



NASB NEWSLETTER [www.shortwave.org](http://www.shortwave.org)

December 2004

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## **THALES OFFERS DRM PRODUCTS**

Pierre Vasseur of NASB associate member Thales Broadcast & Multimedia sends the following update on the company's DRM-related products:

THALES BROADCAST & MULTIMEDIA is one of the world market leaders in AM. We have a range of SW transmitters with DRM capability embedded. We are able to provide 10 and even 20 khz full DRM signal (if the broadcaster possesses two adjacent channels) in order to provide a marvelous audio quality to the listener (CD like). Our equipment is also able to provide the various modes of simulcast. We are also able to provide low power DRM HF transmitters in the 26 MHz band for local broadcasting of high level quality audio.

Regarding dedicated DRM equipment, we have the whole range of equipment available, from the encoder to exciters and reference receivers. We even developed an automatic feedback loop which provides the best possible audio quality taking into account the whole transmitting chain, including the propagation channel. This is the QoSAM feedback loop. QoSAM stands for Quality of Service in Digitised AM bands.

For more information, contact Pierre Vasseur at: [pierre.vasseur@thales-bm.com](mailto:pierre.vasseur@thales-bm.com) or Josef Troxler at: [josef.troxler@thales-bm.ch](mailto:josef.troxler@thales-bm.ch).

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## **DRM COMES TO DALLAS**

(Series of DRM meetings held in Texas November 8-12, 2004)

by Jeff White

The Digital Radio Mondiale (DRM) Consortium held its quarterly committee meetings in Dallas, Texas during the week of November 8, hosted by DRM member DRS Broadcast Technologies (formerly Continental Electronics, maker of high-power shortwave transmitters). Monday and Tuesday were devoted to the Broadcasters Committee and Technical Committee meetings, attended by NASB's Mike Adams.

### **Commercial Committee**

Because of the HFCC Steering Board meeting in Prague, I didn't get into town until Wednesday, November 10, when I was invited by the DRM Commercial Committee Chairman, Michel Penneroux of NASB member TDF, to attend his meeting. And it was a most interesting meeting. It began with an overview of DRM developments in a series of key markets throughout the world, including Europe, Russia, China and Latin America. In Latin America, Mexico and Brazil are the two countries that are seen as the most important and having the most potential to develop DRM at this time.

The Commercial Committee meeting discussed joint marketing efforts by DRM and DAB (Digital Audio Broadcasting) and the growth of mediumwave transmissions in DRM mode. A proposal was made by Technical Committee Chairman Don Messer of NASB associate member IBB to create a Broadcasters Business Plan describing in non-technical terms the value of DRM from a business standpoint for small commercial broadcasters. The proposal was approved, and Don was put in charge of it. Don Messer was also highly involved in producing the DRM Broadcasters User Manual, a technical guide which is now publicly available on the Internet and in printed and CD-ROM formats.

Other items of discussion at the Commercial Committee meeting were efforts to convince receiver manufacturers to implement DRM, DRM's strategic alliance with the retail industry, and PLC (Power Line Communications, also known as BPL) as a polluter of the shortwave bands and therefore competitor to DRM. Reference was made to the DRM Consortium's public statement about BPL/PLC in September, which you will find reprinted elsewhere in this edition of the NASB Newsletter. There was also a review of DRM contributions to international institutions, including the International Telecommunication Union, the European Community and the European Broadcasting Union. It was stated that there had been no recent movement by the automobile industry in Europe regarding DRM car radios, but that certain companies are interested and are following DRM developments closely. There was a discussion of the timetable for release of the DRM chipset which will make it possible to produce DRM-capable receivers for the average consumer.

This was followed by a country-by-country review of recent DRM activities. I was asked to say a few words about the new USA DRM Group which was formed in Washington in May of this year at the initiative of the NASB's Mike Adams, who is the group's International Broadcasters Committee Chairman. Adil Mina of Continental Electronics is Chairman of the Transmitter Manufacturer's Committee, and yours truly is Chairman of the USA Group in general. I explained that we have done a great deal of publicity and generated many articles in North American publications such as Radio World, and that we plan to have a USA DRM website online before the end of this year, with the assistance of Continental Electronics.

Michael Pilath is head of the German DRM platform, which is the most active country platform

at this time. Michael expressed his willingness to assist the new U.S. DRM group in any way possible. He mentioned that Coding Technologies in Germany has produced 400 World Traveler DRM USB receivers, which allow business travelers to receive DRM broadcasts by plugging the very small unit into their laptop. These receivers are available for 199 euros (plus VAT tax) by mail order, and the order form can be found on the Coding Technologies website ([www.codingtechnologies.com](http://www.codingtechnologies.com)). Michael also mentioned that Deutsche Welle is planning a new DRM program for Europe as of next year, and that the commercial broadcaster RTL in Luxembourg will begin a German-language program in DRM as of January 1. He said many ethnic radio stations in Germany (including Turkish and Russian stations) are interested in doing DRM transmissions, and there is also interest in establishing a DRM station for truckers and a radio shopping channel.

