

Director-General's Report

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The fall months have been a busy and productive time for NABA. While there has not been a defining moment or project in the past months, a

combination of work in progress and some deliverables have kept our committees and working groups (WG) very active.

Cyber Security continues to dominate our schedule. The Cyber Security WG, under John Lee's (Fox) guidance, has updated our recommendations to vendors and suppliers outlining broadcaster requirements for equipment and services. This work has been approved by the Technical Committee and our Board of Directors. We are now working with our partners in the World Broadcasting Unions (WBU) to harmonize our recommendations with their work so we can offer the supplier community a global requirements document that would find its way into RFIs and RFPs. We anticipate this work to be completed by the end of the year.

The NABA Cyber Security WG will then turn to producing a Cyber Hygiene document focusing on best practices and operational issues for companies big and small. Combined with vendor recommendations, these will be powerful tools in helping us to keep our services secure in a world which is increasingly vulnerable to security breaches.

In mid-October, NABA, along with our industry partners (AIMS, SMPTE and VSF), held a very successful Media over IP (MoIP) Workshop hosted by NBCU in New York. It was a good day which focused on the user (broadcaster) experience to date and the developing tools broadcasters will have at their disposal as they transition to MoIP. It is clear that over the next few years this area will be on our collective agenda. To this end, NABA has become an AIMS partner to promote IP technology and demonstrate its benefits. We will also look for future Workshop opportunities. Read more about the MoIP Workshop in Thomas Bause Mason's article in

this issue of *NABAcaster*, and if you're interested in viewing the workshop

presentations, please [click here to go to our website where they are posted](#).

The Radio Committee (RC) has successfully created a new Working Group called Next-Generation Radio. This group combines the work on Digital Radio and FM Chip activation in smartphones and adds the car dashboard, hybrid radio and other next generation features that will become the new normal for radio. The WG is chaired by Michael Beach, Vice-President, Distribution at NPR. While each element of their mandate is important, the RC felt that these elements shouldn't be examined in isolation of others and that in fact the transition to the Next Generation is happening on many fronts at the same time, so a holistic approach is the best approach. RC Chair, Paul Brenner from Emmis, will have a full RC meeting in January to review this WG's mandate and deliverables. Good luck to Michael and his WG as they begin their challenging assignment.

The Resilience and Risk Committee (RRC) under Chair John Moore (Fox) and Vice-Chair Rodney North (CBS) have met with their sub-committee chairs to review their mandate and work plan. While everyone agreed this work has value, given the demands of RRC members' day jobs, their challenge has been to find the time needed to meet in sub-committees to review best practices and produce guidelines based on their assessed need.

However, the RRC leadership recognized the value of sharing best practices and experiences in the context of meeting their counterparts from other companies with similar challenges. To that end, they have recommended that their mandate be changed to reflect this, and will segue to a new process which features two face-to-face roundtable meetings a year. The meetings will be designed to cover a wide range of risk and resilience issues and experiences. Should follow up be required of the Committee, a special group would be tasked with that job to report at the next roundtable. The Board has approved this format and the first roundtable is scheduled for March 7th at Fox in Los Angeles. The RRC will run in this manner for the next year to 18 months and then evalu-

ate whether this initiative is delivering what the group wanted to achieve.

The Legal Committee (LC) continues to be focused on the Broadcaster Treaty at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). Although the results of our efforts, and those of our WBU members, have borne little result in the last year or so, there is now a concerted effort by both the WBU and WIPO officials to see whether a Diplomatic Conference is achievable by 2019. WIPO Committee meetings next May and a General Assembly next fall will be crucial to achieving a Diplomatic Conference. And of course, the member countries of WIPO need to favour this effort. We have been at this work a long time; if we continue to have a lack of progress, then our commitment and strategy will need to be reassessed. Next year will be important.

