

United States of America

ON FREE ONLINE ACCESS TO CERTAIN ITU-R DOCUMENTS

1 Introduction

At the directive of Council (Document C09/63), ITU-R Recommendations continue to be freely available online to TIES users, as a trial initiated in 2009 continues. This free online availability is to continue through at least PP-10. A decision on free access to the Basic Instruments of the Union, including the Radio Regulations, has been slated for PP-10, when the Secretariat is due to report on the financial impact of free online access.

2 United States View

The United States commends the staff of the BR for implementing the current trial. Free availability of ITU-R Recommendations greatly eases the efforts of Member States and Sector Members to contribute to the work of the Union. This free availability should be made permanent.

The United States encourages the Director of the BR to expand free online access to at least the Radio Regulations, the Basic Instrument of the Union most clearly within the BR's purview. Access to the Radio Regulations should be provided outside the TIES system, directly to the general public.

The Radio Regulations impose treaty-level obligations on Member States and the individual spectrum users they authorize. Voluntary compliance with the Radio Regulations is critical to their effectiveness, and compliance is greatly aided by free availability. The free availability of the Radio Regulations would allow a greater number of interested parties to knowledgeably petition the governments of Member States as they consider revising the Regulations.

The United States commends the Secretariat's efforts to assess the financial impact of free online access to ITU materials. The Secretariat should consider the substantial benefits of free availability in its assessment. The United States suggests that ITU print publications continue to retain value. The portability, presentation, and ease of use of, for example, the print edition of the 2008 Radio Regulations, have value that cannot be replicated online and would not be diminished by free online access to the content. Further, the ITU can, by appropriately advising online readers, retain its intellectual property rights in its materials, prohibiting further distribution by those who download freely available ITU documents.

3 Proposal

The United States proposes that the ITU continue to provide free online availability of ITU-R Recommendations to TIES users and establish free availability to the Radio Regulations to the general public. Such free availability to treaty instruments will promote Member State, Sector Member, and user-level awareness of ITU-R Recommendations, as well as obligations imposed by the Radio Regulations. Such awareness will promote compliance with ITU instruments and allow free contribution to the work of the Union.

The United States further proposes that ITU continue to publish the Radio Regulations and various ITU-R Recommendations in print form, in either stand-alone volumes or as portions of topic-focused works, as appropriate. Such publications will continue to have value for their portability, presentation, and ease of use, regardless of whether some of their contents are freely available online.
