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NASB Welcomes New Associate Member TDF

In recent years, the NASB has become a more international organization, with our regular participation in HFCC conferences and DRM consortium meetings, and with the associate membership of companies like Comet and Thales (which are based in Europe), TDP from Belgium and VT Merlin Communications from the UK.

We are now pleased to welcome our newest associate member from overseas: TDF, Télé-Diffusion de France. TDF is one of the world's major shortwave transmission providers, operating transmitter sites in France, Monte Carlo, Finland and French Guiana. These facilities are used by Radio France International as well as other international broadcasters. The TDF site in French Guiana may offer DRM airtime in the near future.

HFCC Helsinki Opening Remarks by Oldrich Cip

Ladies and gentlemen, colleagues,

It is my pleasure, first of all to thank Mr Ilari Anttila, Vice President of Digita for his opening remarks, and to welcome you now on behalf of the HFCC/ASBU association to Helsinki - a beautiful city of nature and architecture and a cosmopolitan capital on the Baltic. We are all very

grateful to our Finnish colleagues and to the TDF not only for the invitation at a critical conference planning moment when we simply had no host, but also that they have managed to organise these nice conference facilities around us on such a short notice.

The goal of global co-ordination of short wave broadcasting is now closer than ever. It is good to note for example, that our sister co-ordination group in the Asia Pacific region do not meet in a face-to-face meeting for this season and that they co-ordinate by e-mail. They have accepted our offer to use the combined HFCC/ASBU global B04 database and the online upload procedure. We have already encouraged you to co-ordinate with the ABU colleagues by e-mail during this conference.

Efforts for global co-ordination started more than fifty years ago. We will recall this here in Helsinki during our incoming plenary session debate on the approval of the next (A05) conference venue: Although Egypt has been tentatively accepted by the last May Board meeting, our Egyptian colleagues have had to withdraw the invitation due to internal organisational changes, and to postpone it to a possible future date.

In keeping with an earlier invitation of the National Association of Shortwave Broadcasters we are now in touch with the NASB colleagues again and have already received their invitation to hold the February 2005 event in Mexico City.

Hopefully therefore, international HFBC co-ordination and management will return to Mexico City after more than half a century. Our prospective one-week Mexico meeting however, will be dwarfed in comparison with the original High Frequency Broadcasting Conference that produced the first-ever shortwave frequency plan. That conference lasted for six months from October 1948 to April 1949 but the Plan had not ever been implemented. Out of the 69 participating countries, only 50 signed. Among those that did not sign had been both the Soviet Union and the U.S. Over-submissions of frequency requirements and the lack of credibility of notifications had been among the underlying reasons not only for the failure of the Mexico City conference but for further attempts in all decades that followed.

The HFCC is on the right track now, and much has changed, but it is a bit sad to realise that after fifty years we still grapple with the same old problem. At least this has been the conclusion after the results of the last IRUS campaign have been evaluated. Admittedly, the schedules of the majority of our members that are kept and processed are accurate and related to the real world. But an evidence of unregistered or wooden transmissions even in the schedules of only a couple of users may lead to a loss of credibility of all our work as well as undermine the present process leading to the completion of the global management of the HF broadcast spectrum.

This is all the more significant now since there is a definite chance that our association will become a more important player in the international radiocommunication field. The application of the HFCC for the membership in the radiocommunication sector of the ITU was filed with the office of the Secretary General in keeping with the conclusions of our past plenary meetings. Unfortunately, due to a procedural mistake it was not submitted to this year's session of the Council of the Union. We have received an apology from the new Head of the International Department of the ITU with an assurance that the application will be duly processed next year.

The ITU sector members may participate in the work of the particular sector, propose items for inclusion in the respective agendas, including the preparatory work associated with the World Radiocommunication Conferences. A suggestion to create a specialised HFCC working group will be placed on the agenda of the Plenary Meeting on Thursday.

Back to our conference work now: the winter season on the Northern Hemisphere is always difficult and the present steady decrease of sunspots will not simplify our discussions of collisions. I have found an advice in the writings of an eighteen-century French philosopher Joseph Jobert that also nicely relates to the problems I mentioned a while ago. He wrote: "It is better to debate a question without settling it than to settle a question without debating it."

