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**ITU-T**

TELECOMMUNICATION  
STANDARDIZATION SECTOR  
OF ITU

**Series A**

**Supplement 5**

(02/2016)

SERIES A: ORGANIZATION OF THE WORK OF ITU-T

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**Guidelines for collaboration and exchange of  
information with other organizations**

ITU-T A-series Recommendations – Supplement 5





## Supplement 5 to ITU-T A-series Recommendations

### Guidelines for collaboration and exchange of information with other organizations

#### Summary

This Supplement addresses different processes for collaboration and exchange of information with other qualified organizations, including a generic process for developing an ITU-T document (Recommendation, Supplement, etc.) in collaboration with another organization with the aim of producing documents that are identical (or technically-aligned) in both organizations.

#### History

Edition	Recommendation	Approval	Study Group	Unique ID*
1.0	ITU-T A Suppl. 5	2016-02-05	TSAG	<a href="http://handle.itu.int/11.1002/1000/12781">11.1002/1000/12781</a>

#### Keywords

Collaboration, collaborative work, common document, common team.

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\* To access the Recommendation, type the URL <http://handle.itu.int/> in the address field of your web browser, followed by the Recommendation's unique ID. For example, <http://handle.itu.int/11.1002/1000/11830-en>.

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The World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA), which meets every four years, establishes the topics for study by the ITU-T study groups which, in turn, produce Recommendations on these topics.

The approval of ITU-T Recommendations is covered by the procedure laid down in WTSA Resolution 1.

In some areas of information technology which fall within ITU-T's purview, the necessary standards are prepared on a collaborative basis with ISO and IEC.

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## Supplement 5 to ITU-T A-series Recommendations

### Guidelines for collaboration and exchange of information with other organizations

#### 1 Scope

ITU-T maintains cooperative relationships with many other organizations. The technologies for which these organizations are responsible continue to converge, which has resulted in an increase of interdependency between ITU-T's work programme and the programmes of other organizations. This Supplement describes a process for authoritative document exchange with another organization, which is to be agreed upon with that organization. It also introduces generic procedures for developing an ITU-T document (Recommendation, Supplement, etc.) in collaboration with another organization. Such generic procedures are to be considered as guidelines for negotiating a process or mode of collaboration with another qualified organization.

On a case-by-case basis, ITU-T study groups may use other processes or modes of collaboration to those described in this Supplement. In particular, exchange of information (by way of liaison statements) can occur at any time with another organization without applying the processes described in this Supplement.

NOTE 1 – This Supplement does not apply to ITU-T Recommendations developed in collaboration with ISO/IEC JTC 1 because the long-standing procedures of [ITU-T A.23], which have proved very successful, remain unchanged.

NOTE 2 – Regarding collaboration with the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), clause 2.5.3 of [ITU-T A.Supp3] states that "common or joint text is discouraged because of the current differences in procedures for document approval and revision."

The case of normatively referencing the documents of other organizations in ITU-T Recommendations is addressed in [ITU-T A.5].

The case of ITU-T incorporating texts (in part or in whole, with or without modifications) from another organization is addressed in [ITU-T A.25].

#### 2 References

- [ITU-T A.1] Recommendation ITU-T A.1 (2012), *Working methods for study groups of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T)*.
- [ITU-T A.5] Recommendation ITU-T A.5 (2016), *Generic procedures for including references to documents of other organizations in ITU-T Recommendations*.
- [ITU-T A.8] Recommendation ITU-T A.8 (2008), *Alternative approval process for new and revised ITU-T Recommendations*.
- [ITU-T A.23] Recommendation ITU-T A.23 (2000), *Collaboration with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on information technology*.
- [ITU-T A.25] Recommendation ITU-T A.25 (2016), *Generic procedures for incorporating texts between ITU-T and other organizations*.
- [ITU-T A.Supp3] ITU-T A-series Recommendations – Supplement 3 (2012), *IETF and ITU-T collaboration guidelines*.
- [Author's Guide] *Author's Guide for drafting ITU-T Recommendations* (2016).  
<<http://www.itu.int/ITU-T/go/authors-guide/>>

[Patent policy]	<i>Common patent policy for ITU-T/ITU-R/ISO/IEC.</i> < <a href="http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/ipr">http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/ipr</a> >
[WTSA Res. 1]	<i>World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly Resolution 1 (Rev. Dubai, 2012), Rules of procedure of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector.</i> < <a href="http://www.itu.int/pub/T-RES-T.1-2012">http://www.itu.int/pub/T-RES-T.1-2012</a> >

### 3 Definitions

#### 3.1 Terms defined elsewhere

This Supplement uses the following terms defined elsewhere:

**3.1.1 amendment** [ITU-T A.1]: An amendment to a Recommendation contains changes or additions to an already published ITU-T Recommendation.

NOTE – An amendment is published by ITU-T as a separate document that contains primarily changes or additions. If it forms an integral part of the Recommendation, approval of an amendment follows the same approval procedures as for Recommendations; otherwise, it is agreed by the study group.