Michel Penneroux reported on the DRM situation in France, where there are currently 12 or 13 broadcasters with 32 DRM transmitters. Andrew Flynn of Christian Vision said that there will be a national symposium on DRM in Chile next spring where they will invite mediumwave broadcasters. In Ecuador, there has been interest from mediumwave broadcasters in DRM. New 100-kilowatt DRM transmitters are being installed in New Zealand and Libya. Spanish National Radio has shown interest in DRM. The Gulf Cooperation Council is interested in mediumwave DRM. Radio Sweden's international service is doing DRM tests, as is Digita in Finland. Tests for domestic shortwave in DRM are being done in Japan. RAI in Italy plans to conduct DRM tests in Milan before the end of this year.

Pierre Vasseur of NASB associate member Thales, a Swiss-based transmitter manufacturer, expressed his opinion that a DRM Symposium should be held in Mexico either just before or just after the HFCC Conference in February.

And finally, Peter Jackson of VT Communications (formerly Merlin) announced that the DRM software project will end in March of 2005. In January, they will have a "sale" on the DRM software -- 45 euros rather than the current 60 euros. And this will include a copy of the Dream DRM software as well. The [www.drmrx.org](http://www.drmrx.org) website is due to shut down, but VT will continue to underwrite it for another year.

At the end of the day, host Continental Electronics treated the group to a mouth-watering dinner at a Texas steak restaurant called the Saltgrass Steakhouse. While the menu offered selections up to a 50-ounce cut of Texas steak, I think the largest one attempted by any member of our group was *only* 32 ounces! (And that wasn't me.)

## **A Major Announcement**

On Thursday, November 11, the DRM Steering Board met in Dallas. At the end of the day, a major decision had been made to recommend the extension of the upper end of the coverage of DRM from 30 to 120 MHz. This means effectively that DRM could be used on FM frequencies. Until now, it has only been a system for the longwave, mediumwave and shortwave bands. This recommendation was made to the DRM General Assembly, which will vote on it in the spring of 2005.

## **DRM USA Meeting**

While the Steering Board was busy at its Thursday meeting, many of the other participants in the DRM week took part in an informal meeting of the USA DRM Group at the Continental Electronics factory in suburban Dallas.

The meeting began with a guided tour of the Continental factory. As DRS Broadcast Technology

is a major defense contractor, the security at the plant has become quite tight since 9/11. All visitors must be escorted at all times. Nevertheless, the group was allowed to see transmitters being built and tested, and to ask all of the questions it wanted. The Continental engineers were eager to answer all of the technical questions from this group of mostly engineering folks. It is an amazing facility. And perhaps the highlight of the visit was seeing a 100-kilowatt model 418-DRM shortwave transmitter undergoing factory tests. The 418-DRM, as a new product, was in the early days of being tested as a DRM transmitter. It featured a redesigned interface and tuning system. Also being operated from the Continental plant was a temporary DRM station on 25.9 MHz with 750 watts of power that the FCC had authorized as a special transmission for the DRM meetings in Dallas. We were able to pick up this signal across town at the Wyndham Hotel with true FM mono quality, showcasing the full potential of DRM transmissions.

After the tour we began our USA DRM Group meeting. This was the second time the group had met, as the first was the organizational meeting at Radio Free Asia in Washington, DC on May 6 of this year -- one day before the NASB annual meeting. The purpose of the USA DRM Group is to promote the implementation and use of DRM in the United States. The first item was introductions. Here is a list of those who were in attendance:

Mike Adams - Far East Broadcasting Co. (Intl. Broadcasters Committee Chairman)  
Bret Brewer - DRS/Continental Electronics  
Tyler Callis - SCMS  
Darko Cvjetko - Riz Transmitters (Croatia)  
Doug Garlinger - NASB President  
Marion Hales - IBB  
Jim Heck - World Radio Network (HCJB)  
Dave Henderson - Radio New Zealand International  
Wong Hong - Himalaya Electronics (Hong Kong), maker of DRM receivers  
Charlie Jacobson - HCJB  
Herb Jacobson - HCJB  
Paulo Lages - Radiodifusao Portuguesa  
Eve Maes - wife of Ludo Maes  
Ludo Maes - TDP (Belgium)  
Bob Moore - HCJB  
Mark Poe - IBB  
Andoor Ravindran - MediaCorp Technologies, Singapore  
Fred Riley - DRS/Continental  
Steve Spradlin - Harris Corp.  
Bob Springer - FEBC Saipan  
John Stanley - Mountain Ministries  
Ruth Stanley - Mountain Ministries  
Josef Troxler - Thales Broadcast and Multimedia  
Paul Uday - DRS/Continental Electronics  
John Uvodich - DRS/Continental  
Mike Vanhooser - Nova Electronics  
Bill Walker - VT Merlin  
Jeff White - Radio Miami International (USA DRM Group Chairman)  
Tom Yingst - Harris Corp. (retired)

As this was an informal meeting, there was no structured agenda. It was more of a freewheeling discussion about topics of interest to those who are following DRM developments in the United States. Jim Heck of World Radio Network (the parent body of missionary station HCJB in Ecuador) remarked that he works with a series of AM stations along the Mexico-U.S. border. Most of his stations are within five miles of Mexico, so he commented that he could probably

technically consider using DRM transmissions on 26 MHz -- like the test transmission being done in Dallas -- to broadcast internationally to Mexico, which is considered a priority market for the DRM Commercial Committee. The problem, however, is that no one in Mexico has DRM receivers yet. Darko Cvjetko from Riz Transmitters in Croatia said they have used yagi antennas in tests of some of their transmitters on 26 MHz.

