

Regional Standardization Forum for Africa

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Decision-Making and Approval Procedures: *soft and hard decisions*

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Outline

- **Types of ITU-T decision-making**
 - **“soft” and “hard” criteria**
- **Traditional Approval Process**
 - **WTSA Resolution 1, Section 9**
- **Alternative Approval Process**
 - **Recommendation ITU-T A.8**

Decision Making

- There are many kinds of decisions made within ITU-T
- The rules of procedure sometimes indicate quantitative approval criteria but not always
- The following slides list various ITU-T decision-making mechanisms
- In general, decision-making avoids formal “voting” in ITU-T
 - First instance I’ve seen in >25 years recently occurred in SG15

Decision Making

- Important note: ITU is a United Nations Specialized Agency – ONLY Member States have the right to vote
- However, agreement of Sector Members is important for approval of technical Recommendations
 - The rules allow for a public/private partnership, while respecting MS rights
- Most decisions, but not all of them, are made on the basis of consensus

Decision-Making in ITU-T

- Decisions to enable progression of work
- “Soft” criteria
 - SG agrees to start new work
 - SG decides to establish a Focus Group
 - SG determines that a draft Recommendation is sufficiently mature...
 - SG reaches consent that a draft technical Recommendation is sufficiently mature ...
 - SG selects the relevant approval procedure by consensus
 - TSAG endorses Questions proposed by SG

Decision-Making in ITU-T

- Definitive decisions for approvals
- Quantifiable (“hard”) criteria
 - ➔ 70% affirmative of the MSs responding to Formal Consultation to authorize a study group to approve a Recommendation
 - ➔ Unopposed agreement of MSs present to approve Recommendation under the Traditional Approval Process (TAP)
 - ➔ No more than 1 MS present being in opposition to approve Rec under the Alternative Approval Process (AAP)

Approach to decision making

- From the examples, we see that some decisions are quantifiable and some are not
 - ➔ This has been carefully, and successfully, designed in this manner to have flexibility so work can progress (decides, agrees, determines, etc), but to have specificity when final decisions are taken (unopposed agreement, no more than one MS, etc)

Observations (1)

- In general, the day-to-day work progresses by consensus among the participants
- Chairman's job is to create an environment that allows the meeting to find consensus
- Resolution of disagreements is generally achieved by those directly involved, with reporting back to parent group
- Consensus is the foundation of global standardization

Observations (2)

- Avoid putting a sovereign Member State in a position that forces it to state support or opposition until it is ready to do so, e.g., open voting, show of hands, direct query
 - ➔ Elegant solution is “unopposed agreement”
- Chair can help by carefully crafted questions to move the meeting ahead
 - ➔ “Is there any support/opposition to the proposal?”

ITU-T Recommendation Approval

- There are two methods for approving Recommendations between WTSAAs
 - Traditional Approval Process (TAP) for Recommendations having policy or regulatory implications
 - Member States (MS) have final decision
 - Alternative Approval Process (AAP) for all other Recommendations
 - MSs and SMs both fully participate

