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Shortwave Around the World

A Brief Look at Some Trends in Shortwave Ownership and Use
Based on recent InterMedia surveys in Bosnia, China, Kuwait and Nigeria

Summary of a presentation by Stephen Hegarty, Deputy Research Director of InterMedia, at the 2006 NASB Annual Meeting. InterMedia is contracted by organizations such as the U.S. Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) to conduct audience research studies.

A Brief Overview

Shortwave competes against an ever-wider array of media and delivery systems -- from satellite TV to the Internet. Shortwave radio ownership and use is generally low and on the decline in most regions. Africa is an exception. Shortwave has a niche audience. The heaviest users tend to be well-educated men. The data presented here are not exhaustive, but are representative of trends in a few regions.

Shortwave use in Bosnia peaked during the Cold War in a closed, restricted media environment. Television is the most popular medium in this country, but radio remains a vibrant medium. More local choices have undermined the importance of shortwave as a "go to" source for alternatives. The emergence of Internet radio mirrors the decline of shortwave in Bosnia. The ownership of shortwave radios in the country was 33% in 2001, 31% in 2002, 29% in 2003 and 2004, and 23% in 2005. The weekly use of shortwave was 14% in 2001 and 4% in 2005.

China: Not a Strong Radio Market

There has never been a strong "radio culture" in China. Regular use rates are among the lowest in the world. There were no significant "peak" years for shortwave use, as there were in eastern Europe. Though percentages are low, the numbers still represent millions. Internet is all the rage in China, but not really for radio. The ownership of shortwave radios in China was 13% in 2002, 12% in 2004, and 4% in 2005. The weekly use of shortwave was 4% in 2002 and 3% in 2005.

Kuwait: Satellite Television is King

Radio is used widely and frequently in Kuwait, but less as a source of news. Satellite TV has become the dominant force in Arab media environments -- especially in the Gulf -- contributing to the decline of shortwave. Internet use is extremely high in Kuwait, but not so much for radio. Ownership of shortwave radios was 46% in 2003, 32% in 2004, and 15% in 2005. The weekly use of shortwave was 12% in 2003, 6% in 2004, and 1% in 2005.

Nigeria: Shortwave Still Thrives

Throughout sub-Saharan Africa, radio remains the most widely accessible and heavily used medium. Shortwave is still very much a mass medium in this region. Nigerians use radio most often for news, music and religious programs. The ownership of shortwave radios in Nigeria was 54% in 2003, 64% in 2004, and 63% in 2005. The weekly use of shortwave was 29% in 2003, 43% in 2004, and 45% in 2005.

In Nigeria, where shortwave has a mass audience, all demographic groups use shortwave regularly. In Bosnia, where it is a niche medium, the heaviest users are well-educated, 35 to 49 year old men.

A Word on Internet Radio

In Bosnia, the trend for PC ownership and Internet radio listening mirrors shortwave -- in the opposite direction. More people say they "never" use shortwave (from 28% in 2001 to 54% in 2005). They turn instead to the web to sample radio programming from around the world. The ownership of shortwave radios was 33% in 2001, compared to an 8% ownership of personal computers. However, by 2005, shortwave ownership had dropped to 23% and PC ownership had risen to 20%. The weekly use of shortwave in Bosnia dropped from 8% in 2003 to 4% in

2005, while weekly use of Internet radio rose from 1% in 2003 to 9% in 2005.

NASB Audience Reaction

These InterMedia surveys, conducted for the U.S. BBG, contain mostly bad news for shortwave broadcasters, with the exception of the shortwave scene in Africa. Adil Mina of Continental Electronics, who travels regularly to China, asked how many persons were surveyed in that country. Mr. Hegarty said that there were 10,500 interviews -- a large number perhaps, but Adil Mina pointed out that China has a population of 1.5 billion. He questioned the survey results, pointing out that in rural areas the rate of shortwave listenership is much higher.

Don Messer of the DRM Consortium, and formerly with the IBB, said he has done a lot of work with statistics, and his opinion is that the rural population is often not taken into account enough in these types of surveys. He also emphasized that the introduction of DRM will make a difference in the use of shortwave in places like China.

Kim Elliott, a VOA audience research officer, said that companies like InterMedia generally go to great lengths to make sure that they get correct samples of urban and rural populations, for example. Nevertheless, he feels that radio has great potential in China, with Chinese companies like Tecsun making shortwave receivers and with lots of new programming becoming available.

