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Author: Angela Maimo (rev SkyTerra)
Tel: 202 944 7538
Email: angela.maimo@intelsat.com

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UNITED STATES

PRELIMINARY VIEWS ON WRC-11

WRC-11 Agenda 1.2: taking into account the ITU-R studies carried out in accordance with Resolution 951 (Rev.WRC-07), to take appropriate action with a view to enhancing the international regulatory framework;

ISSUE: Identification of concepts and allocation procedures for enhancing the ITU Radio Regulations (RR) to meet requirements of current and future radio applications while taking into account existing services and usage;

BACKGROUND: WRC-07 considered the report of ITU studies in response to Resolution 951 (WRC-03) on methods to improve the international spectrum regulatory framework. This report identified a number of options for addressing the evolution of radio applications, systems and technologies which include the following:

Option 1: keeping the current service definitions and not introducing any changes to the ITU Radio Regulations (RR) with respect to this agenda item;

Option 2: reviewing and possibly revising the current service definitions or adding one or more new services to the list of service definitions, each one encompassing several of the existing ones;

Option 3: introducing a new provision in the RR enabling substitution between assignments of specific services;

Option 4: introducing composite services in the Table of Frequency Allocations.

WRC-07 also adopted a revised version of Resolution 951, calling for urgent studies in order to develop as appropriate, new concepts and procedures for enhancing the Radio Regulations to meet the demands of current, emerging and future radio applications, while taking into account existing services and usage. In particular, it calls for studies aimed at: a) evaluating options for enhancing spectrum management solutions for increased flexibility in meeting new demands; b) developing applicable concepts and procedures including sharing studies on a band-by-band basis to support these options; c) preparing relevant technical and regulatory solutions for consideration and appropriate action at WRC-11.

DISCUSSION: The United States recognizes the importance of a spectrum regulatory framework that promotes flexible spectrum use, to the extent practicable, so as to allow for the evolution of services and technologies, taking into account existing services and usage. Accordingly, the United States has, in various instances, adopted domestic service rules or sought changes in the ITU Radio Regulations in order to accommodate new or evolving systems after evaluation, on a case-by-case basis, of their requirements and their ability to co-exist with other co-frequency systems.

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However, such changes have always been considered in the context of their potential effect upon existing services and their future growth. In the domestic arena, such changes have been adopted only after careful analysis and consideration of the views of potentially affected parties, as well as the views of proponents promoting emerging services. Within the ITU-R, a similar exercise should be performed prior to adopting similar changes to the Radio Regulations.

The current radiocommunication service definition structure, which is the basis of the ITU spectrum allocation framework, has generally allowed for accommodating the evolution of communication networks both from the point of view of convergence (e.g. multimedia services or hybrid configurations) and technological advances. This service definition structure has provided a reasonable amount of stability in the international spectrum regulatory framework, and is extensively used by Administrations in deriving their domestic allocation tables, thus facilitating the harmonization of domestic and international spectrum policies. However, the United States also recognizes that not all emerging technologies fit neatly within the existing service definition “boxes” of the Radio Regulations. Consequently, in certain cases it may be appropriate to modify the Radio Regulations to accommodate these technologies, while in others it may not be. Taking the latter case first, in situations where “converging” services designated for bands that already host multiple service allocations (i.e., fixed, mobile, broadcasting, etc.), a multi delivery platform service allocation could be accommodate. However, in the case of a new technology that combines elements that may not fir strictly within a traditional service definition, it may be necessary to develop a composite definition (i.e., invoke “Option 4”). This is not so much a change in the regulatory framework in the sense of new overarching policy, rather it is an enhancement of the existing framework through modifications where appropriate and where sufficiently justified.

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U.S. VIEW: The United States is of the view that proposals for redefining or merging radiocommunication services for increased spectrum management flexibility must be supported by appropriate compatibility studies and relevant regulatory procedures relating to the implementation of the applications concerned. In particular, any such proposals should include information on the characteristics and protection requirements of the underlying systems (existing, emerging and future) that will operate under the new service designation as well as their ability to co-exist with other co-frequency services.

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Where there is sufficient knowledge about an emerging or future application or system that can not be accommodated within the current regulatory framework, adequate studies need to be provided regarding the technical and regulatory means for creating a framework that enables its implementation.¶
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