

ITU-R activities related to TDR

I would like to begin by bringing best wishes from the Director of the Radiocommunication Bureau, Mr. Valery Timofeev, for a successful workshop.

The World Radiocommunication Conference (Istanbul, 2000) adopted two Resolutions (Res. 644 and Res. 645) to focus the work related to TDR (Telecommunications for Disaster Relief) in the Radiocommunication Sector.

The first of these Resolutions invites the Sector to continue to study those aspects of radiocommunications that are relevant to disaster mitigation and relief operations. It makes particular mention of decentralised means of communications including the amateur service, and the use of mobile and portable satellite terminals. Clearly, such topic areas fall very firmly into the domain of ITU-R Study Groups.

The second of these Resolutions gives consideration, amongst other items, to the technical means that are essential to achieve effective Public Protection and Disaster Relief (PPDR), including spectrum related issues, and again requests ITU-R to study such matters.

While the general framework for these studies is provided in Question ITU-R 209-1/8, particular emphasis has been given to the radio frequency spectrum related aspects that are associated with Agenda Item 1.3 of the next World Radiocommunication Conference, to be held in June 2003.

Agenda item 1.3 aims “to consider identification of globally/regionally harmonized bands to the extent practicable, for the implementation of future advanced solutions to meet the needs of public protection agencies, including those dealing with emergency situations and disaster relief, and to make regulatory provisions, as necessary, [taking into account Resolution 645 (WRC-2000);]”

Most of the technical studies in support of this agenda item have been carried out in Radiocommunication Study Group 8 (Mobile, radiodetermination, amateur and related satellite services), with additional input from Study Groups 1 (Spectrum management), 4 (Fixed-satellite service) and 9 (Fixed service). The results of these studies have been

included in the Report prepared by the recently held Conference Preparatory Meeting - the CPM - which prepared the technical bases for decisions to be taken at the forthcoming WRC.

These and other recent ITU-R activities related to TDR include:

- an ITU Seminar, organised by WP 8A, on Public Protection and Disaster Relief, held in September last year;
- development of a draft ITU-R Recommendation on Global cross-border circulation of radiocommunication equipment in emergency and disaster relief situations, which recommends means to facilitate the circulation of such equipment;
- a new ITU-R Report on radiocommunication objectives and requirements for public protection and disaster relief.

This latter Report addresses a number of items such as i) clarifying the definitions of "public protection" and "disaster relief"; ii) describing some envisaged applications (which include nb, wb and bb); iii) discussing interoperability and certain advanced technologies that could play a role, and iv) giving a methodology for determining spectrum requirements for such systems in the future. Additionally, the report prepared by the CPM, as well as making reference to these results, also provides estimates of future spectrum requirements and remarks on potential candidate frequency bands for PPDR.

Following the Radio Conference in June, the ITU-R will need to consider how best to implement the Conference decisions, which will no doubt call for continuing studies, as a matter of urgency, on all those aspects of radiocommunications that are relevant to disaster mitigation and relief operations.

Naturally, radiocommunications is only one aspect of this important subject. Within the ITU, there is already a good level of cooperation between the three Sectors to address the broader aspect of telecommunications for disaster relief. However, as is evident from the wide participation at this workshop, there are also many other entities involved - all having vital inputs to the work. As a consequence, I'm sure this workshop will improve our understanding of user requirements and provide a focus for further activity in the ITU.