John White of Thomson Broadcast & Multimedia said that his company sells a lot of shortwave transmitters, and like Adil Mina of Continental, he questions surveys that show shortwave listenership is declining. Alan Heil, a former deputy director of the Voice of America, said that it is also important to take note of the type of audience -- not just the quantity -- that listens to shortwave, which includes the presidents of many countries around the world.

Mike Adams, Vice President of NASB, asked Mr. Hegarty about the shortwave audience in North America. Unfortunately, InterMedia has not done surveys of the audience in this part of the world, but Mr. Hegarty said they should perhaps do so. Mike asked if the NASB could theoretically participate in this kind of survey in North America. The answer was yes.

Note: Reports covering other presentations from the NASB 2006 Annual Meeting will be carried in upcoming issues of the NASB Newsletter.

NASB Board and Officers

At the NASB annual meeting in Silver Spring, Maryland on May 12, the membership voted to re-elect Charles Caudill of KNLS to a second three-year term on the Board of Directors. Glen Tapley of WEWN was elected to fill out the remaining year of Dennis Dempsey's Board term, since Dennis has left WEWN. Adrian Peterson of Adventist World Radio was elected to fill out the remaining year of Paul Hunter's Board term, since Paul is no longer representing any member station. And Jeff White of WRMI was elected to the Board to replace Doug Garlinger, who is no longer working for a member station. Mike Adams of FEBC and Elder Jacob O. Meyer of WMLK continue their Board terms.

At the meeting of the new Board, Jeff White was elected President. Mike Adams was re-elected Vice President. Dan Elyea of WYFR (who is not on the Board) was re-elected as Secretary-Treasurer, and Thais White of WRMI was elected Assistant Secretary-Treasurer.

DRM REPORT

(Rich D`Angelo, PA, NASWA Flashsheet May 14 via DXLD)

USDRM/National Association of Shortwave Broadcasters (NASB) held a two day meeting in Silver Spring, Maryland. Adventist World Radio played host this year at their beautiful headquarters facility just outside Washington, DC. The meeting was recorded for distribution through the Internet as a Podcast so it may be available for your listening pleasure. [See the NASB website for more information as this becomes available.]

The joint meetings were attended by broadcasters, transmission providers, transmitter and antenna manufacturers, regulatory industry, receiver manufacturers, radio amateurs, and shortwave listeners. Adil Mina of Continental Electronics showed a Sangean receiver that came off the production line just four weeks ago, which is marketed under the Roberts name. The first production run was 150 but Sangean is now beginning another run. The price was 299 Euros. The next batch of \$200.00 or less is expected to be available by August. He expects them to be available before the IBC conference in the summer. Adil expects that in three years or less DRM receivers will be \$50.00 or less mainly because of the strong interest the Chinese have in manufacturing them. I anticipate either Adil or a member of his team to be available at the Winter SWL Festival in Kulpsville next March to bring us up-to-date on DRM progress both on the production end and receiving end.

Don Messer, Chairman of the DRM Consortium Technical Committee, spoke about the introduction of DRM in the Americas. He firmly believes that within 2 years DRM broadcasts will be available either commercially or as public broadcasting or both with people using affordable receivers. The 26 MHz with line of sight coverage seems to be the model that is gaining the most traction and could be ready for deployment within two years, provided the FCC makes some rule changes.

Kim Elliott conducted ongoing demonstrations using two Roberts DRM portable radios, without an external antenna, with mixed results. DRM is either "in" or "out" but not in between. These receivers are also capable of analog shortwave reception. The programs were transmitted by Radio Canada International in Sackville.

The meeting was well worth attending as experts in the evolving DRM field shared their knowledge and experiences as this new technology emerges. Although receiver progress is slow in developing, it appears that the pace is picking up with many of the engineers predicting cheap portables coming in the next two years. In the meanwhile, early adopters will need a little bit of an experimentation mindset as the technology develops. Watch NASWA Shortwave Center for a comprehensive report, and maybe some pictures, of this two-day meeting.

USA DRM Group Annual Meeting

May 11, 2006

by Ulis Fleming (k3lu@radiointel.com)

Excerpted by permission from RadioIntel.com. Opinions expressed are those of the author.

It was with great pleasure to have the privilege to attend and participate in the 2006 [USA DRM](#) Group Annual Meeting held this year at [Adventist World Radio](#) HQ in Silver Spring, Maryland USA. This event was co-hosted along with the annual [NASB](#) meeting which was held the following day. In attendance, along with North American Shortwave Broadcasters members and a small handful of radio listeners, were some of the leading minds on the cutting edge of DRM technology and developments.