**3.1.2 Question** [WTSA Res. 1]: Description of an area of work to be studied, normally leading to the production of one or more new or revised Recommendations.

**3.1.3 supplement** [ITU-T A.1]: A document which contains material which is supplementary to and associated with the subject matter of one or more Recommendations but which is not essential to their completeness or understanding and implementation.

NOTE – Recommendation ITU-T A.13 deals with the subject of supplements to ITU-T Recommendations.

#### 3.2 Terms defined in this Supplement

This Supplement defines the following terms:

**3.2.1 collaborative work:** A mode of collaboration between an ITU-T Question and a group in an organization aimed at producing one or more common (or technically-aligned) documents through close liaison, and in the case of common documents, through a synchronized approval (see Appendix II).

**3.2.2 common document:** A document which is developed jointly by an ITU-T Question and a group in an organization.

NOTE – A unique document is developed jointly by an ITU-T Question and an organization but it may be published with different cover pages, headers and footers, based on the publication rules of each organization (see clause 9).

**3.2.3 common team:** A working group composed of individuals working on an ITU-T Question and from a group in an organization aimed at producing one or more common (or technically-aligned) documents through common meetings, and in the case of common documents, through a synchronized approval (see Appendix III).

**3.2.4 technically-aligned documents:** A pair of documents which are developed in close collaboration between an ITU-T Question and a group in an (external) organization, and whose text is technically aligned (but not identical).

NOTE 1 – Implementation of one technically-aligned document may not hamper interoperability with the implementation of the other technically-aligned document.

NOTE 2 – The document developed by the ITU-T Question follows the ITU-T publication rules (such as [Author's Guide]). The other document may follow the publication rules of the (external) organization.



## **4 Abbreviations and acronyms**

This Supplement uses the following abbreviations and acronyms:

AAP	Alternative Approval Process
TAP	Traditional Approval Process
TSB	Telecommunication Standardization Bureau

## **5 Conventions**

In expressions such as "each organization", "one organization", "the other organization", the term "organization" (singular) designates an ITU-T study group or an (external) organization. The expression "the organization" always designates the (external) organization with which an ITU-T study group has established a mode of collaboration.

The term "organizations" (plural) designates an ITU-T study group and an (external) organization which have a common interest in an area of work.

The terms "ballot" and "balloting" are to be understood with respect to the rules and approval process of the organization (ITU-T or the external organization). For ITU-T, this is the last call in the case of the alternative approval process (AAP) and it is the consultation of Member States in the case of the traditional approval process (TAP).

## **6 Qualification of an organization**

**6.1** It is recommended that the ITU-T study group (or working party) considers the organization according to the criteria set out in clauses 6.1.1 to 6.1.3 (except for ISO and IEC).

**6.1.1** Qualification of the organization according to the criteria of Annex B to [ITU-T A.5] is to be conducted before considering establishing one of the modes of collaboration listed in clause 7.2.

NOTE – Organizations which are already qualified according to Recommendations ITU-T A.4, A.5 or A.6 are considered to satisfy clause 6.1.1.

