

**NEWS RELEASE International
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For immediate release

IARU Report: Week Three of WRC-03

The third week of WRC-03 had some exciting moments, but led to no final conclusions on the key Amateur Radio issues. We may not know for certain until sometime Thursday, 3 July, how the 7-MHz issue will turn out. Readers should refer to the previous IARU releases dated 11, 26 and 23 June for necessary background to understand this report. They are available on the IARU Web site at www.iaru.org

Agenda item 1.23 (7 MHz realignment): Before reading what happened during the week on our most important agenda item, it is worth recalling that there is strong pressure for the conference to reach its decisions by consensus. Votes are not taken except as an absolute last resort. This gives a determined minority considerable leverage to influence the result.

Lengthy discussions and off-line negotiations between delegates and regional coordinators resulted in agreement among the supporters of a 300-kHz worldwide amateur allocation on a common formula to achieve that result. This compromise called for a two-stage implementation leading in the year 2015 to 7000-7200 kHz being exclusively amateur, worldwide, with 7200-7300 kHz shared between the amateur, fixed, and mobile services. The final sticking point that had to be overcome was agreement on an additional 50 kHz for broadcasting in Region 2, at 7350-7400 kHz. In Regions 1 and 3, broadcasting would have been shifted up in frequency from 7100-7300 to 7350-7550 kHz. This was one of three options for addressing the agenda item that was reported to Working Group 4C by Sub-Working Group 4C1 when the Sub-Working Group finished its work on Monday. The second option was an additional 100 kHz for the amateur service shared with the fixed and mobile services in Regions 1 and 3 with no change in Region 2, effective far in the future (the possibility suggested was 2018). The third option was "no change."

Working Group 4C was unable to resolve the differences between the three options. On Wednesday a last-ditch effort was made by a drafting group to merge the two options calling for change. This effort failed, and it appeared that we were headed for a showdown in Committee 4 between the proponents of the three options.

However, on Thursday evening the conference chairman brought together a number of delegates and regional coordinators to try to reach agreement on several outstanding issues, including 7 MHz. The outcome of that meeting was a proposed compromise that was brought to Committee 4 on Friday. Committee 4 did not have time to consider the matter on Friday, despite a meeting that went on until 10 PM. Thus, we ended the week with no agreement and with a final meeting of Committee 4 called for Monday afternoon, 30 June.

The compromise proposal calls for a one-stage implementation of an additional 100 kHz for the amateur service in Regions 1 and 3, 7100-7200 kHz, made available by an upward shift of broadcasting to 7350-7450 kHz. In Region 2 the only change would be an additional 50 kHz for broadcasting, 7350-7400 kHz, with no change below 7300 kHz. Thus, amateurs in Region 2 would be relieved of the incompatibility with broadcasting in half of the band, but the incompatibility would continue in the other half. The effective date would be in either 2007 or 2009, but administrations in Regions 1 and 3 would be permitted to authorize

amateurs to use 7100-7200 kHz with limited power and on a secondary basis as of the effective date of the Final Acts of the conference (probably 1 January 2005). Additional adjustment in the allocations above 7200 kHz could be considered at the next conference, but the 7000-7200 kHz band would be excluded from consideration under any future agenda item.

Corridor discussions on Friday revealed that several administrations in Region 3 were not satisfied with the compromise proposal and wanted at least country footnotes permitting them to allocate 7100-7200 kHz on a national basis to fixed and mobile, shared with amateur. There was also some unhappiness over the effective date from the same part of the world. Thus, we go toward the final meeting of Committee 4 with considerable uncertainty as to what will happen. Of course, the arm-twisting in the corridors is continuing unabated.

Agenda item 1.36 (HF broadcasting expansion around 4 to 10 MHz): Final action on a resolution inviting the next WRC to consider additional spectrum requirements for broadcasting between 4 and 10 MHz is awaiting final action until consideration of agenda item 1.23 is completed.

Agenda item 1.7.1 (Article 25): After lengthy negotiations, a complete text for Article 25 was finally agreed in Committee 4 on Friday morning. Some of the wording is the result of delicate compromises. It will be brought to Plenary sometime in the final week of the conference. The text as agreed requires no consequential changes to the definitions of the amateur and amateur-satellite services, so those provisions will remain unchanged.

Agenda item 1.7.2 (Article 19): This text has not yet made it through second reading in Plenary, but there is no reason to believe that any problems will arise.

Agenda item 1.38 (70 cm SARs): The 432-438 MHz secondary allocation for satellite-borne synthetic aperture radars cleared Committee 5 in the form previously described and on Friday cleared the Plenary on first reading.

Agenda item 1.1 (footnotes): Some footnotes that provide exceptions to the table of frequency allocations on a national basis that affect the amateur bands have cleared the Plenary on first reading. The changes are relatively minor and may still be subject to change because the chairman is permitting changes to these so-called "country footnotes" in Plenary as long as there are no objections.

Future agenda items: Committee 7 has not yet finished its work, but a draft agenda for the next conference -- referred to as WRC-07 but not firm for that year -- is taking shape. Of necessity, the future conference agenda will be among the last items of business because it is contingent on WRC-03 decisions that are still pending.

Comings and Goings: Sergiy Bunin, UR5UN, was in Geneva for just one week and has now returned to Kiev. IARU Region 2 Vice President Dario Jurado, HP1DJ, also left during the week after serving on the IARU team. Region 1 Executive Committee member Hans Blondeel Timmerman, PA7BT, is in Geneva for the last half of the conference on behalf of his employer. Region 1 Chairman Ole Garpestad, LA2RR, left Geneva on Saturday after serving on the Norwegian delegation for the first three weeks.

Coming up: Committee 4 is scheduled to hold its final meeting on Monday afternoon. We will then know whether agreement has been reached at committee level on the 7-MHz realignment issue. If not, it will go to Plenary. The second reading of all Conference decisions in Plenary is scheduled to be completed by Thursday noon. The ceremonial signing of the Final Acts of the Conference is scheduled for Friday afternoon, 4 July.

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