A podcast of the meeting will be available for download in the near future but here are some of the highlights of the meeting that I thought were interesting.

Adil Mina of [Continental Electronics](#), one of the companies that make transmitters, gave a very charismatic and positive speech on the outlook for DRM. Mr. Mina mentioned that Sangean has made 150 DRM-DAB (Roberts MP40) receivers in their first production run and they are in the second phase of production. It is expected that these radios will sell for 299 Euros and that perhaps by summer more DRM radios will be available for under \$200 U.S., though no specific manufacturers or models were mentioned. Mr. Mina also noted that there are several commercial groups expressing interest in broadcasting on shortwave in DRM, and the U.S. Department of Defense is evaluating DRM, though for what purpose was not mentioned. One of the appealing aspects of DRM Mr. Mina pointed out is that a country the size of the continental U.S. can be covered with only 5 transmitters and with minimal power.

The DRM Consortium Technical Committee Chairman Don Messer spoke of the technical aspects of DRM technology, developments and upcoming tests to be done in Canada, Mexico, Brazil and the USA. It is anticipated that DRM will be tested on MW in the U.S. One idea that Mr. Messer mentioned was the possibility to utilize the current allocated and under used 11 meter SW band (26 MHz) for regional broadcasting. Forty-three channels could be set up in this band for regional/local use via DRM and offer very good local coverage with only a few hundred watts, and a city the size of Mexico City can be covered with 2 to 6 kW. Mr Messer also acknowledged that some current FCC regulations would have to be changed to allow domestic SW U.S. broadcasting, but this was one of the possible uses of DRM in the future. The 26 MHz broadcasting scenario has also caught the attention of NPR (National Public Radio).

Alan Heil, former deputy director of the Voice of America and author of "Voice of America: A History", gave a very moving speech. Mr. Heil's speech, "Why Is America Jamming Itself?", addressed the illogical and unnecessary dismantling of the VOA now at a time when the USA's voice of public diplomacy needs to be heard globally more than ever and especially in English. Mr. Heil points out that the VOA's dismantling comes at a time when other countries are

ramping up their international services on the Internet and the airwaves. After Mr. Heil's speech, Adil Mina noted that China has actively been copying transmitters and from 2000-2006 purchased more than 40 HF transmitters. In 2006 China will install 7 new shortwave Chinese made transmitters in Cuba.

The Radios

Thanks to Dr. Kim Andrew Elliott and others at the meeting, a table was set up with DRM receivers to tune in to the special broadcasts for the USA DRM Group Meeting from CBC/Radio Canada International on 11730 kHz. The radios that were on display included a Ten Tec RX320D. The radio that was first introduced at the meeting by Mr. Adil Mina, the Sangean (Roberts MP40), is a DAB and DRM digital radio that covers AM (MW), FM and Shortwave. Also featured in this radio is a MP3 player/recorder that allows the listener to "time shift" listen. There is also an SD memory card slot on the right side of the radio.

Final Thoughts

I walked away from the meeting feeling that analog will be around for a good while yet, though in time perhaps, and maybe not even DRM, there will come a day when digital radio is as common as analog is today. But how long will this take is anyone's guess. If there ever was a catch 22 situation, this one is it. If you are upset that you are not able to go out today and purchase a DRM radio off the shelves, it's not the DRM Consortium's fault. They really have no special power in forcing manufacturers to take the lead by producing DRM stand alone radios. Radio manufacturers are a business and that means they expect to make money making radios. If there's a demand for these radios then the manufacturers will follow.

Today not a single U.S. broadcaster has converted a transmitter for DRM capability. It was mentioned at the meeting that most shortwave transmitters can be DRM ready within a few hours with the right engineers, but this also takes money which is something that many shortwave U.S. broadcasters either don't have or are not yet willing to give up. If this was 25 years ago, we would probably be seeing the pockets of the VOA taking an active lead in this process, but since they are being sliced and gutted like a fish, that isn't going to happen either. The 26 MHz reutilization scenario seems like a good one. There is without a doubt a demand and need in the USA for good community and local radio.

I hate to say it, but the leadership and push on DRM is going to come from Europe and not from U.S. consumers. It will be the Europeans who are going to jump start the drive for market demand on DRM radios. At least for now it seems that Sangean has done something. Let's see how well it does once the radio becomes widely available.

