



International Amateur Radio Union Region 1

2017 General Conference – Landshut, Germany

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Subject	Video Streaming at IARU Region 1 General Conferences		
Society	Executive Committee	Country:	IARU Region 1
Committee:	C3	Paper number:	LA17_C3_36
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1 Introduction

A question has been posed to the Executive Committee that video streaming of the 2017 IARU Region 1 General Conference be allowed to take place.

2 Background

At the 2011 Region 1 General Conference in Sun City, South Africa, the meetings of the Permanent VHF/UHF/Microwaves Committee (C5) were streamed so that radio amateurs who were not at Conference could follow the deliberations taking place.

The author is not aware of any survey done to understand how many people took advantage of the streaming or whether any of the on-line audience were involved on-line in the actual working sessions. At the 2014 Region 1 General Conference in Albena, Bulgaria, there was no streaming from any of the Conference sessions.

The position on the Region 1 Constitution does not appear to currently envisage streaming. The relevant section is A 3.2, which states:

A.3.2 The participants of the General Conference are:

- A.3.2.1 - Delegates, Proxies and Observers duly appointed by the Member Societies;
- A.3.2.2 - Members of the Executive Committee;
- A.3.2.3 - Chairmen or Coordinators of Specialised Bodies;
- A.3.2.4 - Observers invited by the Executive Committee;
- A.3.2.5 - Guest observers from non-radio amateur bodies invited by the host society after approval of the Executive Committee;
- A.3.2.6 - Guests of honour invited by the Executive Committee;
- A.3.2.7 - Guests of honour invited by the host society after informing the Executive Committee.

It might be possible to argue that A.3.2.4 could be read to allow streaming, but after taking advice, the Executive Committee believes that the case is not strong, as 3.2.4 clearly implies that the observers are nominated by the EC, and not “anyone”

Any move to streaming would therefore require a change to the Region 1 Constitution and the purpose of this paper is to seek Conference’s view on whether this is appropriate.

The EC has determined that, with this degree of uncertainty, the only opportunity for streaming in 2017 should be the opening Plenary, at which distinguished guests will be speaking. It is a matter for the Conference organisers whether they wish to take up the option.

The following sections of this paper set out some of the issues surrounding more general video streaming of Conferences.

3 Key points

In considering whether to permit video streaming at Conferences, delegates may wish to take into account the following:

3.1 There is little doubt that issues of “transparency” are hot topics in government and industry today. Organisations are increasingly being held to account through greater transparency of their processes and their decisions. It is therefore appropriate for Member Societies to consider whether IARU’s current processes provide a sufficient degree of transparency.

3.2 Taking the 2017 Conference as an example, it consists of a total of 95 hours of discussions – excluding the opening plenary and Committee C2. Many sessions are concurrent.

This raises the questions of:

- How much of the conference is appropriate for video streaming?
- Whether the technology can support streaming parallel streams of video and whether it would in any way be intrusive to the proceedings at the conference.
- Whether there is an audience (demand) for such a significant undertaking. There is empirical evidence that the streaming of the 2011 C5 discussions attracted very few people as audience.

3.3 Attendees at Conference have varying levels of proficiency in English. Member Societies may wish to consider whether video streaming could discourage contributions from those whose English is not so good.

3.4 Video streaming would open up the internal discussions of Conference to anyone in the world. Member Societies may wish to consider the issues surrounding any unfriendly national regulators/administrations, or other organisations unfriendly to IARU, monitoring the detailed discussions in Conference

3.5 The original request to stream the 2017 Conference envisaged the use of the Es’hail satellite which will now not be launched in time for the Conference. But this raises the question as to whether IARU would be popular for taking considerable bandwidth on amateur broadband links to stream its Conference. If the intention is to stream (rather than prove we can use radio to stream) it may be preferable to use the internet, end-to-end?

3.6 Is video streaming preferable to simple audio streaming?

3.7 If streaming is proposed, should there be a feedback process to allow the streaming audience to contribute to discussions in conference. What impact would this have on the management of the conference?

3.8 As stated earlier, streaming is not covered by the existing Constitution and Byelaws of IARU Region 1, which defines those who may "attend" a conference. As this list includes "observers" but with conditions, it is not seen how opening the "observer" definition to include the general public can be within the terms of the current Constitution.

4. Recommendations

Conference is asked to consider the above issues, and to determine whether it wishes to mandate the Executive Committee to amend the Region 1 Constitution to include, as a new clause A.3.2.8, to permit streaming:

A.3.2.8. The Executive Committee may arrange for video/audio streaming of the General Conference.

If the principle of streaming is approved, Conference is also asked to define the scope of streaming:

- Audio or video?
- All sessions or simply plenaries? Working groups?
- With or without the facility for the streaming audience to participate?
- Via amateur networks or the internet?