There was a good deal of discussion about publicity for DRM in the U.S. Herb Jacobson of HCJB said we should contact amateur radio operators, who are more "technically-aware" people, to publicize current DRM receivers like the Ten-Tec RX-320D. Mike Adams mentioned that we will be soon launching a USA DRM website, which will hopefully have a forum area for DXers to discuss DRM issues. The NASB is also beginning to retransmit DX programs from its member stations on the weekly Voice of the NASB DRM transmissions to the U.S. from Radio Canada International. John Stanley offered to use his contacts at QST (an amateur radio magazine) to get something published about the DRM software sale that begins in January. Fred Riley suggested also trying to publicize this in QEX, which is a magazine for radio experimenters. Someone suggested that we should work together with DX organizations to fight BPL (Broadband over Power Lines) in the U.S.

The discussion then turned to the Dayton, Ohio Hamvention which will take place May 20-22 of next year. Mike Adams asked for ideas as to what we could do there. Herb Jacobson suggested that we could make a presentation at the event about DRM. HCJB Engineering in Elkhart, Indiana could perhaps provide a speaker, or Harris Corp., or John Stanley. HCJB and other broadcasters could do special DRM transmissions beamed to Dayton during the Hamfest. Receiver manufacturers could provide radios to pick up these DRM transmissions as a demonstration to Hamvention attendees. We could coordinate press releases about DRM events in Dayton with Siriol Evans of the DRM Consortium.

Discussion returned to the new United States DRM website which DRS/Continental has offered to host. Bret Brewer of Continental indicated that they have reserved three possible URLs for the website, and it was decided that [www.usdrm.com](http://www.usdrm.com) would be the best one to use. This new website should have a U.S.-specific schedule of DRM transmissions, i.e. the ones that can really be heard by listeners in the United States. The two key questions that the website needs to answer are: "Where can I hear it?" and "Where can I buy it (DRM receivers and software)?" There could be a link to Ten-Tec's site and to explications of receiver modifications, as well as to Universal Radio's online mail order catalog. Others suggested links to C. Crane Company and Amateur Electronic Supply -- two other large mail-order firms in the U.S. It was suggested that the website should include reviews of new DRM receivers, such as the Mayah receiver and the new Digital World Traveller USB receiver. We should encourage shortwave broadcasters to provide a link to the U.S. DRM website on their own websites.

John Uvodich of Continental suggested that he could talk to some of the magazines that they run advertisements in, to promote analysis of the differences between IBOC and DRM. Mike Adams asked if DRM transmitter manufacturers would be willing to help U.S.-based shortwave stations that might be interested in doing temporary DRM transmissions as demonstrations. RIZ and HCJB suggested they are ready to cooperate. Charlie Jacobson of HCJB asked, for example, if WRMI in Miami would be interested in doing DRM transmissions, and the number of hours and frequencies available. I indicated that the station is definitely interested. Someone said that we should try to get a U.S.-based shortwave station transmitting in DRM in time for the Dayton Hamvention. Josef Troxler of Thales said the special transmissions are good ideas, but what we really need are permanent DRM transmissions on the air. He suggested that all DRM transmitter manufacturers are ready to cooperate, but the initiative has to be on the broadcaster's side. Mike Adams also mentioned the possibility of stations leasing DRM airtime on existing transmitters beamed to the U.S. that are operated by Radio Canada International, Radio Netherlands and soon

TDF in French Guiana.

Finally, Charlie Jacobson mentioned that US-DRM could work together with universities in the United States to promote DRM broadcasts, much like many universities are presently doing in Germany. Many universities have radio stations that could experiment with DRM. Someone suggested that Texas Instruments could work together with a local university. Jeff White mentioned that Florida International University was very interested in co-hosting an HFCC Conference, so they might be willing to work on some DRM experiments.

Unfortunately, the lively discussion was cut short by Kathy Stewart of Continental announcing that the barbecue dinner was ready in the hallway outside the meeting room. Not even avid broadcast engineers could resist the smell of Texas barbecue beef, ribs and accompaniments, which brought the informal meeting to a tasty end.

## **DRM Symposium**

On Friday, Nov. 12, the first-ever DRM International Symposium for North and South America was held in Dallas, designed to introduce DRM to broadcasters and others from throughout the United States, Canada and Latin America. Eighty-some people from a few dozen countries attended the Symposium.

Jan Hoek of Radio Netherlands, who is Vice Chairman of DRM, began the Symposium by introducing a long list of speakers. Adil Mina of Continental Electronics welcomed everyone to Dallas, and Doug Boyd, an international communications professor from the University of Kentucky, said a few words as well. Then Peter Senger, DRM Chairman, gave a general overview of DRM and its status. His station, Deutsche Welle, has more hours of DRM transmissions on the air than any other at the moment: 47 hours per day. He explained that there are expected to be about 700 hours per day of DRM transmissions on the air by 2006, and 1600 hours per day by 2008. One million DRM receivers are expected to be in the marketplace by 2006, and four million by 2008. Peter said that there are less than 2000 DRM receivers in use right now, most of them software radios that require the use of a PC. The country with the most DRM receivers is currently Germany, followed by the U.S. He said that DRM receivers should be available for under 200 euros by Christmas of next year.