The day ended with a most enjoyable dinner, thanks to the folks at [TCI International](#), [Continental Electronics](#), Thomson Broadcast & Multimedia and the [Assemblies of Yahweh/WMLK Radio](#). I got the lucky seat and sat next to AWR's Adrian Peterson. Mr. Peterson is a walking encyclopedia of radio history and a real friend to radio listeners worldwide.

Why is America Jamming Itself?

Text of an address by Alan Heil, former Deputy Director of the Voice of America, at the American Shortwave Conference on May 11, 2006. Mr. Heil is the author of the book, "Voice of America: A History."

Thank you for organizing this conference and inviting me to brief you on the present and future planned reductions in U.S. international broadcasting.

A couple of years ago, the World Radio TV Handbook said in its annual review of the world's HF broadcasters that the Voice of America seemed headed toward extinction, that it was destined to "go the way of the dodo bird." I thought at the time that was a gross exaggeration. Today, I'm not so sure.

Just a few hours ago, VOA's last operating transmitters in Greece --- near the northern city of Kavala --- went dark. George Jacobs certainly remembers when the Kavala Relay Station was built, and I visited the site when it was under construction nearly forty years ago. Kavala, more than any other station, strengthened VOA's signal into the former Soviet Union and much of Eastern Europe and Turkey. Until this morning, it had provided VOA's only medium wave signal to Turkey's most important urban area, Istanbul.

Kavala's closure, in addition to shutdowns earlier this spring of the VOA station on the island of Rhodes, means that as of this hour, VOA has just 145 shortwave frequency listings in English on its worldwide schedule... compared with 280 frequency listings (nearly twice that number) at the turn of the century.

All this, as Congress considers the Bush administration's request to virtually eliminate all remaining VOA English broadcasts around the world, except for a few highly-targeted programs to Africa. Beyond that, the plan is to abolish all programs in Croatian, Georgian, Greek, Turkish and Thai --- and all radio programs in Russian, Hindi and four languages in a region called "the Balkans tinderbox."

If the cuts go through, VOA will rank sixth among the G-8 nations in on-air hours of English, our own language, as Al Jazeera, Russia, China and Iran all expand their English language radio, TV and Internet services! VOA, as of next fall, may well have abolished the radio units in 20 of the 54 language services it had on the air in early 2004. "Incredible... impossible..." said one senior American diplomat.

Pondering all this makes one absolutely nostalgic. I suppose one of the highlights of VOA's past --- and I begin my book with an account of it --- was the coverage of the pro-democracy demonstrations in China during the spring of 1989. Shortwave then in an unjammed environment enabled us to reach tens of millions of residents in the Peoples Republic of China. You recall that the protest movement was crushed during the Tiananmen massacre of June 3 that year. About a dozen days before the Peoples Liberation Army was unleashed against the people there, we should have guessed what lay ahead. Lets listen to VOA's evening newscast of May 21, 1989 to see why:

[TAPE OF VOA TIANANMEN COVERAGE WITH JAMMING]

If you listen to VOA Mandarin Chinese just a few hours from now as the morning broadcast begins, you'll hear jamming just like that --- as intense as when it resumed against America's Voice nearly 17 years ago. Likewise, Beijing is jamming or co-channeling the Tibetan and Cantonese broadcasts of the Voice, and all the transmissions in local languages of Radio Free Asia. President Bush brought the jamming up with visiting Chinese President Hu Jin Tao during the latter's visit here a couple of weeks ago. Hu's response is unknown, but we can guess what he said.

The only U.S. government broadcast service remaining to China in the clear today is none other than its English service, nine hours daily. But if the cuts go through, that service will be axed to Asia as of next September. Two million Chinese listeners will be cut off, unless they want to tune to the limited vocabulary Special English broadcasts. Incredible.. impossible. Our own government jamming itself, all to save the equivalent of about three percent of the U.S. international broadcasting budget next year? The Pentagon spends about that much every sixteen minutes.

In this era when Congress can appropriate approximately ten times that much for a Bridge to Nowhere in Alaska, it seems fair for us to ask our Senators and Representatives to reverse the VOA cuts --- in English and all strategic languages along with their associated shortwave, AM and FM transmission costs. It reminds me of the story of the Chinese professor who met VOA's News Chief during a visit to China in 1986. He recalled that what he had learned by listening to VOA enabled him to pass a university entrance exam and pursue a promising academic career. In his words: "I owe my life to you."