With that thought let me wish all of us friendly and successful collision debates and a good conference.

B04 HFC Conference – Helsinki Finland

By Jeff LeCureux

The B04 HFC Conference was graciously hosted by Digita in Helsinki, Finland. There were 103 participants from 34 countries that attended the conference from August 23rd - August 27. The accommodations at the Holiday Inn were very adequate and the hospitality that Digita showed to each participant was outstanding. A buffet breakfast and a delicious lunch were provided each day of the conference as well as two evening meals. A sincere thank you to the Digita team who did a great job with accommodating all our needs.



The Digita Oy Hosts: From left to right: Kari Hautala, Riitta Kontula, Hannele Leppä, Maarit Kettunen (absent: Esko Huuhka)

Helsinki is a very clean city with uniquely ornamented 19th century buildings. Much of the history of Helsinki goes back 450 years. Today, it is a modern city enriched in history and the Finnish people are very proud of that history. Getting around in the city was very easy. With its inexpensive electric trams that could get you from the hotel to any part of the city, everything was very accessible. So at the end of the conference each day, you could find the delegates experimenting with new foods at the array of restaurants throughout the city.

Jeff LeCureux and George Ross, KTWR-Guam, had the privilege to represent NASB for this conference. Dennis Dempsey and George McClintock were also present at the conference. Most of the collisions for NASB that were on paper were long standing collisions. There were a few new issues that had come up during the conference. One was a possible collision that WRNO

had with Vatican Radio. I talked with the Vatican delegates and they were very helpful in correcting this by lowering their power from 500 kw to 250 kw. They assured us also that if they still were interfering, that they would adjust their azimuth so that the collision would disappear.

KTBN also had a collision with Greece on 7505 kHz. The Greek delegates were very accommodating and decided that they would find another frequency so they would not interfere.

Throughout the conference DRM was an important part of all discussions. Michel Penneroux of TDF gave a presentation on DRM. Currently, there are 100 transmitters broadcasting in DRM with 50% of them being in China. Mr. Penneroux also set up a DRM radio in the lobby for the week that was tuned to Issoudun, France on 15790 kHz. It gave the delegates a good example of the excellent audio quality that DRM provides.

James Briggs also gave an excellent presentation. He discussed the many receivers that are already or will soon be out on the market. One was the USB DRM receiver that would be available soon. He said an in car version will soon be available also. He also stated that it is a very realistic goal to have receivers in the market that will only be 100 to 150 euros by late 2005.

One of the highlights of the week was the visit to the Pori transmitter site. We left the hotel at 1:00pm and we did not return until 1:00am. It was a long day but a very enjoyable day. The Pori shortwave center was built in 1988, and covers an area of nearly 100 acres. The transmitter building itself is 36,000 square feet. There are five shortwave transmitters (3 x 500 kW, 1 x 250 kW and 1 x 100 kW) and a 600-kilowatt medium wave transmitter operating on 963 kHz. After the tour of the transmitter site, Digita entertained us with a fabulous buffet dinner.



Before the conference closed, NASB was voted unanimously to become a member of the HFCC. It was also during this time that Dennis Dempsey was able to extend an invitation to the delegates to the A05 Mexico City HFC Conference which NASB will host.

Atlantic 2004 Hurricane Season

WYFR took a double hit from Atlantic storms. Hurricane Frances rolled in late on the 3rd of September, on a track that took it directly across the WYFR transmission site. The winds damaged the building roof, transmission lines, antenna switches, and antennas. The missing roofing allowed vast amounts of water inside as Frances slowly tracked across Florida, dumping

30 hours of heavy rain here. All the sheetrock (ceilings and walls) in the office area was a loss, as were the carpets. Electrical power was off for a full week.

About a week after all transmissions were restored and at full power, along came Hurricane Jeanne, again on a direct course for the WYFR transmission site, and even stronger than Frances was. That was the evening of September 25. Again there was extensive damage to the building roof, antenna switches, transmission lines, antennas, and to many other miscellaneous items. The electrical power was out for eight days this time. At the time of writing this, all transmission schedules are restored, but full repairs to the building will take months.