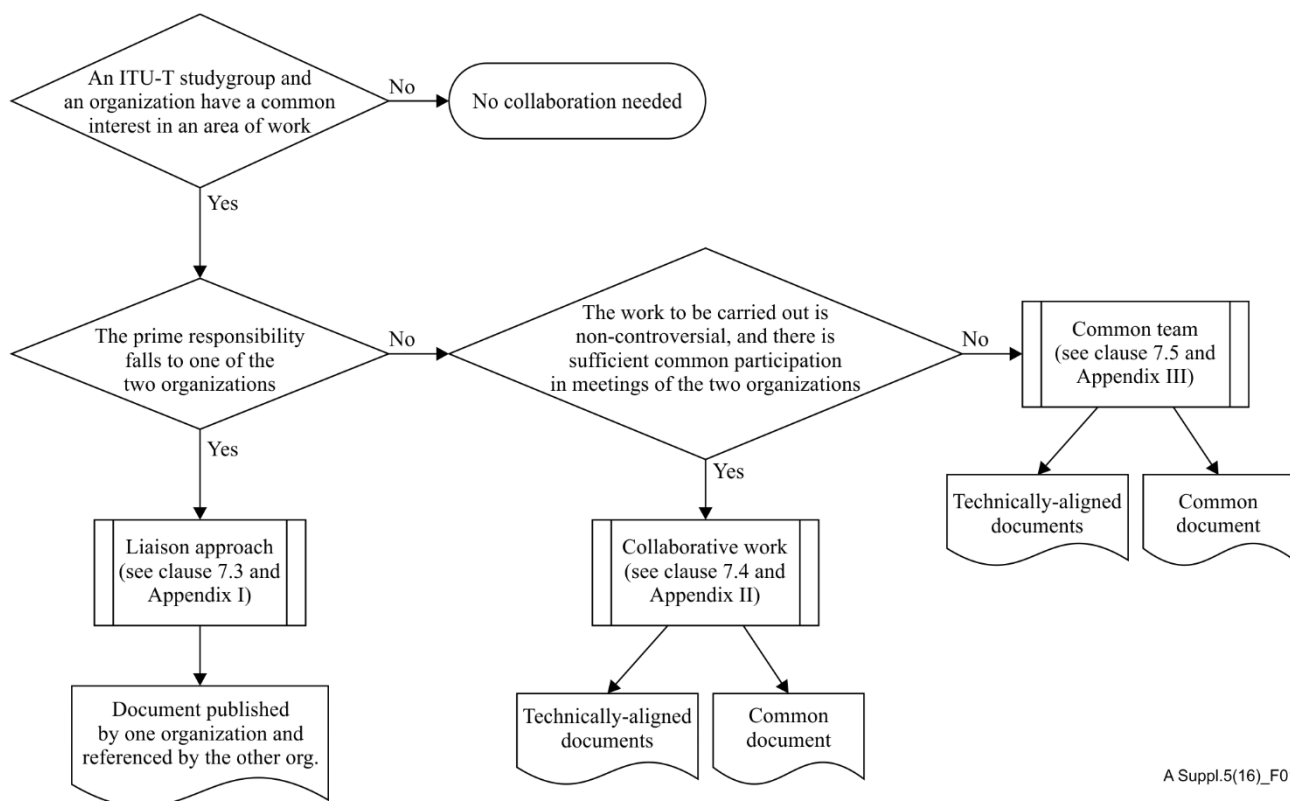
**6.1.2** In addition, the organization is expected to have a process by which its output documents are published and regularly maintained (i.e., reaffirmed, revised, withdrawn, etc.).

**6.1.3** The organization is also expected to have a document change control process, including a clear, unambiguous document numbering scheme. In particular, a feature to look for is that updated versions of a given document be distinguishable from the earlier versions.

**6.2** Qualification of the organization according to the criteria of Annex B of [ITU-T A.5] is reviewed on a regular basis by study groups that need to establish a mode of collaboration with that organization. In particular, if the patent policy of that organization has changed, it is important to check that the new patent policy is consistent with the common patent policy for ITU-T/ITU-R/ISO/IEC and the guidelines for the implementation of the common patent policy for ITU-T/ITU-R/ISO/IEC (see clause 11).

## **7 Determining the mode of collaboration**

**7.1** To maximize the effectiveness of resources and to minimize conflict between standards, the ITU-T study group and the relevant group in the organization are encouraged to identify areas for collaborative work as early as possible in the development process. Normally as part of the development of a new Recommendation in ITU-T (see Annex A of [ITU-T A.1]), consideration is given to the need for interactions with other organizations. If enough information is available at this stage, then, if appropriate, one of the following modes of collaboration can be proposed and agreement sought from the other organization (see clause 8).



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**Figure 1 – Possible modes of collaboration between ITU-T and another organization**

**7.2** Collaboration (as specified in this Supplement) can be carried out in one of three ways: by means of a liaison, by means of collaborative work or by means of a common team. Figure 1 provides some criteria for choosing one mode of collaboration but those criteria are not exhaustive and it is recommended that the study group and the organization carefully evaluates the terms of reference of the collaboration (see clause 8.2).

**7.3** Where an ITU-T study group and an organization have a common interest in an area of work and have agreed that the prime responsibility falls to one of the two organizations, the liaison approach (see Appendix I) is well suited. In this situation, the work is carried out in one organization and the other organization participates, as appropriate, using its liaison status. The result is published by one organization and is referenced, as needed, by the other organization (see [ITU-T A.5]).

**7.4** Collaboration by means of collaborative work is suited for situations where the work to be carried out is straight-forward and relatively non-controversial, and where there is sufficient common participation in the meetings of the two organizations to make the interchange highly effective. The work on resolving issues and developing one or more common documents is continually progressed in the successive meetings of the two groups. The normal approval processes of both ITU-T and the organization are synchronized until the eventual publication of common or technically-aligned texts (see clause 9). Appendix II details generic procedures when collaborative work is performed.

**7.5** Collaboration by means of a common team is well suited for situations where extended dialog is necessary to develop solutions and reach consensus. In this situation, all interested parties participate together in a common team to mutually progress the work, resolve issues, and develop one or more common (or technically-aligned) documents. The normal approval processes of both ITU-T and the organization are synchronized until the eventual publication of common or technically-aligned texts (see clause 9). Appendix III details generic procedures when a common team is established.

**7.6** It is possible for the mode of collaboration to change as the work progresses. For example, work could be initiated in one organization and, as a result of a liaison statement, it could become recognized as integrally important to the other organization. At this point, agreement could be reached to advance all future work in a mode of collaboration.