The budgeteers get to work on Capitol Hill next week, shuffling funds about. You can help persuade them to stop the cuts... and save America's big bird of international broadcasting from extinction, at least for a few more years. America's authentic, universal voice should be loud and clear in this post 9/11 era. Congress should be receptive to the idea that for millions of radio listeners, the news and information provided by VOA is America's Bridge to Everywhere, their window on a world of both peril and promise.

Fact Sheet about VOA prepared by Alan Heil

As the United States approaches the fifth anniversary of 9/11, the Voice of America – its once powerful flagship network on the world's airwaves – is being reduced to a mere whisper. The administration budget request for FY 07 calls for the elimination of VOA broadcasts in English, our dominant mother tongue, to all areas of the world except for a few hours daily to Africa.

This decision – from a purely strategic perspective – makes no sense. English is the primary world language of trade, education, print media, and the Internet. As the Arab World (Al-Jazeera), China, Iran, Russia, and France ramp up their English international services on the airwaves and in cyberspace, America is pulling its service down. Iran announced March 19 that it will establish a second English language news station for listeners abroad later this year or early in 2007.

Furthermore, VOA radio broadcasts in Russian, Serbian, Bosnian, Macedonian, Albanian, and Hindi will be terminated. Loss of VOA's 60-year-old Russian service on radio will be devastating amid increasing signs of authoritarianism in the Kremlin. Silencing radio broadcasts to the four widely-listened to Balkans services as Kosovo continues to be a tinderbox, seems

terribly mis-timed --- as does cutting Hindi as Congress is set to debate US-India nuclear ties.

VOA's Turkish, Greek, Croatian, Georgian, and Thai services will also be shut down. Turkey --- where VOA has an audience of 2.5 million --- is a strategically vital, but unstable, bridge between the West and the Muslim world and is an indispensable ally in the war on terror. Georgia, an emerging democracy, is threatened by Russia. There is a Muslim insurgency in Thailand, where two large VOA relay stations beaming programs to China, Burma and Bangladesh are located. Croatia and Greece are in the volatile Balkans.

These reductions would coincide with substantial enhancements in U.S. regional international broadcasting at the expense of its global reach. The budget savings realized from the cuts amount to about two percent of the administration's \$672 million request for U.S. international broadcasting next year. The savings are equivalent to approximately what the Pentagon spends in 20 minutes. Yet, the absence of VOA English in four of five continents would mean: The loss of all VOA English transmissions to East Asia. More than two million Chinese will be denied a window on America, on the world, and on events in their own country. VOA and Radio Free Asia broadcasts in Mandarin, Cantonese, and Tibetan are heavily jammed or blocked, as are their websites in these languages. Only English reaches Chinese in the clear, and more people are learning English in China than speak English in North America.

Advocates of cuts in English contend that English shortwave audiences are small, but they ignore the fact that these programs are simulcast or rebroadcast on FM and AM stations in 48 countries - from The Philippines to Guyana. Worldwide, VOA English reaches an estimated 13.3 million listeners, many of them among the most influential in their societies who turn to VOA on shortwave in crises. Among them are U.S. citizens who seek information on emergency evacuation procedures in times of conflict or unrest.

Voice of America remains an effective, but relatively low-cost, element of U.S. public diplomacy. Silencing America's voice -- especially in the English language -- would be foolish and unnecessary. It is urgent that either the administration or Congress reverse course and ensure that this vital national network remains viable in the post 9/11 age.

26 MHz Low Power Digital Shortwave Broadcasting

Exciting New Alternative for Local Coverage

Article reprinted from Thomson Broadcast & Multimedia Radio News Spring 2006

The introduction of DRM offers broadcasters cost-effective broadcasting solutions, even for local coverage, using 26 MHz broadcasting systems. Depending on the topography, a 26 MHz low power shortwave digital transmitter can cover an area of 3,000 to 10,000 square kilometers with only 10 kW of transmitter power.

Attractive New Alternative

The 26 MHz broadcasting band, rarely in use in international broadcasting, has 50 channels, each with a bandwidth of 10 kHz. As opposed to the usual international shortwave coverage using skywave propagation, the 26 MHz system relies on "direct wave" propagation. This "free-space propagation" phenomenon is comparable to the

situation in VHF-range.

Hence, the specifications of the antenna system should take into account the different propagation phenomena as well as the fact that skywave effects may cause undesirable interference either from the local system in remote areas or from remote systems in the local area.

