

Recommendation A.4

COMMUNICATION PROCESS BETWEEN ITU-T AND FORUMS AND CONSORTIA

(Geneva, 1996)

1 Introduction

The purposes of the International Telecommunication Union are contained in Article 1 of the Constitution (Geneva, 1992). These include the aim "to promote, at the international level, the adoption of a broader approach to the issues of telecommunications in the global information economy and society, by cooperating with other world and regional intergovernmental organizations, and those non-governmental organizations concerned with telecommunications".

Also noted are the challenges faced by the Union in achieving its purposes in the changing telecommunication environment, both in the period covered by the Strategic Plan for the Union for 1995-1999 and in the following period, as stated in Resolution 1 (Plenipotentiary Conference, Kyoto, 1994). The Annex to Resolution 1 elaborates the Strategic Plan. For the Standardization Sector, its strategy includes recognition of the growing influence of industry forums, and a specific goal to develop appropriate agreements and cooperative relationships with other organizations including forums. Among the priorities identified for the Sector is the objective "to continue to cooperate with other global and regional standardization organizations and industry forums to harmonize the development and implementation of global telecommunication standards".

In order to facilitate the development of cooperative relationships with forums, and to encourage information exchange, it is deemed necessary to provide guidance on the means of communication. In particular, it is of benefit to establish procedures for use when structuring the communications process between ITU-T and forums and consortia.

The WTSC decides that the following procedures be applied.

2 Procedures

Study Group Chairmen are encouraged to engage in two-way communications, where appropriate, with representatives of forums/consortia, and to invite presentation to their Study Groups of work of the forums/consortia, as identified by the Study Group.

In addition, procedures have been introduced for a formal communication process between the ITU-T (or one or more of the Study Groups) and forums/consortia that qualify according to the criteria in Annex A. The communication process permits document exchange between the ITU-T and qualified forums/consortia.

2.1 Establishment of the communication process

Establishment of a communication process with a forum/consortium should be considered on a case-by-case basis, and should be evaluated with due care and diligence using the set of criteria in Annex A. Normally, the process is established at the Study Group level. In the case of groups associated with one or more Study Groups, the evaluation and decision to proceed should be carried out by the Lead Study Group. To avoid multiple requests to a forum/consortium for information pertaining to the criteria in Annex A, and to facilitate evaluation by Study Groups, the Director of the TSB should make the request to the forum/consortium and subsequently make a preliminary analysis of the response.

2.1.1 Communication process initiated by an ITU-T Study Group

If a Study Group considers that it is beneficial to establish a communication process with a forum/consortium, the Study Group should first check the Director's action list (see 2.3) and obtain the Director's analysis. The Study Group shall review the analysis and make a decision whether or not to communicate with the forum/consortium. Any areas of concern should be immediately shared with other interested Study Group Chairmen and the Director. If the Study Group approves, the Study Group Chairman shall initiate the communication process. The Study Group Chairman should facilitate the process as described in 2.2.

2.1.2 Communication process initiated by a forum/consortium

If a forum/consortium wishes to establish a communication process with a Study Group, that Study Group should first check the Director's action list (see 2.3) and obtain the Director's analysis. The Study Group shall review the analysis and make a decision whether or not to communicate with the forum/consortium. Any areas of concern should be immediately shared with other interested Study Group Chairmen and the Director. If the Study Group approves, the communication process can be established. The Study Group Chairman should facilitate the process as described in 2.2.

If a forum/consortium contacts the Director of the TSB to establish a communication process with the ITU-T, the Director should first determine whether it is appropriate for

- a) the ITU-T (for administrative aspects), or
- b) one or more Study Groups (for topics relating to their work).

In case a), the Director evaluates the forum/consortium according to the criteria in Annex A. If the Director approves, he shall initiate the communication process and inform the TSAG and all Study Groups.

In case b), the Director performs a preliminary analysis and transmits it to the affected Study Group(s) which shall proceed as outlined in the first paragraph of 2.1.2. If multiple Study Groups are involved, the decision of each Study Group should be communicated to the others, to the TSAG and to the Director of the TSB.

2.2 Implementation of the communication process

2.2.1 Documents sent to qualified forums/consortia

The decision to send documentation (including requests for documentation) to a qualified forum/consortium should be initiated by a Study Group Chairman with the agreement of the Study Group. The documentation is sent to the forum/consortium by the TSB.

2.2.2 Documents received from qualified forums/consortia

Documents submitted to the ITU-T by qualified forums/consortia should conform to criterion 8 in Annex A. These documents are not issued as Contributions. They are issued by the Study Group concerned as Temporary Documents with a reference to the originating forum/consortium.

2.3 Director's action list

The Director of the TSB is requested to establish and maintain an up-to-date action list of the forums/consortia which are being evaluated and/or have been accepted for the communication process, including identification of the Study Groups concerned. To assist the other Study Groups in making similar decisions, this action list should be made widely available, e.g., online in ITUDOC.

Annex A

Qualifying criteria for forums/consortia communication process

NOTE – An Administration may require that "communications" to the ITU-T or its Study Groups, from a forum/consortium within that Administration's jurisdiction follow its established national procedures.

Forum/consortium attributes	Desired characteristics
1 Objectives/relationship of work to ITU-T work	Objectives should refer to use of International Standards/Recommendations, or to the provision of input into international standards organizations, especially ITU-T
2 Organization; – legal status – geographic scope – secretariat – nominated representative	– should indicate in which country/countries it has legal status – should be global (i.e., should involve more than one region of the world) – permanent secretariat should exist – should be willing to nominate a representative
3 Membership (openness)	– forums/consortia membership criteria should not preclude any party with material interest, especially ITU Member States and Sector Members – membership should comprise a significant representation of telecommunications interests
4 Technical subject areas	Should be relevant to a particular Study Group(s) or the ITU-T as a whole
5 IPR Policy: – patents and trademarks – copyright	– should be consistent with ITU Policy statement – ITU and ITU Member States and Sector Members should have right to copy for standardization-related purposes
6 Working methods/processes	– should be well-documented – should be open and fair – should support competition – should explicitly consider anti-trust issues
7 Outputs	– outputs available to the ITU-T should be identified – process for ITU-T to obtain outputs should be identified
8 Documents submitted to the ITU-T	– should contain no proprietary information (no distribution restriction) – should indicate source within the forum/consortium (e.g., committee, subcommittee, etc.) – should indicate degree of stability of the document (e.g., preliminary, mature, stable, proposed date of adoption, etc.) – should indicate degree of approval of document (i.e., per cent of total forum membership involved and per cent of total forum membership that approved the document)