## **8 Agreeing the mode of collaboration**

**8.1** Agreement for collaboration needs to be mutually recognized to be successful. Therefore, operation in one of the three modes of collaboration for a given area of work is an agreed decision of both organizations. This agreement (based on the terms of reference presented in clause 8.2) is to be confirmed at the ITU-T study group level and at the appropriate decision-making level of the organization.

**8.2** The mutually agreed terms of reference for a given mode of collaboration may include:

- 1) the relevant ITU-T Question and its parent study group;
- 2) the relevant group in the organization and, if applicable, its parent body;
- 3) the mode of collaboration (see clause 7);
- 4) the scope of the effort as it relates to each organization's work programme;
- 5) where possible, identification (type, title and reference) of the document(s) that is (are) to be developed collaboratively and their type (technically-aligned documents or common document);

NOTE 1 – It is recommended to use the template in [ITU-T A.1], Annex A.

- 6) detailed explanations on how to synchronize the ITU-T approval process (AAP according to [ITU-T A.8] or TAP according to section 9 of [WTSA Res. 1] or agreement at the study group level) with the approval process in the organization so that comments coming from one organization during the approval process can be taken into account by the other organization (see Appendix IV);
- 7) any start-up provisions to accommodate work in progress in each organization.

NOTE 2 – If the draft ITU-T Recommendation has been consented for AAP Last Call (or determined for TAP consultation), the window to establish a collaboration is considered to be closed.

- 8) any reporting or tracking provisions beyond those specified in clause II.6 or III.6;
- 9) explanations on how the document(s) would be cooperatively maintained by both organizations (see clause 10).
- 10) statement that the organization's patent policy is consistent with the common patent policy for ITU-T/ITU-R/ISO/IEC (see clause 11).

**8.3** A collaborative relationship for a given area of work continues as long as both organizations feel collaboration is beneficial. In the unusual event that either organization feels that collaboration for a given area of work may be terminated, it is recommended to discuss this situation immediately with the other organization. If satisfactory resolution cannot be obtained, then collaboration for the given area of work can be terminated at any time by either the ITU-T study group or the appropriate body in the organization. If termination occurs, both organizations can make use of the prior collaborative work.

## **9 Publication of documents**

**9.1** In the case of a common document, the final editing is done by ITU's Telecommunication Standardization Bureau (TSB) according to [Author's Guide]. TSB then sends the final document as soon as possible to the organization for publication according to its own rules.

NOTE – A unique document is developed jointly by ITU-T and an organization but it may be published with different cover pages, headers and footers, based on the publication rules of each organization. Consequently, cover pages, header and footers do not contain any normative statement.

**9.2** In the case of technically-aligned documents, each organization publishes its own document according to its own publication rules. However, it is recommended that the organization waits for TSB to produce the final document for ITU-T in case some editorial changes would also apply to its own document.

**9.3** The document is published as a Recommendation in ITU-T and as a standard (or any other type of normative document) in the organization (or as a Supplement or any other type of informative document in ITU-T, and as an informative document in the organization).

**9.4** It is valuable that users perceive the collaboration between ITU-T and the organization. This may be enforced by the following means:

- a) Include a footnote from the title of the ITU-T document that notes the collaborative nature of the work; in the case of technically-aligned document, the footnote gives the title of the document of the organization, and states the degree of technical alignment.
- b) Include a footnote from the title of the document of the organization that notes the collaborative nature of the work; in the case of technically-aligned documents, the footnote gives the title of the ITU-T document, and states the degree of technical alignment.
- c) If an ITU-T document makes a reference to another ITU-T document that is a common document (or has a technically-aligned document in an organization), then include a footnote from the reference as in item a); if there are technical differences between both documents, then include an appendix or annex that summarizes the differences.
- d) If a document from the organization makes a reference to another document that is a common document (or has a technically-aligned document in ITU-T), then include a footnote from the reference as in item b); if there are technical differences between both documents, then include an appendix or annex that summarizes the differences.

**9.5** If any unusual circumstances arise to indicate that publication of a common document is no longer desired (e.g., because of substantial differences in content), this situation is immediately discussed with the other organization. If after the consultation either organization determines that common document publication is not appropriate, then each organization can publish separately using its own publication format.

## **10 Maintenance of documents**

**10.1** The work is not necessarily completed at the stage of publication. While every effort has been taken to produce a quality document, experience has shown that defects may be found as the document is being applied to implementations. Therefore, there is need for an ongoing shared responsibility for maintaining the document.

**10.2** It is critical that rapid correction of possible errors, omissions, inconsistencies, or ambiguities be performed cooperatively. It is recommended that the procedures for this important effort are outlined in the terms of reference of the chosen mode of collaboration (see clause 8.2).

**10.3** Further work is often identified as a result of the development process and as a result of changing technology and new operational requirements. Accordingly, there is an important need for amendments that provide expansions, enhancements, and updates to the basic provisions of the published common (or technically-aligned) documents.