Meeting Specifications

To overcome those problems, maximum fieldstrength should be created in the service area and a minimum of radiation should go elsewhere. Taking this into consideration the antenna system has to fulfill the following requirements:

1. Optimized antenna radiation characteristic to match the coverage area
2. Minimized radiation towards ionosphere
3. Reliability, efficiency, easy to maintain

The efficiency of a transmitting system can be significantly improved through proper shaping of the antenna directional characteristic. Applying this rule of thumb to the 26 MHz DRM broadcasting system, we see that the pattern must be matched to the service area by shaping the azimuthal pattern and tilting the main beam directly (line-of-sight) into this area while taking into account the elevated location of the antenna.

On the other hand, thanks to the vertical pattern shape and negative tilt angle, the radiated power towards sky is minimized and interferences are reduced.

Antenna Design

The azimuthal and vertical pattern of the antenna system can be controlled most efficiently by the number of radiating elements, the arrangement of the dipoles within the antenna array and the phasing of the dipoles. This design concept allows a customer specific shaping of the vertical radiation characteristic and an optimized performance for coverage. Interferences with other 26 MHz systems are avoided through considerably reducing radiation towards sky.

HCJB Ends English Broadcasts from Ecuador in May

(News Release From HCJB World Radio)

Radio Station HCJB, the Voice of the Andes, will air its final English-language broadcasts on international shortwave radio from Ecuador on Saturday, May 6, even as the station's English Language Service shifts its emphasis toward teaching English as a second language. English was one of the first two languages, along with Spanish, to air when the station began broadcasting in Quito on Christmas Day, 1931.

Station Director Doug Weber calls the move a refocusing or "taking some of the resources that

we've been using on the broadcasts and focusing that into English-as-a-second-language (ESL) things—programming that will go out on our other (mostly Spanish) outlets.”

This follows a May 2003 refocusing of the station's outreach from Ecuador that saw English broadcasts and production drastically reduced. “Since then we've only been doing English-language transmissions for 2½ hours a day,” Weber said. “We haven't received a lot of response from those transmissions, but we have received a lot of response from some of our ESL programs.”

Weber also cited the transfer of English Language Service Director Jeff Ingram to HCJB World Radio's newest regional office in Singapore where he will assume media management responsibilities. He was the last full-time English-language radio producer, with newer staff concentrating their efforts on ESL follow-up.

“We've had a very loyal audience and we're grateful to them,” Weber said of the nearly 75 years of relationship via the radio. “And we're grateful to the Lord as well for the opportunity to be able to minister to so many people through our English-language broadcasts for so many years.”

As to possible future changes, Weber said while specific plans aren't in place, “We are in a process of evaluating all of our ministries in all of our languages to try to determine what are the most effective things that we're doing and try and put our emphasis on the things that we're doing well.”

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Update

One English-language program from HCJB received a last-minute reprieve. The popular "DX Party Line," a weekly half-hour program for radio enthusiasts produced and hosted by Allen Graham, will continue as a weekly 15-minute program as of June 2006. It will be aired by HCJB's shortwave station in Australia, and in the Americas by WWCR in Tennessee and NASB member station WRMI in Miami. There is a report from the NASB on DX Party Line on the third weekend of each month.

DRM General Assembly Meeting

Istanbul, Turkey, March 27-30 2006

Mike Adams
VP NASB

The main DRM meetings happen 4 times a year, but the General Assembly is the main meeting of the year where elections also take place. It was no surprise to see Peter Senger of DW re-elected as the Chairman of the steering board.

There were meetings of the Broadcasters' Group (BG), and the Technical and Commercial Committees (TC & CC) as well.

At the CC we got an update from Don Messer regarding DRM on MW in the Americas (ITU Region 2). Previously DRM had been approved for use on SW and MW in Regions 1 & 3. A broadcaster can already start using DRM on MW in America if they don't cause interference to stations in another country, or by bilateral agreement with a bordering country. If you want to broadcast internationally across a region covering several countries, it will be important to have ITU regional approval. One station that might fall in this category would be the TWR 100 kW MW station off the coast of Venezuela. To make a change to the Region 2 rules, the ITU needs to call a regional conference, and Don informed us that there has finally been a call for such a conference to sort out all the legalities to allow DRM on the air on MW.