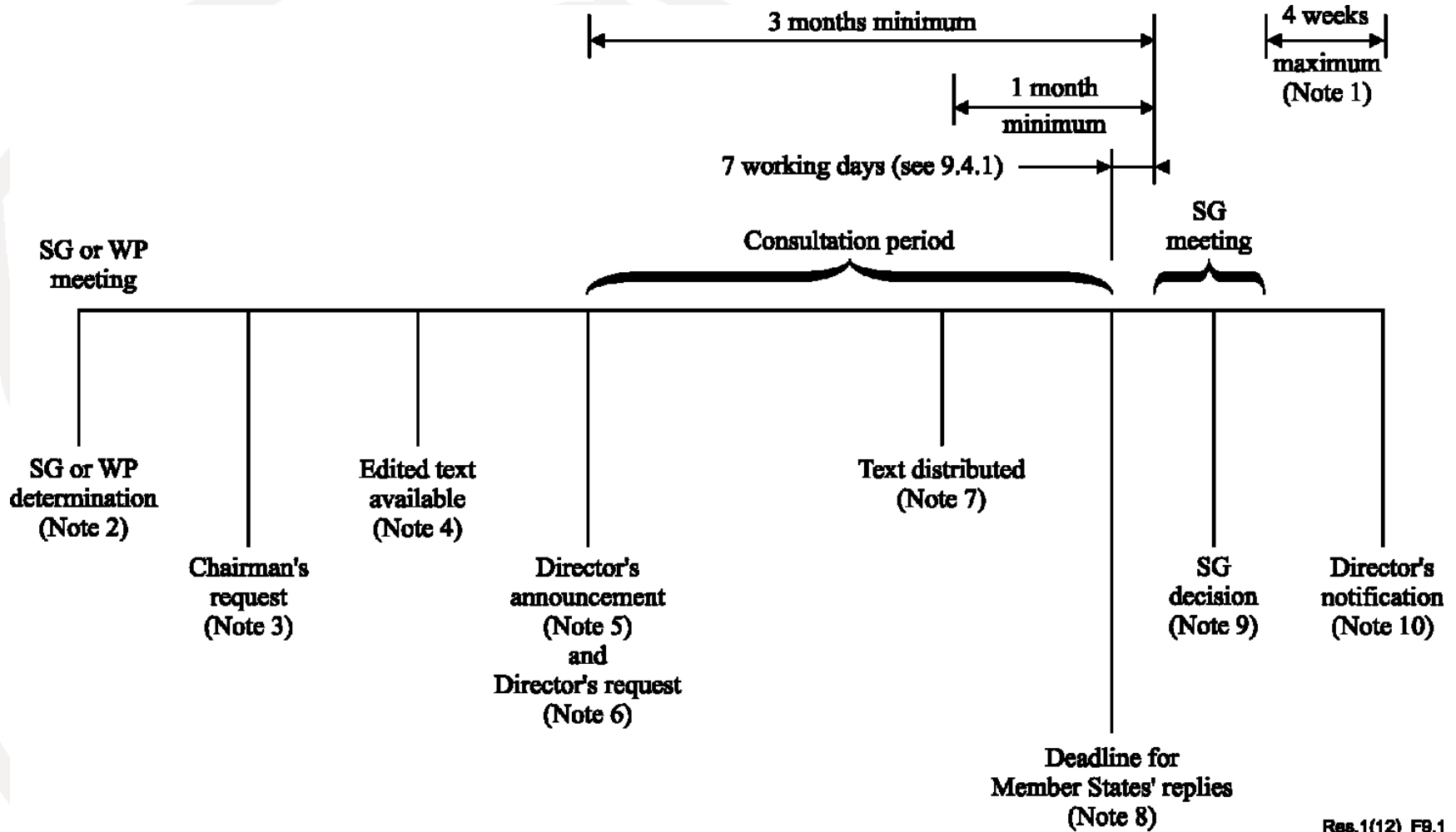
ITU-T Recommendation Approval

- TAP is described in WTSA Resolution 1, Section 9
 - ➔ Key terminology, unique to TAP, is summarized in Figure 9.1 – *TAP sequence of events*
- AAP is described in Recommendation ITU-T A.8
 - ➔ Key terminology, unique to AAP, is summarized in Figure 1 – *AAP sequence of events*

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TAP Process Chart



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Main steps in TAP (1)

- SG DETERMINATION (that work is sufficiently mature)
 - ➔ Can be done by SG or WP
- Director's ANNOUNCEMENT (of intent to seek approval at next SG meeting)
- Director's REQUEST (for MSs to approve request that SG can decide on approval; 70% affirmative required)

Main steps in TAP (2)

- TEXT DISTRIBUTED (at least 1 month before SG meeting)
- DECISION meeting
 - ➔ Approval requires unopposed agreement of the MSs present

Other steps in the process (1)

- SMs, MSs, Associates, Academia participants and liaisons can propose changes for the DECISION meeting's consideration of the DETERMINED text
- Editorial corrections and amendments not affecting the substance may be accepted
- A Recommendation Summary is required

Other steps in the process (2)

- If there are major changes, the SG should defer approval to another meeting, EXCEPT
 - ➔ The SG can proceed with approval if the Study Group Chairman, in consultation with TSB, considers that changes are reasonable for MSs not present and that the proposed text is stable
- This is a very, very normal occurrence

Other steps in the process (3)

- A MS that does not want to oppose approval but has a concern, can have its concern noted in meeting report and in the Recommendation
- If a MS requests more time to consider its position, the “4-week rule” allows that MS to inform TSB of its disapproval within 4 weeks of the meeting
 - No reply from that MS means no objection, and the Recommendation is approved