**10.4** The processing of amendments may follow the same procedures as the original development. These may be considered as extensions to the original work by the same collaborative work or common team, or may be considered as separate new work that requires the formation of a new collaborative work or a common team (see clause 8.2).

## **11 Patent policy and copyright arrangements**

**11.1** For common (or technically-aligned) documents, organizations are to have a patent policy which is consistent with the common patent policy for ITU-T/ITU-R/ISO/IEC [Patent policy], and submit patent statements, as appropriate, to ITU-T and to the organization.

NOTE – Information pertaining to the common patent policy is available at <http://itu.int/en/ITU-T/ipr>.

**11.2** The subject of modifications to texts and arrangements for royalty-free copyright licences, including the right to sub-license, for texts accepted by either ITU-T or by the organization and their publishers and others, is a matter to be agreed upon between TSB and the particular organization. However, the originating organization retains the copyright for its texts.

## **Appendix I**

### **Guidelines for collaboration using the liaison mode**

The basic concept of collaboration using the liaison mode is to leave to one organization the prime responsibility in an area of a work and to allow the other organization to participate in the work, as appropriate, using its liaison status.

**I.1** In some situations of common interest, it may be appropriate to reach an agreement that would allocate the standardization of a particular area of work to one organization. The result is published by one organization and is referenced, as needed, by the other organization (see [ITU-T A.5]). If such an agreement cannot be reached, it is recommended that each organization does not produce a document whose implementation hampers interoperability with the implementation of a document of the other organization.

**I.2** In some situations, authoritative document exchange between an ITU-T study group and an organization helps to strengthen the information flow between ITU-T and those organizations. Such a framework for ongoing communications is particularly needed to provide authoritative information of one organization's dependencies on the other's work.

**I.3** All interactions between an ITU-T study group and the relevant group in the organization are conducted using the liaison procedures. In particular, this applies to participation in each other's meetings and to the submission of input documents.

NOTE – For example, for an individual to represent the relevant group of the organization in an ITU-T study group meeting, a letter (or liaison statement) from that organization is recommended authorizing such representation. Likewise, for an individual to represent an ITU-T Question in the meeting of an organization, a liaison statement from the ITU-T study group to that organization is recommended authorizing such representation.

**I.4** The decision to send a liaison statement is made by the study group. When necessary, between scheduled meetings, the liaison statement may be prepared by an appropriate correspondence process and approved by the study group chairman in consultation with the study group management. The liaison statement is sent by TSB (on behalf of the study group) to the organization.

**I.5** Where possible, the exchange of documents is in electronic format. Questions of electronic links to enable document exchange are to be agreed upon by the secretariats of the organization concerned.

**I.6** Documents submitted to the ITU-T study group by the organization conform to the following criteria:

- a) contain no confidential information (i.e., no distribution restriction);
- b) indicate the source within the organization (e.g., committee, subcommittee, etc.);
- c) differentiate between normative references and non-normative references.

These documents are not issued as contributions but as a TD at a study group or working party meeting, or as a document at a rapporteur meeting. As soon as they arrive they are made available, with the agreement of the study group chairman, for advance consideration by the relevant group. Moreover, they are issued with a reference to the originating organization.

## **Appendix II**

### **Guidelines for collaboration using collaborative work**

The basic concept of collaboration using collaborative work is to closely couple the development, consensus building, and ballot/comment resolution efforts of an ITU-T Question and of the relevant group in an organization in an efficient and effective manner to produce mutually agreed common (or technically-aligned) documents.

#### **II.1 Establishing a collaborative work**

**II.1.1** Upon agreement by the ITU-T study group and the relevant group in the organization that a specific area of work is to be developed collaboratively, a collaborative work is established between the respective ITU-T Question and group in the organization (see clause 8.2).

**II.1.2** The ITU-T Question and the relevant group in the organization function using the procedures of their respective organization, but with certain additional procedures, as described below, to facilitate closer collaboration in building consensus and synchronization of approvals leading to the publication of common (or technically-aligned) documents (see Appendix IV).

**II.1.3** During the time of development of a common (or technically-aligned) document, it is important that communication is consistently maintained between organizations by exchanging the different versions of the draft document as it evolves (see also clause II.4).

**II.1.4** The terms of reference (see clause 8.2), including the mode of collaboration, can be changed at any time by mutual agreement of the ITU-T study group and of the relevant group in the organization. It is recommended that collaboration also continues for the ongoing maintenance phase (see clause 10). Procedures for terminating a collaborative work are covered in clause 8.4.

#### **II.2 Participation in meetings of the other organization**

**II.2.1** The collaborative work is facilitated if there is some significant degree of common participation by individuals in the meetings of both organizations.

**II.2.2** Representation of one organization in a meeting of the other organization is achieved by means of liaison officers (see clause I.3). It is recommended that individuals attending meetings in a liaison capacity are familiar with the procedures of the organization holding the meeting.

