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| **Title:** | | Some issues identified concerning the AAP process after WTSA-20 changes | | | |
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| **Abstract:** | This document brings to TSAG's attention two issues identified in the Alternative Approval Process (AAP) after the modifications introduced by WTSA‑20 in ITU-T A.5 and A.8. Possible ways forward are suggested to assist TSAG in determining possible actions on this topic, if any. |

During the internal review of WTSA-20 results and update of some templates, some issues concerning the AAP process were identified.

# 1. Deletion of an AAP Recommendation

During WTSA-20, Rec. ITU-T A.8, clause 8, was amended to replace a specific text for deleting AAP Recommendations to simply refer to the deletion of texts as specified in WTSA Resolution 1, clause 9.8, as an effort to streamline procedures. However, in close analysis, a substantive modification was introduced, perhaps unwittingly.

In WTSA Res 1, chapter 9 (which defines TAP and where the prime role is that of the Member States), clause 9.8.2 defines that deletion only takes into account the opinion of Member States (or exceptionally of Sector Members that have received a delegation of authority to speak on behalf of a Member State, as per ITU CV239) both at the SG meeting as well as during the three-months consultation. This is a logical corollary of the Member State primacy during the TAP process.

However, until its [previous (2008) version](https://www.itu.int/rec/dologin.asp?lang=e&id=T-REC-A.8-200810-S!!PDF-E&type=items), Rec. ITU-T A.8 (which defines AAP where, by design, there is a balance of participation in decision making between Member States and Sector Members) allowed in its clause 8 both Member States and Sector Members (not necessarily acting on behalf of Member State as per CV239) to express objection to the deletion at either the Study Group meeting or during the three-months consultation.

Therefore, the change in ITU-T A.8, clause 8, at WTSA-20 removed the balance on participation from Sector Members for the deletion step of a Recommendation. Besides the principle issue, as AAP Recommendations are technical in nature, implementation is by the industry and it would be natural to have their views when considering deletion of an AAP Recommendation.

If indeed this was an overlooked side-effect of the change in ITU-T A.8, clause 8, two possible ways to address the situation are identified:

OPTION 1:

Reinstate the language of ITU-T A.8, clause 8, as found in its 2008-10 edition (see Annex A to this TD);

OPTION 2:

Amend the language in ITU-T A.8 (2022-03) to allow considering the opinion of Sector Members when considering the deletion of a Recommendation approved under the AAP process. For example:

*"Deletion of Recommendations is specified in clause 9.8 of WTSA Resolution 1 (Rev. Geneva, 2022), with the allowance that Sector Members can also express objection during the study group meeting and consultation period concerning the deletion of a Recommendation approved using AAP."*

## 2. Provision in ITU-T A.5 directly affecting the AAP process defined by ITU-T A.8

At WTSA-20, a new provision was added in ITU-T A.5, clause 6.4, NOTE, that, in the event that a normative reference is added during the AAP Last Call comment resolution to a specification coming from an organization that is **not** A.5-qualified, additional review is not launched and the text is submitted for approval at the next SG meeting. This is a logical consequence of the need for a study group or working party to agree to the qualification under ITU-T A.5 for such an organization (see ITU-T A.5, clause 7.1).

However, in view of TSAG and WTSA efforts towards streamlining the ITU-T rules, it would be more consistent (and end-user-friendly) to have all aspects affecting AAP included in ITU-T A.8 itself. This would assist in Rapporteurs and chairs not overlooking this provision comment resolution and Last Call judgement (as per ITU-T A.8 subclauses under clause 4.4).

OPTION 1:

A new clause 4.4.4-bis could be added to ITU-T A.8, addressing the need to send for SG approval as a result of the LC comment resolution:

**4.4.4-bis** If, as the result of the last call comment resolution, a new normative reference is added from an organization that is not already qualified according to the criteria in ITU-T A.5, Annex B, an additional review is not initiated, and the draft Recommendation is submitted for approval to a study group meeting to allow consideration by the study group of A.5 qualification of the respective organization.

OPTION 2:

A new item c could be added in clause 4.4.4:

c) a new normative reference is added as the result of the resolution of comments submitted during an AAP additional review (Rec. ITU-T A.5, clause 6.5), or a new normative reference is added as the result of the resolution of comments submitted during an AAP last call and either concerns are expressed during the AAP additional review ([ITU-T A.5], clause 6.5) or the referenced organization is not already qualified according to the criteria in [ITU-T A.5], Annex B ([ITU-T A.5], clause 6.4, note), in which cases the procedures in clause 4.6 regarding approval at a study group meeting are applied.

The current text in ITU-T A.5 could remain or be updated at a future revision of ITU-T A.5.

# 3 Conclusion

This document brings to TSAG's attention two issues identified in the Alternative Approval Process after the modifications introduced by WTSA-20 in ITU-T A.5 and A.8.

Ways forward are identified to assist TSAG in determining possible actions on this topic, if any.

# References

* WTSA-20 Resolution 1 (2022-03), *Rules of procedure of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector*. (In force) <https://www.itu.int/pub/T-RES-T.1-2022>
* Recommendation ITU-T A.8 (2022-03), *Alternative approval process for new and revised ITU-T Recommendations*. (In force) <https://www.itu.int/rec/T-REC-A.8-202203-I>
* Recommendation ITU-T A.8 (2008-10), *Alternative approval process for new and revised ITU-T Recommendations*. (Superseded) <https://www.itu.int/rec/T-REC-A.8-200810-S>
* Recommendation ITU-T A.5 (2022-03), *Generic procedures for including references to documents of other organizations in ITU-T Recommendations*. (In force) <https://www.itu.int/rec/T-REC-A.5-202203-I>

Annex A  
Previous and current text of ITU-T A.8, clause 8  
"Deletion of Recommendations between WTSAs"

## A.8 (2022)

Deletion of Recommendations is specified in clause 9.8 of WTSA Resolution 1 (Rev. Geneva, 2022).

## A.8 (2008)

**8.2.1** At a study group meeting it may be agreed to delete a Recommendation, i.e. because it has been superseded by another Recommendation or because it has become obsolete. This agreement by the Member States and Sector Members present at the meeting must be unopposed. If unopposed agreement has not been reached, the same criteria as in clause 5.4 above are applied. Information about this agreement, including an explanatory summary about the reasons for the deletion, shall be provided by a circular. If no objection to the deletion is received from a Member State or a Sector Member within three months, the deletion will come into force. In the case of objection, the matter will be referred back to the study group.

**8.2.2** Notification of the result will be given in another circular, and TSAG will be informed by a report from the Director of TSB. In addition, the Director shall publish a list of deleted Recommendations whenever appropriate, but at least once by the middle of a study period.

Annex B  
New clauses in ITU-T A.5 concerning AAP

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**6.4** If a new normative reference is added as the result of the resolution of comments submitted during an AAP last call, the information outlined in clauses 6.2.1 to 6.2.10 shall be provided by the rapporteur or editor and published as a TD before the draft Recommendation goes for additional review. The TD shall be mentioned in the information provided for the additional review.

NOTE – If the referenced organization is not already qualified according to the criteria in Annex B, an additional review is not initiated, and the draft Recommendation is submitted for approval to a study group meeting, where clause 7 is applied.

**6.5** If a new normative reference is added as the result of the resolution of comments submitted during an AAP additional review or during a TAP consultation, or if concerns are expressed during an AAP additional review about a new normative reference added as the result of the resolution of comments submitted during an AAP last call, clause 6.3 applies when the draft Recommendation is submitted for approval to a study group meeting.

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