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SERIES A: ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK OF ITU-T

**Supplement on guidelines for remote
participation**

ITU-T A-series Recommendations – Supplement 4

ITU-T



Supplement 4 to ITU-T A-series Recommendations

Supplement on guidelines for remote participation

Summary

Supplement 4 to the A series of ITU-T Recommendations specifies guidelines on the organization and handling of meetings of ITU-T groups with remote participation.

History

Edition	Recommendation	Approval	Study Group	Unique ID*
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FOREWORD

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The World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA), which meets every four years, establishes the topics for study by the ITU-T study groups which, in turn, produce Recommendations on these topics.

The approval of ITU-T Recommendations is covered by the procedure laid down in WTSA Resolution 1.

In some areas of information technology which fall within ITU-T's purview, the necessary standards are prepared on a collaborative basis with ISO and IEC.

NOTE

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Supplement 4 to ITU-T A-series Recommendations

Supplement on guidelines for remote participation

1 Scope

Well-documented rules and procedures, including the legal aspects, are useful for electronic meetings of ITU-T groups. ITU-T groups include, but are not limited to, TSAG, study groups, working parties, Questions or Rapporteur groups, focus groups, Joint Coordination Activities (JCAs), correspondence groups, ad hoc groups, regional groups and the Review Committee.

Meetings of ITU-T groups may be conducted in the following formats:

- physical meetings (face-to-face);
- physical meetings with remote observation (i.e., webcast);
- physical meetings with (active) remote participation;
- e-meetings, also called virtual meetings.

The same format may not apply to all sessions of a given meeting. This Supplement provides guidelines for physical meetings with active remote participation and e-meetings. The meeting format (see clause 6.4) to be used for any given meeting or meeting session is beyond the scope of this Supplement.

2 References

- [FSTP-AM] Guidelines for accessible meetings, ITU-T Q26/16.
<<http://www.itu.int/md/T13-SG16-150209-TD-WP2-0367/en>>
- [HSTP.ACC-RemPart] Guidelines for supporting remote participation in meetings for all, ITU-T Q26/16.
<<http://www.itu.int/md/T13-SG16-150209-TD-WP2-0365/en>>
- [PP GR] Plenipotentiary Conference, General Rules of conferences, assemblies and meetings of the Union (Rev. Guadalajara, 2010).
<<http://www.itu.int/net/about/basic-texts/rules.aspx>>
- [PP Res.167] Plenipotentiary Conference, Resolution 167 (Rev. Busan, 2014), Strengthening and developing ITU capabilities for electronic meetings and means to advance the work of the Union.
<http://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-s/opb/conf/S-CONF-ACTF-2014-PDF-E.pdf>
- [WTSA Res.32] World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly, Resolution 32 (Rev. Dubai, 2012), Strengthening electronic working methods for the work of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector.
<<http://www.itu.int/pub/T-RES-T.32-2012>>

3 Definitions

3.1 Terms defined elsewhere

None

3.2 Terms defined in this Supplement

This Supplement defines the following terms:

3.2.1 group: A study group, TSAG, a working party, a Question, a Rapporteur group, a correspondence group, an ad hoc group, the Review Committee, a JCA, a focus group, a regional group or any other type of group created in ITU-T.

NOTE – A workshop or a seminar is not considered a group in the context of this Supplement.

3.2.2 remote participation: Participation in a meeting from a separate geographical location, using communication technologies.

NOTE – Depending on the group meeting, remote participation may be active or in an observing capacity (in case of webcast), but only active remote participation is considered in this Supplement.

3.2.3 remote participation moderator: A person in charge of monitoring the remote participation tool, ensuring that remote participants know what is taking place in the meeting and allowing remote participants chances to contribute (in case of a meeting with active remote participation).

NOTE – A remote participation moderator is not systematically available for each meeting with remote participation.

4 Abbreviations and acronyms

This Supplement uses the following abbreviations and acronyms:

JCA Joint Coordination Activity

TIES Telecommunication Information Exchange Service

TSAG Telecommunication Standardization Advisory Group

5 Conventions

None

6 Organization of a meeting with remote participation

This clause gives guidelines for the group chairman and secretariat who are organizing a meeting with remote participation.

6.1 When scheduling the time for meetings with remote participation or for e-meetings, consideration should be given to the different time zones of the expected remote participants. Consideration should also be given to, when practical, scheduling relevant agenda items identified by a remote participant to better accommodate the remote participant's time zone.

6.2 If remote participation is to be arranged for participation in a group meeting, TSB should be informed at least twelve calendar days before the group meeting, to allow for enough time for logistics arrangements.

6.3 If the group chairman is expected to participate remotely, the group should identify an acting chairman in case the chairman is unable to connect.

6.4 The meeting agenda indicates the format in which the meeting will be conducted:

- physical meetings (face-to-face);
- physical meetings with remote observation (i.e., webcast);
- physical meetings with (active) remote participation (see also clause 7.1);
- e-meetings, also called virtual meetings (see also clause 7.1).

NOTE – The first two formats are not covered by this Supplement. The meeting format could be based on a variety of criteria, including, but not limited to, the nature of the meeting, whether the meeting is held inside or outside Geneva and technical capabilities available for the meeting.

6.5 It is recommended that the technologies used for remote participation are those available from the ITU, even for meetings held outside Geneva.

6.6 For meetings held outside Geneva with (active) remote participation, it is recommended that hosts be supplied with guidelines in order to minimize possible technical issues related to remote participation. These guidelines (e.g., in the form of a checklist) should be accessible for the host well in advance before the event, and should include all the technical and logistics requirements for providing the remote participation facility.