The key markets for DRM at the moment are Europe and the Near and Middle East. China could become a major market; the Chinese are doing tests and will decide during 2005 whether to go with the DRM system. In Latin America, there are already 20 hours per day of DRM transmissions. Peter Senger explained that while some broadcasters may have to buy a new transmitter to use DRM, it will pay for itself in 10 years because of the significant savings in power consumption over a regular analog transmitter.

The worldwide DRM Consortium has over 80 members now. Full membership costs \$10,000 per year. Associate membership, which is limited mainly to broadcasting unions, requires a one-time payment of \$500. A less-expensive DRM Supporter option is also available. Peter Senger ended his remarks with an important announcement -- that the DRM Steering Board, meeting the previous day in Dallas, had recommended to the general assembly the expansion of DRM to 120 MHz (as opposed to the current 30 MHz), and the general assembly would decide on this next March.

The next speaker was DRM Technical Committee Chairman Don Messer of the IBB. Sporting a Texan hat and accent for the occasion, Don explained the basics of DRM -- that it provides FM mono sound quality and fade-free reception in its coverage area. He told how DRM can be used for mediumwave or local shortwave (21 or 25 MHz) broadcasts, long-distance shortwave

transmissions (the terrestrial equivalent of satellite radio which can cover an entire continent), and tropical band transmissions for regional coverage using near vertical incidence skywave. Don said that a station can broadcast simultaneously in up to three or four languages with DRM if it doesn't need extremely high quality audio. Different modes of DRM can be used for different types of audio quality, called "robustness." DRM can also display station call letters, program names, traffic information, etc. The total power required for a DRM transmitter is significantly less than that for an equivalent AM transmitter.

Hans Linkel, manager of Radio Netherlands' Bonaire relay station and Chairman of the DRM System Evaluation Group, gave a presentation about field tests that have been conducted to show a comparison of coverage areas between AM and DRM signals. He said that DRM power output should be 7 dB lower than that of equivalent AM transmissions, and even then the DRM coverage area is still a bit larger than with AM. Reducing the power by 7 dB reduced transmitter power consumption 40-60%.

Dan Dickey of Continental Electronics made a presentation about DRM transmitter developments and modifications, answering the popular question "Will my transmitter work in DRM?" He explained that a lot of information about this topic is found in the DRM Broadcasters User Manual, now available online from the DRM website ([www.drm.org](http://www.drm.org)).

John Sykes of the BBC World Service spoke about DRM from a broadcaster's perspective. He explained that in the U.K., radio listening went way down in the 1960's through the 1980's when TV became popular, but that radio listening has gone way up again since the 1990's. He said that delivery platforms have diverged and AM radio listening has declined, but DRM has the potential to revitalize AM radio. The BBC is planning a DRM service beginning next year to Germany, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, and they expect DRM receivers to soon be available for around 150 euros. John said that DRM would be ideal for truckers in the United States because of its long-distance coverage. He said that broadcasters have to put DRM transmissions on the air before manufacturers will make DRM receivers, and he said that "content is king" -- an expression heard from several speakers at the Symposium. John Sykes said we need to educate listeners and stimulate the demand for DRM.

After a delicious buffet lunch of Mexican food, Michael Penneroux, Chairman of the DRM Commercial Committee, explained the commercial strategy for the implementation of DRM around the world. Stefan Meltzer of Coding Technologies talked about the DRM chipset and some estimates of how long it will take for DRM receivers to hit the marketplace. Paul Linnarz of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation Media Programme for Latin America talked about DRM from the South American perspective, with a special emphasis on the radio market in Peru.

Yours truly was next with an update on the activities of the USA DRM Group, which have already been covered in the report on the USA DRM Group meeting above. Mike Adams, NASB's official liaison to DRM, gave the audience an idea which broadcasters you can hear on DRM in the Western Hemisphere right now. Charlie Jacobson of HCJB said that DRM could potentially revitalize the AM radio market in countries like Ecuador. He said in recent years the number of shortwave stations in Ecuador has shrunk from 51 to 26, and many of these aren't really on the air. The FM band, as in many countries, is overcrowded. Charlie said that while Latin America often follows U.S. standards, the IBOC system is simply not workable in many Latin American situations, so DRM may be a solution.

Jacques Bouliane of Radio Canada International/CBC, told the audience that RCI is too small a station to operate its own independent DRM service, so they have put a transmitter on the air in DRM from Sackville, New Brunswick airing a "bouquet" of programs from a variety of international broadcasters who purchase airtime (including the NASB). Fernando Borjon of the

Mexican Ministry of Communications and Transportation, gave a brief overview of the radio situation in Mexico, with 104 million inhabitants nationwide and 18 million in Mexico City, and a 3600-kilometer border with the United States. He said that Mexico has set a standard for digital TV, and the industry is eager to get a decision on digital radio. They are evaluating Eureka and IBOC, but the Ministry sees various problems with implementing these systems in Mexico for AM broadcasting. They would like to evaluate DRM as well.

