

Director-General's Report

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Well here we are in the “dog days” of summer, and yet the NABA engine room continues to hum along. Like most summers in recent

times, it's been busy as my report reflects.

As you read in the cover story by John Ball in this issue of *NABAcaster*, the World Broadcasting Unions' International Media Connectivity Group (WBU-IMCG) met in Washington, DC at the beginning of June, hosted by our NAB colleagues. It was a good couple of days of examining international program collection and distribution as broadcasters move into the IP world.

In mid-June, the WBU Technical Committee (WBU-TC) met in Stuttgart, Germany and one of the major takeaways was the formation of a WBU-TC Cyber Security Sub-Committee to coordinate the work that is being done in North America, Europe, and parts of Asia on cyber security requirements for broadcasters. We all have spent a considerable effort over the past few years on cyber governance, hygiene and broadcaster requirements for suppliers of equipment and software. It is important to harmonize these efforts so that we can create a global template of best practices and supplier requirements.

John Lee, NABA's TC Chair, is also Vice-Chair of the WBU-TC and has taken the lead with the WBU-TC Cyber Sub-Committee. He is also leading a renewal of NABA's Cyber Security Sub-Committee. The first step in that renewal is to work with the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) cyber committee to harmonize our supplier requirements. We hope to make progress in time for the IBC in mid-September, where we will have another opportunity to discuss cyber security with a global audience at a C-Tech Forum on cyber security on September 15th. If you're planning to attend the IBC and this subject interests you, you should [go to the IBC website](#) and look at the agenda for the forum.

At the end of June, I met with my counterparts (the Secretaries/Directors-General) of the other broadcast unions at the end of the EBU's General Assembly in Dublin. We reviewed the work of the already mentioned WBU Committees above, as well as the Broadcaster Treaty Working Group and the Sports Committee. It was a productive day of sharing our initiatives, challenges and successes, including media over IP, cyber security issues and obtaining better legal protection for our broadcast signals on all platforms.

The Director-General of the EBU, Ingrid Deltenre, is leaving the EBU this summer after seven years of service in that role. She has become a good friend and colleague. I wish her well in her future role as a Director on the Board of a Swiss-based bank. She'll be missed by us all. Her replacement is Noel Curran, the former Director-General of Radio Television of Ireland (RTÉ). I look forward to working with Noel as he joins our small band of executives who manage international broadcast associations.

Readers will see an article in this newsletter by Thomas Bause Mason, who led our MoIP working group and produced a report on that work along with requirements that broadcasters will expect from suppliers as our production and network/station facilities move to an IP base. From that work, we plan to hold a MoIP workshop in partnership with the Alliance for IP Media Solutions (AIMS), the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers (SMPTE), and Video Services Forum (VSF) in New York on October 16th, hosted by NBCUniversal at 30 Rockefeller Plaza.

The focus of the workshop will be on the “user” experience to date and what we can expect in the future. MoIP is moving to the top of everyone's agenda these days, and getting broadcasters, IP specialists and manufacturers to spend the day looking at the challenges, experiences and future needs of our industry should contribute to a better understanding of the challenges and better solutions.

While we are looking forward a few months, I note that ATSC 3.0 will be moving to the implementation stage later this

year. To that end, NABA, Samsung and the NAB went to a CITEL gathering in Orlando, Florida late in June and demonstrated the benefits of this new transmission technology, including Ultra High Definition, mobility, and IP. Winston Caldwell from Fox has written a very useful report which is in this issue, and I thank Winston and Louis Libin (Sinclair) for their leadership on this project. And special thanks to the NAB and Samsung for their demo work. I find it hard to believe that so many regulators from North and South America and the Caribbean (and in fact, the rest of the world) don't appreciate that this technology is about to be launched, and also the benefits it can bring regardless of what stage one is at in the digital transition.

The Resilience & Risk Committee (RRC), the Legal Committee (LC) and the Radio Committee (RC) have all met over the summer. The RRC spent some time clarifying the roles of their sub-committees on resiliency, live remote risks, and facility and studio risks. These are not necessarily high-profile issues, but in times of emergency, whether it's natural or man-made, it becomes the number one priority for broadcasters to have secure facilities that can serve their viewers and listeners with vital information. The RRC also liaises with the cyber security group and the news operations people. Important work which sometimes goes under the radar!

The Radio Committee is also reviewing its work plan. With the recent completion of the position paper on HD Radio and most of the informational and infrastructure work completed on activated FM chips in smartphones, the committee feels that this work should continue as needed but as part of a larger effort focused on Next Generation Radio, including the future of the in-car dashboard, hybrid radio, streaming and apps. Makes sense, as all media is moving in that direction.

The Legal Committee is getting ready for the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) General Assembly the first week of October. This is important to us since decisions affecting our efforts to achieve a Diplomatic Conference on a new Broadcaster Treaty are likely to be made.

Continued on Next Page...

Readers will know this has been a project spanning many years of effort, but it is now more urgent than ever. We need a global set of legal tools to protect our signals on any platform in the digital IP age. While it may be exaggerated, a recent report suggests that up to 90 million viewers pirated the first show in the HBO series *Game of Thrones*. That is a big-time revenue loss for HBO, especially if you multiply that figure many times when you look at broadcast, cable, satellite and internet delivery that creates a global business for many of our members. We will be at WIPO, along with our colleagues from the other unions, to lobby for a Diplomatic Conference that will create the tools we need.

At the end of this month, our Technical Committee will meet in Toronto at Bell Media to review a whole list of important items, many of which we have already mentioned. I think central to their discussion will be the implementation of ATSC

3.0 and how all the pieces of Next Generation Television fit in to that transition. This will not be a government mandated transition as the last one to digital HD was, but rather a market-driven transition where the consumer is going to want to see the benefit of spending the money to upgrade. Interesting times!

Add in the recent impact of the incentive auction in the U.S., which harvested a lot of broadcaster spectrum for telecom use, and the plot just got more complicated. The costs and disruption associated with making the transition to new spectrum assignments for over 1,000 U.S. stations and those affected border stations in Canada and Mexico make the challenges all that much greater. At least in the U.S. there is a fund to help those stations affected - that is not the case as of yet in Canada and Mexico, resulting in what we feel is an unfair financial burden. NABA has written to all three North American administrations suggesting that the U.S.

fund is a best practice that should be replicated in Canada and Mexico. To date we have had no response. Must be summer?

The TC will also review where we are with work on common metadata for file formats and discuss implementation of the specifications by our members.

Finally, our Board of Directors will gather in Mexico City for a Board meeting September 6th, hosted by TV Azteca. The Board's agenda is made up of many of the items noted above, where they will review the work to date and provide direction as required. It is also a time where our Board can strategically assess where we are on some of these issues and what action should be taken to meet our tactical interests.

So, as you can see, it is a busy summer as we get ready for an even busier fall. I hope your summer is going well and you are getting some down time. ■