7 Guidelines for the group chairman

This clause gives guidelines for the group chairman to help chairing a meeting with remote participation.

7.1 Based on the remote participation tool used, the management team of the group decides the operation mode for the meeting. The modes described in clauses 7.1.1 and 7.1.2 are suggested. The decision of the management team is announced at the beginning of the meeting and the meeting is chaired accordingly.

7.1.1 All remote participants are unmuted by default and can intervene at any time. To prevent interference of background noise, the chair reminds remote participants to mute their microphones until when they wish to contribute (see also clause 7.6).

NOTE – This may be practical for the meeting of a very small informal group like a correspondence group, but probably not during the meeting of a Question or a Rapporteur group (if at least to avoid echo and other background noise).

7.1.2 All remote participants are muted by default and will be unmuted by the remote participation moderator on a case-by-case basis, if they so request through the remote participation tool.

NOTE – The remote participation moderator would then inform the meeting that a remote participant can intervene and the chairman would include the remote participant in the queue of meeting participants who want to intervene.

7.2 In the case of physical meetings with remote participation, the group chairman and the remote participation moderator are encouraged to meet in the room ten minutes before the scheduled start of the meeting to check that the system is working and that the group chairman can display and share documents.

7.3 At the beginning of each meeting with remote participation, the group chairman announces that there is a remote facility and requests that all remote participants introduce themselves by mentioning their name and affiliation.

NOTE – Remote participants who join a meeting after the initial introduction of participants are expected to announce their arrival by mentioning their name and affiliation. If the remote participation tool announces participants' arrival with a specific sound, the group chairman asks new participants to introduce themselves.

7.4 The group chairman encourages remote participants to announce their name and affiliation clearly before speaking (see also clause 8.3).

NOTE – This is particularly useful in case of a meeting with interpretation or with participants with disabilities or specific needs (see clause 10).

7.5 The General Rules of conferences, assemblies and meetings of the Union [PP GR] apply to meetings with remote participation, in particular clauses 20.2 (Order of debates), 20.8 (Limitation of speeches) and 20.9 (Closing the list of speeches).

7.6 Where supported by the remote participation tool, the chairman or the remote participation moderator is permitted to mute remote participants with bad connections or whose connections introduce too much noise, or may ask them to leave the meeting if the situation cannot be remedied.

8 Technical guidelines for remote participants

This clause gives guidelines for remote participants.

8.1 Remote participants are encouraged to use the remote facility through a landline (when available), or to use a headset (and not the microphone and speaker of their machine). Remote participants should make sure that the loudspeaker on their machine is muted when they call from a landline.

8.2 It is recommended that remote participants connect at least five minutes before the start of a meeting to avoid disturbance. This will also allow for the group chairman and/or the remote participation moderator to check sound levels.

8.3 Remote participants are encouraged to announce their name and affiliation clearly before making any intervention (see also clause 7.4).

8.4 Remote participants should speak from a quiet place without background noise. They should speak slowly and clearly to allow the other participants to compensate for any audio problem. They are encouraged to end their remarks with the phrase "This concludes my intervention."

NOTE – Clauses 8.3 and 8.4 are particularly useful in the case of a meeting with interpretation, or with participants with disabilities or specific needs (see clause 10).

8.5 If the connection is poor, and if requested by the chairman, remote participants should be prepared to type their question or comment in the chat window of the remote participation tool.

8.6 During a physical meeting with remote participation, remote participants accept that, in case of technical problems (e.g., lost connection), their participation may be interrupted (see also clause 8.8) while the physical meeting will continue, whereas in case of onsite technical issues (e.g., headphone failure), the chairman may decide to suspend the meeting until the problem is solved.

NOTE – Remote participants recognize that an important part of any meeting are the informal discussions during breaks and lunch where delegates can informally explain, understand, and forge the compromises needed for the consensus processes to work. Remote participants recognize that they will not have this type of interaction with the other participants.

8.7 Remote participants accept that in case of technical problems (e.g., lost connection) during an e-meeting, the chairman will assess whether enough participants are still connected and will decide whether to continue the meeting (see also clause 8.8) or to suspend the meeting until the problem is solved.

8.8 Remote participants may report problems to the remote participation moderator (when available) who should determine where the cause lies and should either take direct remedial action or offer advice as appropriate. A remote participant who experiences problems in joining the meeting should preferably discuss with the remote participation moderator in a private chat window (or tab) so that the main chat window is reserved for discussions of interest to all participants.

9 Technical guidelines for in-person participants

This clause gives guidelines for participants physically present in a meeting with remote participation.

9.1 In order to increase voice quality, only one microphone should be on (open) at a given time in the meeting room, and physically present participants shall speak close to (and in front of) the microphone.

10 Guidelines for persons with disabilities or with specific needs

This clause makes reference to guidelines applying to remote participants with hearing or visual impairments, in particular.

10.1 Guidelines for users with hearing or visual impairments are available from the Joint Coordination Activity on Accessibility and Human Factors (JCA-AHF at <http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/jca/ahf>).

10.2 Requirements and good practice for supporting remote participation in meetings for all are contained in [HSTP.ACC-RemPart]. Guidelines for accessible meetings are contained in clause 8.1.3 of [FSTP-AM].

10.3 Persons with disabilities can mention their specific needs (for example, captioning) on the registration form. Provision of specific facilities is done in accordance with *resolves* 3 of [PP Res.167].

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