A very lively question and answer session followed the program speakers. One participant proposed that DRM on 21 or 26 MHz could be used for community radio services in the United States, and that the USA DRM Group should look into promoting this possibility. In answer to a listener question, Charlie Jacobson of HCJB said that a 3 MHz tropical band frequency has been approved by the Ecuadorian authorities for DRM broadcasting by HCJB, but the authorization had not arrived in writing yet. HCJB's current DRM tests on the 19 meter band beamed to Dallas were using four kilowatts of average DRM power with a 24 dB gain antenna. Dave Matthews of Radio New Zealand had an interesting technical question about DRM/AM simulcasting, which he said is a very attractive way to get into DRM. Hans Linkel of Radio Netherlands said that somewhere between 50 and 100 organizations are already broadcasting in DRM today around the world.

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## **DRM RELAYS ITS CONCERNS ABOUT THE HAZARDS OF PLC INTERFERENCE**

*(Reprinted from the November 2004 DRM Newsletter)*

The DRM consortium issued the following statement about the hazards of Power Line Communications (PLC) interference, in September:

“Among DRM’s members are well-known commercial, public, international, national and local broadcasters. They provide indispensable news, analysis, information and entertainment to local communities and remote populations across the globe via existing short-wave, medium-wave/AM and long-wave radio bands. The DRM consortium also includes leading network operators, broadcast electronics manufacturers and high-tech research institutions. DRM also includes among its members international NGOs that provide essential emergency services.

DRM’s members, and the listening audiences they serve, depend on the integrity and security of the worldwide radio spectrum below 30 MHz – now and in the future.

With a collective wish to provide enhanced media services to future generations, DRM’s members joined forces to create a new, digital radio system (also called DRM). DRM’s development was supported by the European Commission, with funding provided within the Radiate, QOSAM and DIAM projects.

DRM is the world’s only, non-proprietary, universally standardized, digital radio system for short-wave, medium-wave/AM and long-wave. It provides clear, FM-like audio quality and excellent reception, free from static, fading and interference. An open standard, DRM has received the endorsement of the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI), the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and the International Electrotechnical Committee (IEC). More than 60 leading broadcasters have already started DRM transmissions alongside their existing, analogue radio broadcasts.

There is, however, an electrical radiation hazard that threatens today's analogue radio services, as well as radio's bright digital future. DRM's members are deeply concerned about interference to the radio spectrum caused by harmful emissions from Power Line Communications (PLC), a controversial new method of delivering Internet service to, and distributing data services within, households using AC power lines. PLC emissions levels are currently under consideration by governmental bodies in several countries.

Over the past 2 years, DRM's members have measured the effect of PLC emissions on analogue and digital broadcasts in both laboratory and field tests. The test results, which have been reported to the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), show that PLC radiation obliterates radio broadcasts.

If PLC emissions are too high, existing analogue and digital radio broadcasts are in many cases suddenly wiped out, meaning that listeners hear either electrical interference, or nothing at all, instead of the radio programming they have tuned into.

DRM's members believe that further, independent testing of PLC emissions' effect on radio broadcasts will reveal pertinent information for manufacturers and consumers alike. DRM's members are concerned that consumers may be unaware of the hazards of PLC interference to the radio broadcasts they rely on today, as well as future broadcasts.

DRM's members strongly urge those governmental bodies that are exploring PLC implementation to safeguard the broadcasting bands from PLC emissions' interference. In order to preserve the stability of the worldwide radio spectrum now and into the future, it is vital that governmental officials and regulatory bodies take appropriate protective measures today."

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## **NASB INVITED TO HFCC/ASBU STEERING BOARD**

The elected members of the HFCC/ASBU Steering Board include Oldrich Cip (of Radio Prague), Chairman; Horst Scholz (of Deutsche Welle), Vice Chairman; Dennis Thompson and Gary Stanley of VT Merlin Communications; Jan-Willem Drexhage of Radio Netherlands; Vladislav Cip, HFCC Secretary; and the Arab States Broadcasting Union representatives, including Bassil Zoubi. But the organization also invites the member which has organized the most recent HFCC/ASBU conference and the member which will organize the next conference to participate in the Steering Board meetings. Since the NASB is organizing the A05 HFCC/ASBU Conference, we were invited to send a representative to the latest Steering Board meeting in Prague, Czech Republic on November 5, 2004; to the SB meeting at the HFCC/ASBU Conference itself in Mexico City; and to the Steering Board meeting in Prague in May or June of 2005.

The main topic of discussion at the November 5 meeting was preparations for the Mexico City HFCC Conference. Therefore, the NASB sent Jeff White, Conference Chairman, to the Nov. 5th meeting in Prague. Several NASB personnel will be at the Conference in Mexico City, and NASB will likely send its new President, Doug Garlinger, to the Prague Steering Board meeting in May or June of next year.