NOTE – The fact that a liaison officer officially represents one organization in a meeting of the other organization does not preclude experts from that organization from participating in the meeting of the other organization as explained in clause II.2.1. In that case, each expert participates according to his/her membership in the relevant organization.

#### **II.3 Contributions**

Contributions are handled by each organization according to its normal procedures (e.g., clause 3 of [ITU-T A.1] for ITU-T). In addition, it is important that the results of analysis of contributions be passed promptly to the other organization.

#### **II.4 Editors for a common document**

NOTE – In the case of technically-aligned documents, each organization nominates one or more Editor(s) for its own document.

**II.4.1** It is strongly recommended that the ITU-T Question and the relevant group in the organization agree on a single Editor who will produce and maintain the single master common document, normally in accordance with the [Author's Guide].

**II.4.2** The draft master common document will be updated only when agreement to the specific text has been made by both organizations. Each iteration of the draft common document is dated. Changes from the previous draft are highlighted by change marks.

**II.4.3** The appointed Editor is responsible for the common document through draft iterations and final submission to the secretariats for publication (see clause 9). The individual selected for this task commits to following the work through to completion so that continuity can be maintained.

## **II.5 Achieving consensus**

**II.5.1** Close liaison is maintained during the development of draft documents, and resolution of ballots and comments to ensure that the views of all concerned are taken into account in building consensus.

**II.5.2** In general, the intent is that the degree of consensus and the stability of the agreements will increase at each step of the collaborative process.

**II.5.3** In rare cases, it may become apparent during the development of a common document that one or more specific technical differences are necessary in order to take into account the needs of ITU-T and of the organization. All proposed differences are carefully examined to ensure there is a legitimate need for these. In such a case, the common document is to include the full technical material needed by each organization with wording that specifically identifies any text that is applicable only to one organization. If consensus cannot be reached, the collaboration may cease as specified in clause 8.3.

## **II.6 Progress reporting**

**II.6.1** The ITU-T Question is responsible for providing written reports of its meetings to its parent study group. Similarly, the group in the organization is responsible for reporting the results of its meetings to its parent group following normal procedures. These reports summarize the results of the meeting including agreements reached, areas identified for further study, the status of collaborative progress, and projected upcoming milestones (see Appendix IV).

**II.6.2** These reports, or appropriate extracts, are conveyed to the other group using the normal liaison procedure (see Appendix I). Meeting reports contain sufficient information to enable the collaborative work to mutually progress in both organizations as effectively as possible.



## **Appendix III**

### **Guidelines for collaboration using a common team**

The basic concept of collaboration using a common team is to perform all development, consensus building, and ballot/comment resolution efforts in common meetings to produce mutually agreed common (or technically-aligned) documents.

#### **III.1 Establishing a common team**

**III.1.1** Upon agreement by the ITU-T study group and the relevant group in the organization that a specific area of work is to be developed collaboratively in common meetings, a common team is established with participants from both organizations (see clause 8.2).

**III.1.2** The common team has either a single convenor agreed upon by the ITU-T study group and the relevant group in the organization, or co-convenors, one appointed by each organization. In the case of co-convenors, the chairing of meetings can be on a rotational basis or as otherwise agreed by the common team.

**III.1.3** Eligibility for attendance at a common team meeting is determined by the requirements of each organization.

**III.1.4** The common team uses the procedures described below to build consensus and to achieve synchronization of approvals with the aim of leading to publication of common (or technically-aligned) documents (see Appendix IV).

**III.1.5** The terms of reference (see clause 8.2) or mode of collaboration can be changed at any time by mutual agreement of the ITU-T study group and of the relevant group in the organization. It is recommended that collaboration also continues for the ongoing maintenance phase (see clause 10). Procedures for terminating a collaborative work are covered in clause 8.3.

#### **III.2 Meetings**

**III.2.1** Each common team meeting is properly scheduled in advance. The common team is responsible for making its own meeting arrangements and schedule, subject to agreement by the ITU-T study group and by the organization. In ITU-T, a meeting of the common team is considered as a rapporteur meeting of the relevant Question (see clauses 2.3.3.10 to 2.3.3.15 of [ITU-T A.1]).

**III.2.2** Generally, hosts for common team meetings alternate between ITU-T and the organization, but they may also be cooperatively hosted with appropriate agreement. It is recommended that common team meetings be scheduled at the same location and time as the respective ITU-T study group or relevant group in the organization, although meetings may also be scheduled at other times and locations.

**III.2.3** It is recommended that the convenor(s) of the common team maintain a mailing list of all individuals who wish to be informed of the meetings of the common team.

**III.2.4** Meeting notices and the agenda respect the deadlines of both ITU-T (e.g., a convening letter for rapporteur meetings is posted, normally at least two months prior to the meeting, on the study group webpage) and the organization. It is recommended that the meeting notice identifies the meeting as one of both ITU-T and the organization, and that the meeting notice and agenda are sent for posting to the ITU-T study group secretariat and to the secretariat of the organization. Each agenda provides a list of documents to be considered, including previous meeting reports and input contributions (see clause III.3).