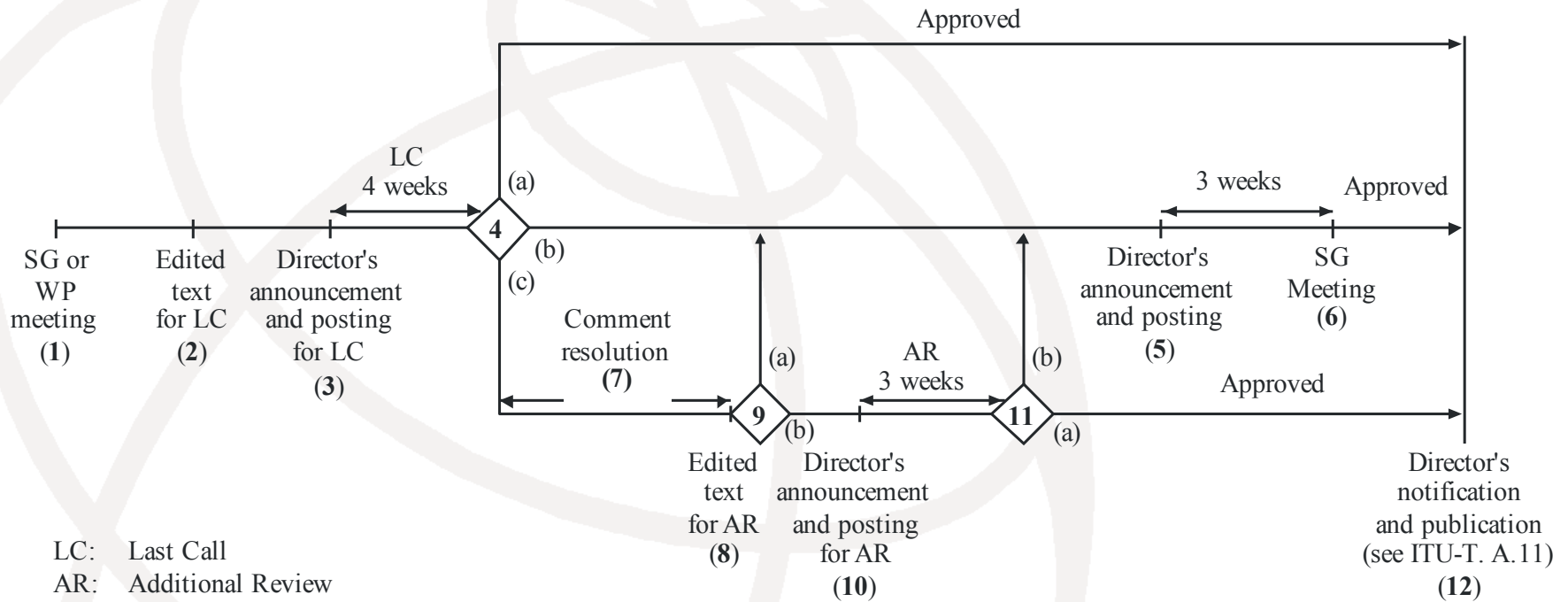
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Evolution of the approval process for dramatic improvement

- 2001: After adoption by a SG, Recs that do not require formal consultation of the MSs are considered as approved
 - Only applies to Recs that do not have policy or regulatory implications, or for which there is a doubt
 - This is known as the Alternative Approval Process (AAP)

AAP Process Chart



A.8(08)_F01

Main steps in AAP (1)

- CONSENT (that work is sufficiently mature)
 - ➔ Can be done by SG or WP
 - ➔ Same as DETERMINATION in TAP
- Director's AAP ANNOUNCEMENT of LAST CALL (review before approval)
 - ➔ Posted on the 1st and 16th of every month
 - ➔ LAST CALL (LC) is 4 weeks
 - ➔ MSs, SMs, Associates and Academia participants can submit LC comments

Main steps in AAP (2)

- If there are no comments (other than typographical corrections) the Rec is approved
- If there are any comments, **including** “editorial” comments, SG Chairman considers next step in Last Call Judgment
 - Consult with relevant experts and TSB
 - Address and attempt to resolve comments
 - Provide new, revised text and report on comment resolution attempts

Main steps in AAP (3)