While the work of the TC is decreasing, the Commercial Committee has much more to do as DRM launches in Europe and other markets. One question that was being asked was "When is the first real radio going to be for sale?" We were fortunate to have a member of RadioScape (who make the DRM module) at the meetings. At the time of the meeting he said we were only weeks away from having the last batch of trial radios before production could begin. As promised, these Roberts radios were delivered to many DRM members and were on display at NAB and will be shown at the NASB meeting in Washington, DC. The only thing that remains is for those who are testing these 200 radios to give their final feedback to Roberts before production. DRM members are planning to make an order for the first 1,000 radios directly to Roberts to get production started. After that, production and sales should begin flowing.

While many have been quite anxious that radios did not make it into the stores at Christmas, John Sykes of the BBC reminded us that we should not be concerned by the timeline, as DRM is making very good progress compared to the roll-out of other technologies like DAB, XM/Sirius and of course IBOC/HD Radio. John urged broadcasters not too give up now, and if anything, increase broadcasts.

In the Broadcasters group we also discussed the future rollout of DRM in Asia. While the BBC and DW have converted transmitters for DRM, they have not begun transmissions to Asia. In general, it was recommended that a launch in Asia would be the next priority after Europe. On the other hand, Radio New Zealand has installed a new SW transmitter that will fully simulcast all their broadcasts in analog and digital SW to all of Oceania. [See the next article.] We reviewed all the installations and preparations that all broadcasters are making in the region, and it is quite clear that a launch of DRM in Asia in 2007 is possible. It was recommended that we look forward to launching for the ABU meeting in 2007 or, at the latest, for the 2008 Olympics

in Beijing.

DRM continues to progress and, once we see radios in the store, the last piece of the puzzle will finally be in place. Stay tuned!

Radio New Zealand Goes Digital

Article reprinted from Thomson Broadcast and Multimedia Radio News Spring 2006

The Pacific will soon be serviced around the clock with a live DRM signal. Radio New Zealand International (RNZI), Radio New Zealand's overseas broadcasting service is taking the new Thomson digital 100 kW shortwave transmitter into regular operation shortly. RNZI contracted Thomson in 2004 for the supply and installation of a new shortwave transmitter fully equipped for digital DRM operation.

RNZI started its overseas service on shortwave with an analogue 100 kW shortwave transmitter from Thomson-CSF in the 1990's from the Rangitaiki transmission site. During 2005 the station building was prepared for the new TSW 2100 D. Installation and commissioning works on the new transmitter were successfully carried out in late 2005.

The TSW 2100 D, equipped with the advanced transmitter control system ECOS2, is capable of fully automated operation. For digital operation, the Thomson Skywave 2000 DRM Multiplexer Cirrus and the DRM Modulator Stratus are fully integrated for automated operation. With the same equipment it is also possible to switch over to analogue operation in a few seconds using the normal DSB or the power saving DCC modulation modes. This was a significant requirement of RNZ because during natural disasters in the Pacific area, like tsunamis or cyclones, the transmitter will be used in analogue mode for rescue and emergency broadcasting service.

Re-Broadcasting Operation

RNZI have chosen the TSW 2100 D shortwave transmitter to cover a large area in the Pacific. The main audience will listen to RNZI's FM rebroadcasted speech program at all the small Pacific islands.

Such a program distribution in this special situation was the best available solution to cover normal operation in DRM mode for the re-broadcasting service and also emergency broadcasting in analogue mode. The DRM service is intended principally for news, current affairs and sports. It offers a reliable alternative to the use of satellite broadcasting that is vulnerable to weather conditions and political interference.

RNZ Chief Executive and Editor in Chief Peter Cavanagh says the decision to purchase from Thomson recognizes the very significant contribution the company has made towards the DRM system since its invention in 1995.

The transmission site in Rangitaiki, located in the center of the North Island about 60 km away

from the city of Taupo, is unmanned. For this reason the station is fully remote controlled from the RNZ House located in New Zealand's capital city, Wellington, about 500 km away.

HCJB Pifo Site Closedown (News Release From HCJB World Radio)

Voice of the Andes Begins Antenna Removal, Scrutinizes Shortwave's Role

Even as HCJB World Radio has begun dismantling shortwave radio antennas at its Ecuador broadcast site in Pifo, strategic opportunities for spreading the gospel via radio are emerging for the mission.

To accommodate new international airport construction near the capital city of Quito, missionary engineers and national staff have lowered a two-antenna curtain array that Radio Station HCJB, the "Voice of the Andes," formerly used to air programs to the South Pacific and Europe. In 2003 the mission switched to local and regional AM and FM broadcasts in these regions while refocusing its Ecuador-based international shortwave outreach on Latin America.