**III.2.5** Communication between an ITU-T Question (or rapporteur group) and a common team is also done through liaison statements. It is expected that the relevant group in the organization also communicates with a common team by way of liaison statements.

### **III.3 Contributions**

**III.3.1** Contributions to the work of the common team may be provided by ITU-T members or by members of the organization. Each contribution indicates its source.

**III.3.2** Contributions to be considered at a common team meeting are normally in the hands of the common team convenor(s) at least twelve calendar days in advance. Late contributions will only be considered upon agreement by the meeting participants, in particular to accommodate particular deadlines or meeting dates of the organization.

**III.3.3** All contributions to the common team, regardless of their means of submission, will be identified and maintained by the common team in a document register.

**III.3.4** It is recommended that the convenor(s) maintain a mailing list of the common team participants and ensure timely distribution of contributions and meeting output documents to eligible participants.

### **III.4 Editor in case of a common document**

NOTE – In the case of technically-aligned documents, each organization nominates one or more Editor(s) for its own document.

**III.4.1** It is strongly recommended that the common team appoints a single Editor to produce and maintain the single master common document, normally in accordance with [Author's Guide].

**III.4.2** The draft master common document will be updated only when agreement to the specific text has been made by the common team. Each iteration of the draft common document are dated. Changes from the previous draft are highlighted by change marks.

**III.4.3** The appointed Editor is responsible for the common document through draft iterations and final submission to the secretariats for publication (see clause 9). The individual selected for this task commits to following the work through to completion so that continuity can be maintained throughout the effort.

### **III.5 Achieving consensus**

**III.5.1** The functions of the common team meetings are three-fold: the development and editing of draft documents, and resolution of ballots and comments. The common team meetings are only authorized to deal with the specific collaborative projects identified in the terms of reference (see clause 8.3).

**III.5.2** In responding to the requirements of the designated collaborative projects, the development of draft documents is a consensus building process.

**III.5.3** Balloting, or voting, by the common team during the development of draft documents is considered inappropriate in reaching a consensus and could be counter-productive. The common team consensus is built through discussion, acceptance, compromise, and, if necessary, informal polling of delegates to sample the state of agreement. It would also be appropriate to record in meeting reports points of consensus, as well as any specific reservations that meeting delegates have on particular issues.

**III.5.4** Topics of concern to only the ITU-T or to only the organization may be addressed by subgroup meetings held within the framework of the common team meeting.

**III.5.5** In rare cases, it may become apparent during the development of a common document that one or more specific technical differences are necessary in order to take into account the needs of ITU-T and of the organization. All proposed differences are carefully examined to ensure there is a legitimate need for these. In such a case, the common document is to include the full technical material needed by each organization with wording that specifically identifies any text that is applicable only to one organization.

**III.5.6** The approval processes will be conducted according to the established procedures of each organization with the adaptation and synchronization described in Appendix IV. It is recommended to convene a ballot resolution meeting as soon as practical after the close of a ballot/comment period to review and resolve the results. The group is normally chaired by the common team convenor(s) or the editor of the draft document.

**III.5.7** The purpose of a ballot resolution meeting is to resolve as many of the negative comments as possible without invalidating any affirmative positions. The goal is to achieve agreements resulting in the greatest possible consensus. This can be done provided that all affected representatives are satisfied with the handling of the comments.

### **III.6 Progress reporting**

**III.6.1** The common team is responsible for providing written reports of each meeting to the ITU-T study group and to the relevant group in the organization. These reports summarize the results of the meeting including agreements reached, areas identified for further study, the status of collaborative progress, and projected upcoming milestones (see Appendix IV).

**III.6.2** Comments and/or instructions may be provided back to the common team from the ITU-T study group and from the relevant group in the organization.

## **Appendix IV**

### **Guidelines for synchronization of approval processes**

To facilitate closer collaboration in building consensus, this appendix explains how to synchronize approvals between the ITU-T study group and the organization in order to lead to the publication of common (or technically-aligned) documents.

**IV.1** Each organization retains its individual procedures for approving the result of the collaboration work. The following clauses describe how these procedures are synchronized for the different stages of approval.

NOTE – In the case of the development of technically-aligned documents, the approval processes do not require exact timing synchronization as explained below. In the case of the development of non-normative documents (i.e., Supplements or other types of non-normative documents in ITU-T), the following process needs to be adapted.

**IV.2** As outlined in clause II.6 (in the case of collaborative work), each group keeps its parent body informed of the progress of the collaborative work. As outlined in clause III.6 (in the case of a common team), the common team keeps the ITU-T Question and the relevant group in the organization informed of the progress of the collaborative work. When the work has progressed to a point where a schedule for synchronized approval can be established with a degree of confidence, it is important for the two groups (in the case of collaborative work) or the common team to jointly plan the specific steps, taking into account scheduled dates of meetings of the ITU-T study group and of the relevant group in the organization.