At the November 5th meeting, the skies were rather cloudy and the weather was a bit cold, but Prague is always a lovely city at any time of the year. The meeting was held at the headquarters of Czech Radio on Vinohradská Street, very near the famous Wenceslas Square, and also very near the Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty headquarters building.

The meeting on November 5th was an all-day affair, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., with a break for lunch at a local pizzeria. The morning session was entirely devoted to the planning for the HFCC/ASBU Conference in Mexico. (You can find all of the latest information about this elsewhere in this Newsletter.) Steering Board member Gary Stanley wrote the following summary of the meeting, to which we have added a few explanatory comments in [ ].

B04 HFCC Steering Board Meeting  
Prague, 5th November 2004  
Gary Stanley, ABU-HFC Vice Coordinator

### **Attendees**

Oldrich Cip Chairman HFCC SB  
Horst Scholz Vice-Chairman HFCC SB  
Dennis Thompson Rapporteur HFCC SB  
Vladislav Cip HFCC Secretariat  
Jeff White Radio Miami (representing NASB)  
Thais White Radio Miami (representing NASB)  
Gary Stanley VT Merlin Communications (ABU-HFC Observer)  
[Jan-Willem Drexhage of Radio Netherlands and Bassil Zoubi of the Arab States Broadcasting Union also participated in portions of the meeting by speakerphone.]

### **A05 HFCC/ASBU conference**

The A05 HFCC/ASBU conference will be held in Mexico City, hosted by the National Association of Shortwave Broadcasters (NASB) 7th - 11th February 2005. Mexico City is home to two SW broadcasters, Radio Mil and Radio Educacion, who are co-sponsoring the conference.

### **B04 IRUS Campaign**

The next IRUS monitoring campaign is [was] scheduled for 16th to 22nd November. [This is the HFCC committee which has been set up to monitoring real usage of the shortwave spectrum, to compare the actual usage with the registered requirements. Arto Mujunen of the IBB monitoring office in Helsinki, Finland is in charge of this committee.] ABU-HFC members are very welcome to take part. [ABU-HFC is the Asia Pacific Broadcasting Union HF Committee.] The frequency band and time will not be announced in advance, to encourage Frequency Managers to update their schedules with actual usage only, in all frequency bands.

### **Cooperation with ABU-HFC**

The HFCC SB will encourage its members to take part in the A05 ABU-HFC conference, in Kuala Lumpur, 24th - 28th January 2005. They will be asked either to attend the meeting in person, or to take part via email. In previous ABU-HFC coordination conferences collisions have been determined by finding requirements that have coincident CIRAF zones. For the A05 ABU-HFC conference, the HFCC SB have offered to run the collision prediction software, before the conference and at the end of each day, so that each FMO [Frequency Management Organization] will be able to have a list containing calculated as well as coincident CIRAF zone collisions, at the 55 and 65 dB level.

## **ITU-R Matters**

The HFCC is still pursuing ITU-R Sector Membership that, due to an administration error at the ITU, has been delayed.

A WRC-07 HFCC Project Group has been formed to prepare and submit input documents for WRC-07 Agenda item 1.13. [This is the item regarding the need for extra spectrum by shortwave broadcasters between 4 and 10 MHz.] The group will be led by Geoff Spells of VT Merlin and its terms of reference will be:

- To update statistics on HFCC/ASBU/ABU-HFC schedules on a seasonal basis
- Prepare and submit input documents on broadcasting statistics to relevant groups, e.g. CEPT PT4, ITU-R WP6E, EBU, ABU, etc
- To follow the work in CEPT, ITU, EBU and ABU and to contribute suitable material in response to further queries

I reported on the progress of WRC-07 Agenda item 1.13 at the recent ITU-R WP6E meeting. This Agenda item is complex, as it also involves services represented by WP8A (mobile and amateur) and WP9C (fixed). WP8A and WP9C have queried the validity of the statistics provided by the broadcasters. WP6E have provided further information, which shows the statistics are a true picture of the usage in the HFBC bands. This document, 6E/TEMP/61, and the other WP6E output documents concerning HFBC are available on the HFCC web site [[www.hfcc.org](http://www.hfcc.org)].

## **PLT**

Two inputs were received from Sharad Sadhu [Chairman of the ABU-HFC], regarding strategies to tackle the PLT problem [known as BPL, or Broadband over Power Lines, in North America]. Sharad suggested that the problem of PLT could be raised at WRC-07 under Agenda item 1.13, as it threatens the amount of interference-free spectrum available to broadcasters. The HFCC SB thought this was a useful idea and should be explored by the WRC-07 HFCC Project Group.

## **DRM**

An extract of the HFCC/ASBU/ABU-HFC database, containing all DRM transmissions, will be used as the basis for the live schedule on the DRM web site. Therefore, FMOs [Frequency Management Organizations] should ensure that their DRM requirements are as accurate as possible. Additionally, all DRM requirements should be notified as such, and not hidden under the AM label.

## **Future conferences**

At the moment there are no hosts for the B05 HFCC/ASBU conference [to be held in August of 2005]. FMOs that have not previously hosted a coordination conference are urged to volunteer to host a future conference.

