

defense, and the public interest. NTIA, with the support of the Federal agencies, is partners with the State Department and the FCC in preparing for and participating in these conferences. Over the last several WRC cycles, the United States has made important strides in preparation for these critical intergovernmental meetings. NTIA believes that various aspects of the United States' preparation process to develop and promote U.S. objectives in upcoming conferences can be further improved upon.

The United States preparatory process for World Radiocommunication Conferences follows two related paths—technical and proposal/position preparation. The technical preparation are conducted in the International Telecommunications Union Radiocommunications Sector (ITU-R) Study Group process and includes Federal and Non-Federal Government participation. The U.S. International Telecommunication Advisory Committee (ITAC) is the mechanism by which the U.S. prepares technical studies for WRCs. The General Services Administration chartered this committee to the U.S. State Department as an advisory committee under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA)³. The ITAC-R National Committee (NC) assists the U.S. Government in technical preparations for international meetings and negotiations. Under this advisory committee, the public is afforded the opportunity to participate actively in government decision-making activities. With respect to technical preparations for WRCs, the State Department uses the ITAC to develop technical study inputs to the ITU-R study groups and the CPM to form the technical, operational and regulatory basis for WRC decisions, but does not employ the ITAC to develop preliminary views or proposals directly related to WRCs.

The Federal and non-Federal WRC positions and proposal preparation processes are independent. The Federal preparation process includes NTIA, which represents the views of the administration. NTIA is the President's principal adviser on telecommunications and information policy and manages the Federal Government's use of radio spectrum.⁴ The Radio Conference Subcommittee (RCS) of NTIA's Interdepartment Advisory Committee (IRAC) meets monthly to discuss and approve Federal

agency views, positions and proposals, on WRC issues.

The Non-Federal Preparation is performed by the FCC. The FCC, an independent agency established by the Communications Act of 1934, manages the use of radio spectrum by state and local governments and the private sector. The FCC, as an independent agency, represents the views of its constituents and receives their input on WRC views, positions, and proposals.

Questions for Public Comment

To assist in the assessment, NTIA seeks public comment on any issue of fact, law, or policy that may inform the agency about improvements needed in the WRC preparatory process. Specific comments are requested on the questions below. These questions are designed to assist the public and should not be construed as a limitation on the issues on which public comments may be submitted. Please provide copies of any studies, research and other empirical data referenced in the comments.

1. Federal Government Preparation Process

A. How should NTIA as the President's advisor seek the views and inputs of the non-Federal entities?

B. How can NTIA better educate the commercial sector on the Federal agencies' radiocommunication requirements, and related policies and decisions that affect U.S. conference proposals?

2. WRC Advisory Committee (WAC) Preparation Process

A. The WAC is part of the FCC's WRC preparation process. How can the Federal agencies best participate in the WAC?

3. FCC/NTIA Proposal Coordination Process

A. Should the Federal and non-Federal advisory processes remain independent? Why or why not?

B. Federal views and proposals sent to the FCC represent NTIA's review and modification of RCS inputs and thus the Administration's output, while the FCC sends WAC views and proposals directly to NTIA for consideration without bureau review. Would it improve the process to take a similar approach on both sides (circulation of RCS and WAC inputs, or circulation of NTIA and FCC outputs)?

C. Please specify how communications/coordination between the FCC processes and the Executive Branch processes under the purview of NTIA can be improved? Include in your

discussion such topics as involvement of senior agency management, early agreements on WRC positions, NTIA-FCC reconciliation process and timeframes.

D. What steps can be taken to resolve difficult issues? Should timelines be developed in order to identify these issues early in the process?

4. Study Group/National Committee Process Related to WRC Agenda Items

A. Should the U.S. National Committee set objectives and policy regarding WRC studies?

B. Is closer coordination among various study groups required? If so, why and how can this be accomplished?

C. The U.S. Study Group consists of government and non-government participants who prepare for ITU meetings. Should the U.S. Study Group process be guided to align with U.S. WRC goals and objectives? If so why, and by what means?

D. Should a Federal government/non-government position on agenda items and supporting information/studies to pursue U.S. positions be developed, approved and disseminated?

E. To ensure success of U.S. objectives for WRC agenda items, technical studies must begin early in the process. Is it necessary to energize an agenda item and its associated studies by a certain point in the preparation process if no activity has occurred? If so, how can this be accomplished (e.g., what mechanisms and by what point in time)?

5. Forming the WRC Delegation

A. Is there a lack of continuity in leadership between WRC conferences? If so, how can this be better managed?

B. When in the preparation process should the core delegation group, vice-chairs, and principals be formed to begin work? How can these groups be better used to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the United States' WRC agenda?

C. Agencies, companies, and organizations nominate representatives to be on the U.S. WRC delegation. Is the nominated delegation formed early enough in the process to develop and approve final positions in a timely manner? If not, how can this process be improved?

D. Is the accredited delegation formed early enough to develop and approve U.S. positions, strategy, and fallback positions? If not, how can this be improved?

E. At what point in the preparation process should delegation assignments be made and spokespersons identified?

³ See 5 U.S.C. app.

⁴ 47 U.S.C. § 902 (2000).