**IV.3** When the groups (in case of collaborative work) or the common team decide that the draft has reached a point of maturity and that the synchronized approval process may commence, each organization is advised of the decision.

**IV.4** The following subclauses only apply if the organization has one or more intermediate levels of balloting (before final balloting for approval).

**IV.4.1** The organization distributes the draft document for comment to its members.

**IV.4.2** At the same time, the draft document is distributed to the ITU-T study group members for review and comment. ITU-T member comments are provided by means of contributions within the same time period. The organization considers all responses together.

**IV.4.3** In the case of collaborative work, both sets of responses are made available to the ITU-T Question as well as to the relevant group in the organization. Both groups coordinate their efforts in resolving all received comments and producing the revised draft document.

**IV.4.4** In the case of a common team, both sets of responses are made available to the common team which resolves all received comments and produces the revised draft document (see clauses III.5.6 and III.5.7).

**IV.4.5** If the changes are substantive and if another intermediate level of balloting (before final balloting for approval) is available in the organization, clause IV.4 is recursively applied.

**IV.5** When all issues have been resolved to the satisfaction of both organizations, the organization conducts the final balloting for approval according to the following subclauses.

NOTE – If a problem is indicated on the side of the organization which would delay approval, this is immediately conveyed to the ITU-T study group so that appropriate action can be taken and, if necessary, a new synchronized plan established.

**IV.5.1** At the same time, the draft document is distributed to the ITU-T study group members for review and comment. ITU-T member comments are provided by means of contributions within the same time period. The organization considers all responses together.

**IV.5.2** Also during this time period, TSB will review the document and submit comments, if any.

**IV.5.3** In the case of collaborative work, both sets of responses are made available to the ITU-T Question as well as to the relevant group in the organization. Both groups coordinate their efforts in resolving all received comments and producing the revised draft document.

**IV.5.4** In the case of a common team, both sets of responses are made available to the common team which resolves all received comments and produces the revised draft document (see clauses III.5.6 and III.5.7).

**IV.5.5** It is at this point where synchronization is critical. The first controlling factor is the date of the ITU-T study group (or working party) meeting where determination (TAP) or consent (AAP) or agreement (non-normative documents) is to be obtained. At this meeting, the balloting has normally concluded in the organization and a revised draft document is published as a TD in time for the ITU-T study group (or working party) meeting. However, the ITU-T study group (or working party) meeting may accept to consent (for AAP) or determine (for TAP) a draft document pending further adjustments based on the result of the balloting in the organization.

NOTE – It is understood that the stable draft document would always be available for comments to ITU members for the AAP Last Call or TAP consultation (see clause IV.5.6).

**IV.5.6** The second controlling factor is that the balloting has concluded in the organization and a revised draft document is produced for ITU-T approval:

- a) for TAP: by 4 months before the ITU-T study group (or working party) meeting where approval is to be obtained so that the Director of TSB can issue a letter announcing the intent to approve the Recommendation at the upcoming study group (or working party) meeting;
- b) for AAP: normally by 2 months after the ITU-T study group (or working party) meeting where consent was obtained so that the Director of TSB can announce the Last Call for approval of the Recommendation;
- c) for agreement (in case of non-normative documents): at least seven calendar days before the ITU-T study group (or working party) meeting (see clause 3.3.3 of [ITU-T A.1]).

**IV.6** If no negative votes and no technical comments are submitted during the AAP Last Call or the TAP consultation, or discussion at the study group (or working party) meeting in case of agreement, and if, in the case of TAP, the following ITU-T study group (or working party) meeting approves the document, the organization is informed and the document is published according to clause 9.

**IV.7** If negative votes and/or technical comments are submitted during the AAP Last Call or the TAP consultation, or if comments are made at the study group (or working party) meeting in the case of agreement, the comments are resolved according to the following subclauses.

NOTE – If an ITU-T Member State indicates a problem which would prevent approval, this is immediately conveyed to the organization so that appropriate action can be taken and, if necessary, a new synchronized plan established.

**IV.7.1** In the case of collaborative work, the ITU-T Question resolves all received comments and produces the revised draft document. Comments and the revised draft document are also made available to the organization.

**IV.7.2** In the case of a common team, the team resolves comments and produces the revised draft document (see clauses III.5.6 and III.5.7).

**IV.7.3** If the changes are substantive, this is immediately conveyed to the organization to find an appropriate solution:

- a) In case of technically-aligned documents, the organization considers whether some or all of the changes can be applied to its own document or if the documents are published separately.
- b) In case of a common document, if the organization can conduct another final balloting for approval, clause IV.5 is applied once again (for an additional review in ITU-T in the case of AAP) and the approval in ITU-T is delayed.
- c) Otherwise, the ITU-T study group and the organization may decide to publish the document as either technically-aligned documents or separately.



## **SERIES OF ITU-T RECOMMENDATIONS**

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Series I	Integrated services digital network
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