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## **HFCC MEXICO PLANS WELL UNDERWAY**

As you probably know, the NASB -- along with the IBB -- is sponsoring the A05 Conference of the HFCC/ASBU (High Frequency Coordinating Committee/Arab States Broadcasting Union) in Mexico City February 7-11, 2005.

Jeff White, Conference Chairman, says all is going very well with the conference preparations. He met with HFCC Steering Board members in Prague on November 5 to discuss plans for the meeting, and he will be making a short visit to Mexico in early December to make preliminary plans and meet with many of the local people who are involved. Jeff was able to secure many sponsorship agreements for the HFCC Conference at the recent DRM meetings in Dallas, as many of the prospective companies and organizations were present. NASB Board member Dennis Dempsey has also been actively involved in conference preparations and potential sponsorship arrangements.

As of late November, some 20 persons were already registered for the Conference. An overall participation of at least 100 is expected. As this is only the second time in the history of the HFCC that the conference has been in the Americas, this is an excellent opportunity for NASB members to take part in the meeting and see how shortwave frequency management is actually accomplished. Many NASB members and associate members are sending not only their frequency managers, but also general management personnel to the HFCC -- including KNLS, WYFR, WEWN, WRMI, HCJB, VT Merlin, TDF and others. NASB President Doug Garlinger will also be attending. George Ross and Jeff LeCureux from KTWR in Guam will be in charge of NASB frequency management at the conference, assisting the FCC.

The tentative Conference agenda is as follows, with event sponsorships noted:

### **Tentative Agenda- A05 HFCC Conference - Mexico City, Mexico**

#### ***Sunday, Feb. 6, 2005***

1000-1600 Registration desk opens at Hotel Marquis Reforma for delegate registration.

1600-2100 Optional tour of Mexico City by bus (cost approx. USD 30), "Historical and Modern Mexico." We will visit the city's main plaza, "Constitution Plaza" (also known as the "Zócalo"), one of the largest plazas in the world. In the plaza, we will see the Government Palace and the gigantic murals by painter Diego Rivera depicting more than 1200 people who illustrate the history of Mexico. We will also visit the Metropolitan Cathedral with its famous Altar of the Kings. We will have a panoramic view of the Templo Mayor ruins which have been excavated from the ancient city of Tenochtitlan, upon which Mexico City was constructed. We will continue with a visit to Alameda Park, the old Post Office and the Palace of Fine Arts. There will be an opportunity to have an optional dinner (each person pays his/her own meal) at an open-air restaurant with live Mariachi music.

#### ***Monday, February 7, 2005***

0700-0900 Breakfast on your own at the hotel.

0900-1800 Registration desk is open (except for lunch break) at hotel.

0900-1800 Internet Center is open in main meeting room, sponsored by VT Communications

1000-1100 Official conference opening at hotel - remarks by meeting hosts and HFCC/ASBU officials; opening plenary session.

1100-1130 Coffee break, sponsored by World Christian Broadcasting (KNLS in Anchor Point, Alaska)

1130-1230 Morning coordination in main meeting room at the hotel.

1230-1330 Lunch at the hotel restaurant. Optional group event; each person pays his/her own meal.

1330-1430 Afternoon coordination in main meeting room at the hotel.

1430-1500 Coffee break, sponsored by Comet North America

1500-1700 Afternoon coordination continues in main meeting room at the hotel.

1700-1800 Presentation in the main meeting room: "The Story of a Radio Station: Radio Mexico International, the Voice of Mexico to the World" by Ana Cristina Del Razo, former director of Radio Mexico International

1800 Buses leave hotel for reception at Radio Educación

1830-2030 Tour and reception at Radio Educación

2030 Buses leave Radio Educación for return trip to Hotel Marquis Reforma

2100 Dinner on your own at the hotel or at one of many hotels within walking distance in the "Zona Rosa" area.

### ***Tuesday, February 8, 2005***

0700-0900 Breakfast on your own at the hotel. 0900-1700 Registration desk is open (except for lunch break) at hotel.

0900-1700 Internet Center is open in main meeting room, sponsored by VT Communications

0900-1100 Morning coordination in main meeting room at hotel.

1100-1130 Coffee break, sponsored by the Broadcast and Communications Group of TCI, a Dielectric company

1130-1230 Morning coordination continues in main meeting room.

1230-1330 Lunch at hotel restaurant. Optional group event; each person pays for his/her own meal.

1330-1430 Afternoon coordination in main meeting room at hotel.

1430-1500 Coffee break, sponsored by DRS Broadcast Technology - Continental Electronics

1500-1700 Afternoon coordination continues in main meeting room.

1700 Buses leave hotel for Núcleo Radio Mil.

1730-1930 Tour of the corporate headquarters of Núcleo Radio Mil Communications, followed by a cocktail reception.

1930 Buses leave Radio Mil for Santa Fe Mall

2000-2100 An opportunity to explore the Santa Fe Mall -- largest in Latin America -- and do some shopping on your own.

2100-2300 Dinner at the Rainforest Cafe in Santa Fe Mall. This is a realistic indoor rainforest with jungle surroundings, cascading waterfalls and giant aquariums. The original menu selections are influenced by the cuisines of Mexico, Asia and the Caribbean. Optional group event; each person pays his/her own meal. (There are many other restaurants to choose from in the Mall, if you prefer.)

