus was reached at the SG 7 meeting, SG 7 decided to send the revision of Recommendation ITU-R TF.460-6 to the Radiocommunications Assembly together with a report describing the difficulties encountered by Study Group 7 regarding the revision of the Recommendation.

In order to be able to take a decision on the future of this Recommendation at the Radiocommunication Assembly 2012, feedback from administrations on the use of leap second or its proposed elimination is required. Therefore it is proposed that the Member States kindly answer the questions below.

Do you support maintaining the current arrangement of linking UT1 and UTC (to provide an approximate celestial time reference by the use of a stepped atomic time scale)?	YES - NO
Would you support the revision of Recommendation ITU-R TF.460-6 to provide a continuous time scale? (In any case could you explain your reasons?)	YES - NO