- Depending on calendar, Chairman has a choice to get the fastest approval:
 - (1) Post revised text for an Additional Review (AR) of 3-weeks,
 - MSs and SMs can comment
 - This is the most common course
 - If there are no comments in 3 weeks, the Recommendation is approved; or
 - (2) Send draft revised Recommendation and comments to next SG meeting

Main steps in AAP (4)

- If there are AR comments, Chairman considers next steps in Additional Review Judgment
 - Changes are only typographical; Recommendation is approved
 - Comments are substantive or “editorial”; draft Recommendation and all comments are sent to the next SG meeting

Main steps in AAP (5)

- At SG meeting, if there are major changes, the SG should defer approval to another meeting, EXCEPT
 - The SG can proceed with approval if the SG Chairman, in consultation with TSB, considers that changes are reasonable for MSs not present and that the proposed text is stable
 - This is a very, very normal occurrence
 - Only about 2% of AAP Recommendations even get to the SG stage

Main steps in AAP (6)

- Draft Recommendation may have gone through many changes at the SG, causing a new MS concern:
 - ➔ If a MS states that the Rec now has policy or regulatory implications, the Rec can be moved back to the beginning of TAP or AAP
 - SG does not make a DECISION at this meeting
 - ➔ SG picks path that will ensure best progress towards a decision

Main steps in AAP (7)

- If there is unopposed agreement of MSs and SMs present, Recommendation is approved
- If there continues to be any objection, the Chair asks only MSs present if there is objection to approval
 - ➔ Recommendation is not approved if there is more than one MS objecting (i.e., 2 or more MSs)
 - ➔ Recommendation is approved if 1 or no MSs object

AAP Experience

- About 65% of AAP Recommendations are approved in LAST CALL with no comments
- More than 85% of AAP Recommendations are approved in LAST CALL
- About 2% of AAP Recommendations need to go to the SG DECISION meeting
- Average time from CONSENT to NOTIFICATION of approval is 9 weeks
- Efficient management of the AAP process is a key task for SG Chairmen, Rapporteurs and Editors

Amendments and Corrigenda

- Amendment to a published Rec:
 - Includes only the change or addition
 - If integral (normative) part of Recommendation: Approved using the same approval process as the Rec
 - If not integral (informative): agreed by SG
- Corrigendum to published Recommendation:
 - Includes only the correction
 - Obvious correction: published by TSB with concurrence of SG Chairman
 - Otherwise: same approval as for Rec

Implementer's Guide and Revisions

■ Implementer's Guide:

- Historical record of identified defects with their corrections since Rec was published
- Agreed by SG, or by WP with concurrence of SG Chairman
- Eventually issued as Corrigenda (Corr.) or Revised (Rev.)

■ Revision:

- Full text of published Rec with all approved changes, corrections, additions
- Same approval process as for Rec

Deletion of Recommendation

- Deletion is considered on a case by case basis
 - Recommendation has been superseded or has become obsolete
 - Choices: Deletion by WTSA or between WTSA's
- Deletion by WTSA:
 - Upon decision of SG, Chair reports to WTSA requesting deletion
 - WTSA acts as appropriate

Deletion of Recommendation - TAP

- SG agrees to deletion by unopposed agreement
- Inform membership of proposed deletion, including an explanatory summary of the reasons, via Circular
 - If no objection within 3 months, deletion comes into force
 - In case of objection, refer back to the SG

Deletion of Recommendation - AAP

- SG agrees to deletion by unopposed agreement of MSs and SMs present
 - If not achieved, then SG agrees to deletion if no more than 1 MS present is opposed
- Inform membership of proposed deletion, including explanatory summary of the reasons, via Circular
 - If no objection from a MS or SM within 3 months, deletion comes into force
 - In case of objection, refer back to SG

Additional Information

Doc.	Link
Basic Texts (ITU Constitution, Convention and General Rules of Conferences, Assemblies and Meetings of the Union; Resolutions and Decisions of 2010 Plenipot	http://www.itu.int/S-CONF-PLEN-2011-ZIP-E.zip
General Rules of Conferences, Assemblies and Meetings of the Union	http://www.itu.int/net/about/basic-texts/rules.aspx
WTSA Resolution 1	http://www.itu.int/pub/T-RES-T.1-2012/en
Recommendation ITU-T A.1	http://www.itu.int/ITU-T/recommendations/rec.aspx?rec=11920