2300 Buses leave restaurant for hotel

### ***Wednesday, February 9, 2005***

0700-0900 Breakfast on your own at the hotel.

0900-1800 Registration desk is open (except for lunch break) at hotel.

0900-1800 Internet Center is open in main meeting room, sponsored by VT Communications

0900-1100 Morning coordination in main meeting room at hotel.

1100-1130 Coffee break, sponsored by the U.S. International Broadcasting Bureau (IBB)

1130-1230 Morning coordination continues in main meeting room.

1230-1330 Lunch at hotel restaurant. Optional group event; each person pays his/her own meal.

1330-1430 Afternoon coordination in main meeting room at hotel.

1430-1500 Coffee break (Sponsorship opportunity)

1500-1700 Afternoon coordination continues in main meeting room.

1700-1800 Presentation (to be announced) in main meeting room.

1900-2200 HFCC Dinner (Sponsored by RIZ Transmitters) at Hotel Marquis Reforma, including live DRM demonstration

### ***Thursday, February 10, 2005***

0700-0900 Breakfast on your own at the hotel.

0900-1800 Registration desk is open (except for lunch break) at hotel.

0900-1800 Internet Center is open in main meeting room, sponsored by VT Communications

0900-1100 Morning coordination in main meeting room at hotel.

1100-1130 Coffee break (Sponsorship opportunity)

1130-1230 Morning coordination continues in main meeting room.

1230-1330 Lunch in hotel restaurant. Optional group event; each person pays his/her own meal.

1330-1430 Afternoon coordination in main meeting room at hotel.

1430-1500 Coffee break (Sponsorship opportunity)

1500-1600 Afternoon coordination continues in main meeting room.

1600-1800 Plenary session

1800 The evening is free for sightseeing, shopping and dinner or your own. We will offer some suggestions.

### ***Friday, February 11, 2005***

0700-0900 Breakfast on your own at the hotel.

0900-1300 Registration desk open at hotel.

0900-1300 Internet Center is open in main meeting room, sponsored by VT Communications

0900-1100 Morning coordination in main meeting room at hotel.

1100-1130 Coffee break (Sponsorship opportunity)

1130-1200 Official closing of conference in main meeting room.

1200-1300 Farewell reception -- cocktails and hors d'oeuvres in the hotel Rotunda, sponsored by Thales Broadcast and Multimedia

1300-1400 Lunch in hotel restaurant. Optional group event; each person pays his/her own meal.

1400-2000 Optional tour by bus to the ancient pyramids of Teotihuacan and the Basilica of Guadalupe, on the outskirts of Mexico City (approx. USD 30 per person). We first visit the Basilica of Guadalupe, the largest shrine in Latin America to the Virgin Mary. Later we visit the ancient city of Teotihuacan, where you can walk along the Boulevard of the Dead and sense the grandeur of the "place of the Gods" while visiting the Pyramid of the Sun and the Pyramid of the Moon. We will also visit a handicraft center where you can purchase high-quality Mexican handicrafts, and there will be a stop for an optional dinner (each person pays his/her own meal) at one of the traditional restaurants of the region.

2000 Buses return to Hotel Marquis Reforma.

*Saturday, February 12, 2005 - Monday, February 14, 2005*

0900 Buses leave for an optional two-night trip to the popular tourist resort of Acapulco on the Pacific coast. En route, we will visit Cuernavaca, "the City of Eternal Spring," including its grand cathedral. We will continue to the city of Taxco, a place that preserves its history with its original cobblestone streets and the exquisite temple of Santa Prisca. We will stop at a small silver jewelry factory where you can watch artisans doing their traditional silver crafting work. After an optional lunch in Taxco, we will continue to the beautiful port of Acapulco where you will have until Monday morning to visit (on your own) "La Quebrada" (where swimmers dive off mountain cliffs into the Pacific Ocean below), the "Pie de la Cuesta" with its spectacular sunsets and occasional sightings of dolphins and whales, Port Marques, and boat excursions in Acapulco Bay. You can also enjoy the beautiful beach right behind the hotel, and the famous Acapulco nightlife with its discotheques, bars and restaurants. The tour will cost approximately USD 125 per person in double occupancy (or approximately USD 190 per person for single occupancy), and will include luxury bus transportation round-trip from Mexico City to Acapulco and two nights' accommodation in Acapulco at a hotel on the beach. Buses will return to Mexico City on the afternoon of Monday, Feb. 14.

Most of the participants registered so far are planning to take part in the tour to Acapulco after the Conference, and many are bringing their family members along as well.

In addition to the event sponsorships mentioned in the tentative agenda above, NASB member station WEWN/EWTN Global Catholic Radio will be providing a computer specialist throughout the week and conference bags, and NASB member WRMI in Miami is providing a large number of international telephone calls, faxes and other organizational expenses.

We are still in need of a few more sponsors for coffee breaks. Organizations interested in sponsoring an event at the HFCC Conference should contact Jeff White at radiomiami9@cs.com, or by telephone at +1-786-942-4205 or by fax at +1-305-559-8186.

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**NASB Members:**

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