The hurricanes also affected NASB member stations WRMI in Miami and WEWN in Birmingham, Alabama, but only marginally. Both stations shut down as a precautionary measure for periods of several hours up to two days when their areas were most affected by high winds, heavy rains and power outages.

DRM Symposium in Dallas November 12

The DRM (Digital Radio Mondiale) consortium and NASB associate member DRS/Continental Electronics will be hosting a major DRM Symposium in Dallas, Texas on Friday, Nov. 12. The purposes of the symposium will be to update all interested parties on DRM developments and to discuss ideas for the implementation of DRM in the United States, Canada and Latin America. A number of speakers are planned, and they will deal with technical, commercial, regulatory and other issues regarding DRM. There will also be ample opportunities for questions and answers and roundtable discussions. On the afternoon of Thursday, Nov. 11, there will be an informal meeting of the USA DRM Group at the Continental Electronics plant in Dallas, complete with factory tour and Texas barbecue dinner. For complete details and hotel information, please contact Jeff White, chairman of the USA DRM Group, at: radiomiami9@cs.com.

NASB is now a member of the HFCC

At the recent HFCC (High Frequency Coordinating Conference) in Helsinki in late August, the NASB's application for membership in the HFCC was accepted. We have been actively participating in HFCC/ASBU conferences since 2001. The NASB will continue to participate in HFCC conferences and submit frequency schedules as part of the FCC delegation.

In addition, the NASB's offer to host the next HFCC/ASBU Conference was accepted by the delegates at the Helsinki conference. This conference will take place in Mexico City on February 7-11, 2005. Jeff White, head of the NASB's HFCC Conference Committee, will be organizing the event, along with NASB Board member Dennis Dempsey of EWTN Global Catholic Radio and others.

HFCC/ASBU Conference Mexico City

February 7-11, 2005

The world's HF broadcasters get together twice a year to plan seasonal frequency schedules at

the High Frequency Coordinating Conference (HFCC), which is held in conjunction with the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU) seasonal planning meeting. Here, some 80% of the world's shortwave frequency planning takes place.

The HFCC Conference has been going on since 1989, and next February 7-11, 2005 will be the first time it has ever been hosted by broadcasters from the United States -- a joint sponsorship by the National Association of Shortwave Broadcasters (NASB) and the U.S. International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB). Because of visa considerations for certain delegations, the meeting is being held in Mexico City, with the additional co-sponsorship of the government-owned Radio Educación and the privately-owned commercial network Núcleo Radio Mil Communications -- Mexico's two largest shortwave broadcasters.

In addition to the traditional frequency planning work, the Mexico City HFCC Conference will offer delegates the opportunity to hear seminars on topics such as DRM, and to visit the local shortwave stations. Optional sightseeing tours will be available to major tourist sites in Mexico City, the pyramids of Teotihuacán, and a weekend trip to the world-famous beach resort of Acapulco.

The NASB, which is organizing the conference, is urgently seeking sponsors for certain events at the meeting. These are an excellent opportunity for you to promote your company or organization to the major HF broadcasters and telecommunications authorities from 40-plus countries around the globe. All organizations that sponsor one or more of the following events will receive ample recognition at the event itself, plus the opportunity to show a PowerPoint presentation or to give a short talk about their services, and space for an exhibit or table during the conference week. Prices are approximate, depending on such factors as overall attendance, but maximum amounts can be fixed, and partial sponsorships are also possible.

* Coffee Breaks - 9 available at \$556 each

* Wednesday evening gala dinner - 1 available at \$3000-5000

* Friday farewell cocktail reception - 1 available at approx. \$1000-2000

* Printing of hard copies of combined seasonal frequency schedules - 1 available at approx. \$1400

* Bus transportation to conference activities - 3 trips available at \$600 each

For more information, please contact the NASB's HFCC Conference Chairman, Jeff White, at radiomiami9@cs.com or telephone +1-305-559-9764 or fax +1-305-559-8186.

For general information about the Mexico City HFCC/ASBU Conference, see www.hfcc.org/mexico.html

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