

Stealing comments from my own closing remarks, I offer this observation as the underlying message of the day: do we really need broadcast radio in smartphones or in dashboards? Or does the internet and one-to-one consumer-delivered information and entertainment really replace broadcast radio? My response is to first reframe the question as: do we need the same old broadcast radio? The answer to that, unfortunately, is that we probably cannot sustain the same old broadcast radio platform because of the internet, smartphones, connected cars and whatever technology is coming. Simple audio presented on a single numeric frequency, programmed the same way we do now (delivered as one-way broadcast channel) must change. This is not to say we should change everything. We do a lot of things right. We must think about how to leverage our assets while transitioning content and efforts to include new technology based on internet or other distribution channels. First, recog-

nize that the value of our primary owned assets (the single most efficient method of mass market communication), our benefits to the consumer (e.g., local content, cost-efficient consumption), and our public

trying to get what we have and reinvent it anyway, and expecting those to be our sole saviour, is not the answer. We must make something that we own - a platform, a digital transmission, a way of doing business that exploits our unique position.



Both the NABA AGM Event and the Future of Radio & Audio Symposium were held at CBC/Radio-Canada's excellent Glenn Gould Studio facilities.

As NABA moves from a moment of well-deserved appreciation for the results of our *Future of Radio & Audio Symposium* to the development of actionable items that can be the change agents for North American broadcasters, we ask for your active input and participation. Please do consider how you can be involved with NABA or, at a minimum, what ideas, input

or resources you are willing to submit that could help us make a difference. As I did in my closing remarks, I thank all that took the time to participate in or attend the event, and I thank Michael McEwen and Julie McCambley for taking the first steps towards being change agents of radio. ■

service capabilities (e.g., helping citizens in times of emergency or need) are being attacked or shrouded by competitive agendas and frankly by a lack of our own unified efforts. Looking to inventors, developers, platforms or business models created by others, who in many cases are just

## Director-General's Report

Michael McEwen, NABA



Well it's been a couple of months since our last *NABAcaster*, and what a busy time it has been with our AGM, Board and Committee meetings, and the Future of Radio & Audio Symposium.

If I've learned one thing (and you're never too old to learn) it is not to plan an AGM in mid-February in Toronto. It was actually the coldest February in recorded Toronto history! As one of our Mexican members said to me "this is cruel and brutal." And he was right. So next year we are going to Mexico for our AGM and will thankfully leave winter behind

us for a few days.

But if the weather was cold, the content was hot.

The President of Bell Media gave the keynote speech at the AGM, and delivered a very strong presentation on what Canadian broadcasters need to do to be competitive (and profitable) in the Canadian market. The points he made will define the debate over the next year in Canada, and it promises to be a vigorous discussion. The rest of the AGM program dealt with all the key issues faced by television today and tomorrow, including spectrum, the Next Generation of TV, signal piracy, and the challenges of file formats on multiple platforms. Informative and spirited discussion left a good feeling about a day well spent.

The Future of Radio & Audio Symposium drew 200 attendees from all over North America who also braved the To-

ronto cold to discuss the future of their industry. Radio doesn't get the attention it should in our media-rich environment, as it is basic to most of us in our everyday lives. The timing and relevance of the Symposium was evident all day long. It got off to a great start with FCC Commissioner Ajit Pai giving the keynote and declaring radio (whether over-the-air, through an app on mobile, or on the internet) as a crucial source for our daily need of core survival information and cultural enrichment. Commissioner Pai also stated that IP should not be seen as a challenge to radio, but instead as just another way for radio to reach listeners and markets. And so it went throughout the day: the future of delivery was explored, digital radio discussed, the revitalization of AM actually seemed possible from a technical point of view, and the all important future in-car dashboard discussion confirmed that radio will still

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be central to the entertainment hub. A good day made possible by NABA's Radio Committee and the support of many suppliers of equipment and services to radio stations, groups and networks.

After, the Secretariat took some time to recover and we are now fully engaged with our Committee work and projects that will rollout over this spring. As you'll note in this *NABACaster*, we have entered into a strategic partnership with the UK's Digital Production Partnership to advance

our work in finding some solutions to the multiple file format standards that challenge our broadcast members and their workflow. We hope this collaboration will benefit our Joint Task Force on File Formats and Media Interoperability, and most importantly, speed up finding solutions and industry consensus on adopting them. An important step for sure.

The 2015 NAB Show is this week in Las Vegas and NABA is there for meetings and workshops. In May and June, another round of Committee

and Board meetings will take place in New York and Indianapolis. Also, the World Broadcasting Unions' International Satellite Operations Group (WBU-ISOG) gathers for its semi-annual forum in NYC at CBS on May 19-20. They will consider a revised mission statement, work plan, and group name change to reflect the multi-platform connectivity which characterizes international program exchange today.

Never a dull moment in the broadcasting world! ■

## Summary of the 25th Meeting of CITEL's PCC II Session

Winston Caldwell, Fox

The 25th meeting of the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL) Permanent Consultative Committee II: Radiocommunications (PCC.II) met from February 23-27 in Medellin, Colombia. At the CITEL PCC.II, delegates from the countries of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Region 2 (North, Central, and South America) gather to discuss current, planned, and desired Radio Frequency (RF) spectrum use and related issues. The primary goal of the CITEL PCC.II meetings within the current World Radio Conference 2015 (WRC-15) cycle is to establish Inter-American Proposals (IAPs) which represent consensus amongst Region 2 Administrations on a WRC-15 agenda item. WRC-15 agenda item 1.1 (AI 1.1) primarily pertains to the establishment of Primary allocations to the Mobile Service in specific frequency bands, the identification of these allocations for International Mobile Telecommunications (IMT) applications (i.e., fourth generation wireless systems), and the inclusion of these changes in the ITU Radio Regulations. Two of the candidate bands that are under consideration for IMT identification include the Ultra-

High Frequency (UHF) band and the C-band, both vital to the broadcasting industry. A NABA delegation is actively participating in the CITEL PCC.II IAP consensus building process pertaining to AI 1.1. In doing so, we are informing the delegates of Region 2 of the importance of maintaining the interference-protected Primary status to the services utilized in the delivery of broadcast television and explaining the need to support a No Change (NOC) in the 470-698 MHz and 3 400-4 200 MHz bands.



At the beginning of this meeting a Draft IAP (DIAP) existed with the three Administrations of Canada, the United States (U.S.), and Mexico supporting a new Primary allocation to the Mobile Service in the 470-698 MHz band with identification to IMT in Regions 1, 2, and 3. Support from six Administrations is needed to up-

grade the state of a DIAP to an IAP. The Colombian (and host) Administration contributed the same proposal but only for the range 614-698 MHz. Canada, the U.S., and Mexico worked with the Colombian delegation to seek a means for harmonization between the two different proposals. An eventual result of the meeting is that the original DIAP is now split into two separate DIAPs: one for the 470-608 MHz supported by the three Administrations of Canada, the U.S., and Mexico and one for 614-698 MHz supported by the four Administrations of Canada, the U.S., Mexico, and Colombia.

On the other hand, there exists an opposing IAP, supported by NABA, for a NOC in the 470-698 MHz band. At the beginning of this meeting, this IAP was supported by twelve Administrations. Through the week, those Administrations supporting the opposing DIAP worked to negotiate with those supporting the IAP, but all twelve Administrations held firm on the NOC position. By the end of the meeting, Venezuela added their support to the NOC IAP, increasing the number of supporting Administrations.

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