The LC has a watching brief on NAFTA negotiations for changes which may impact the cultural industries. They are also keeping a watching brief on devices like "Roku", which can steal broadcaster signals with considerable revenue impact. This situation will only become more challenging with streaming services and other internet offerings.

The Technical Committee (TC) will meet on December 14th in Washington to set their agenda for the upcoming year ahead. Although the TC hasn't met since the end of August, their sub-committees have been busy. Repack costs in Canada have been a continuing focus and the TC will be looking to brief both Canadian and Mexican officials on repack costs (as a result of the U.S. spectrum auction) for border stations in both countries. In addition, a second briefing on the market-driven rollout of ATSC 3.0 will be given to those same officials. These briefings should happen in January.

NABA responded to a FCC Notice of Inquiry concerning the potential of opening up C-band (3.7 to 4.2 MHz) to IMT services. We have long opposed this intrusion into traditional broadcast spectrum, which is the backbone of our broadcast satellite distribution of signals in the U.S., Mexico and Canada.

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We have done studies that demonstrate the interference consequences of such activity and the potential cost to broadcasters and their operations. It is too soon to assess where the FCC may go next on this subject, but we will remain vigilant through our spectrum sub-committee and take action as appropriate. To date we see no benefit to sharing this spectrum with other services.

We briefed Canadian government officials on the benefits of activating the FM Chip in smartphones in early November. While Canada has been slow to see FM Chip activation, great strides have been made in Mexico and there is very encouraging growth in the U.S. While there is obvious commercial and service benefit to FM Chip activation, the core benefit is public service in times of natural or man-made disasters where cell service may not be possible but local radio is still available as the mobile phone becomes the radio receiver. A pretty compelling argument from my point of view.

In addition, CBC/Radio-Canada's Julie Bergeron attended the ITU Study Group 6 meetings this past fall and presented the Digital Radio Report, which recommended voluntary adoption of HD Radio as the North America digital radio standard. The ITU took note of this initiative - our thanks to Julie.

The TC will organize a Cloud Workshop, in early 2018 potentially adjacent to our

2018 AGM (more on the AGM later), with the focus on: what works, what doesn't, challenges and opportunities. This event will open a discussion that is likely to dominate a lot of our TC work over the coming year - thanks to John Lee.

Our Board of Directors met in Mexico City on November 14th, hosted by Sergio Sarmiento and TV Azteca. It was an excellent meeting that included a briefing by Sergio on the regulatory framework currently evolving in Mexico, the net effect being an easing of some of the previous onerous requirements but the situation is still very much in flux. This kind of regulatory sharing and awareness is important for all members, no matter which country they're from, since it informs their company of a North American regulatory environment and the potential benefits and/or impacts.

Likewise, Leonardo Ramos from Televisa gave a technical and operational briefing on some of the current issues, including repack challenges and the potential impact of ATSC 3.0 on border communities. It is clear that Mexico is a long way from ATSC 3.0 implementation, as is Canada, with both countries looking to the U.S. market rollout for best practice lessons and market take up.

This led to a wide ranging industry discussion led by our President, Richard Friedel (Fox). A lot of concern about the need for a different skill base in our workforce to

deal with MoIP and how to get the right balance was clearly evident throughout our discussions, as well as the challenges of introducing ATSC 3.0 into the U.S. market. There are a lot of opportunities, a lot of challenges and clearly a lot of unknowns. We live in interesting times.

The Board accepted with pleasure the offer from Disney | ABC to host our AGM March 8th and 9th in Los Angeles (please save the dates), and the Board will have a teleconference in late January in preparation for the AGM.

So as the year ends, we can look back to a most satisfactory and productive 2017. All of this reminds me that we as a broadcast community are not only connected nationally and in our North American region, but indeed we are intertwined with the global broadcast community. Our issues are their issues and their issues ours. The more we can share, work together on solutions, and effect regional and global positions, the better off we are. To paraphrase McLuhan "think globally, act locally."

Season's Greetings to you and your families, our very best wishes for the New Year ahead. ■