Other antennas will also be dismantled in accordance with the mission's late-December agreement with the Quito Airport Corporation (CORPAQ) which is compensating the mission for labor, but not providing funds for new site construction.

"We know that 30 towers at the Pifo site have to come down by December 2007," explained Jim Estes, director of HCJB World Radio's Latin America region, referring to antenna systems that could obstruct the approach of landing planes. Pifo is a town about 15 miles east of Quito.

Of 48 towers sustaining 32 antenna systems on the 110-acre site, another 18 lower-height antennas---whose signals do reach Latin America---will not impede approach. But those too will be dismantled by the time airport operations are expected to begin in 2009.

Mission leadership has determined that the station will not risk potential radio interference to future air traffic communications once commercial flights begin. Barring unforeseen circumstances, all transmissions from the Pifo site (including Spanish, Portuguese, German, Low German, English and various indigenous languages, including Quichua) are expected to end sometime in 2009.

Beyond that, Estes and Radio Director Doug Weber are considering various options, including the idea of building a new, smaller site in Ecuador as the mission reviews how shortwave radio in Ecuador fits into its objectives of reaching the world for Christ. Other options include buying airtime from other broadcasters or placing transmitters at other sites owned by likeminded missions.

"We're going through a process right now with our engineering crew of studying all three of those options to see what the cost is," Estes said. "And cost is one of the issues for us. We're trying to be as economical as we can be."

A 100-kilowatt transmitter has already been shipped from Pifo to HCJB World Radio-Australia's shortwave site at Kununurra. That facility began transmissions in mostly Asian

languages (in addition to English) in January 2003. Staff at the Australian site expect the transmitter to be on the air by early April.

Ten shortwave transmitters remain in Ecuador where Radio Station HCJB began broadcasting from Quito in 1931. The international transmitter site was later moved to Pifo in the early 1950s. Four of those transmitters were designed and built at the HCJB World Radio Engineering Center in Elkhart, Ind., including a powerful 500,000-watt unit.

Changes at Pifo are not expected to diminish the mission's participation in the World by Radio (previously known as World by 2000) effort begun in 1985 whereby Christian international broadcasters committed to make gospel broadcasts available in all the world's major languages.

Of the 28 World by Radio languages involving HCJB World Radio, those that once aired from Quito have since been shifted to other locations, including a shortwave site in the U.K. that reaches the Euro-Asia and North Africa/Middle East regions.

Of more than a dozen languages that air from Australia, two---Bhojpuri and Chattisgarhi, both spoken in India---are World by Radio languages. Still other World by Radio languages are aired by local stations and networks worldwide.

"We're involved in radio all around the world, but our involvement is much different than what we've done historically here from Ecuador," Estes said. "It's more of an involvement where we're helping local people develop their radio ministries to reach their own people.

"Here in Latin America we've helped [radio ministries] everywhere from Buenos Aires up to Havana with such things as studios, equipment, technical advice and training on how to do radio," he added. "It's quite exciting to see." Since the 1990s, the mission has aided local Christian radio endeavors in some 300 cities in more than 100 countries while facilitating network programming via satellite in all but one of its five global regions.

Assistance to local partners is facilitated by the engineering center, and the center's pioneering work in digital shortwave radio also presses on, with continued development and testing of Digital Radio Mondial (DRM) equipment---digital broadcasting for the shortwave transmitters produced there.

The Pifo site is part of that project, said Weber, who also heads the DRM task force for HCJB World Radio. "We have participated in DRM tests from down here with the DRM consortium, and we will continue to do tests over the next few years," he explained. "We are very much monitoring DRM in its development in Latin America, hoping that we can eventually use that technology and be a pioneer within Latin America, not only in digital shortwave but in digital AM."

An announcement 10 years ago had alerted the mission's engineers that Quito's long-awaited new airport might be built just six miles from the mission's shortwave facilities at Pifo. Impending changes looked more certain by mid-1997 when aviation authorities said that due to potential interference, HCJB needed to dismantle its Pifo installations.

Subsequent plans to dismantle and move the Pifo installation to Ecuador's coast were first tabled in 2003 by mission leadership, and later scrapped due to concerns about increased energy costs. Electricity for the high-powered transmitters has been generated at a mission-built hydroelectric plant in nearby Papallacta.

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