

# Looking for additional spectrum

Over 130 frequency managers discussed frequency management at the Fourth Global Shortwave Coordination Conference in preparation for ITU World Radiocommunication Conference 2007.

**Shortwave broadcasters** gathered in Hainan to address the need for more channel frequencies and request national spectrum regulators all over the world to support their cause at the upcoming ITU World Radiocommunication Conference 2007 (WRC-07).

Sharad Sadhu, Head of Technology Transmission and Spectrum in the ABU, reporting from the Fourth Global Shortwave Coordination Conference which took place from 13-17 February in Hainan, China and hosted by the Radio and Television of the People's Republic of China (RTPRC), said that shortwave broadcasters had clearly demonstrated the need for additional spectrum to meet requirements of their ongoing services and overcome current congestion in the allocated spectrum in the 4–10 MHz band.

Availability of additional frequency channels is one of the biggest problems faced by shortwave broadcasters as the available quota of channels is being densely utilised. ITU's WRC-07 will look at this requirement with a view to make more channels available for shortwave broadcasting. It is in this context that the broadcasters have articulated their need, taking into account the current congestion, the need for expansion in the near future and the life-saving role that shortwave broadcasters are called upon to play during natural disasters.

The Fourth Global Shortwave Coordination Conference saw more than 130 frequency managers of 60 shortwave broadcasters addressing frequency channels for 7350 daily transmissions. Via software tools and face-to-face discussions, they were successful in significantly reducing interference with each others' services. Interference was eliminated in 19 per cent of services that were deemed to be affected. When these channels are put to use for transmissions in the

last week of March onwards, reception quality is expected to improve significantly.

The conference had been officiated by Li Zhi, Director-General of the Administrative Bureau of Radio Stations, RTPRC, who said in his opening address that the coordination conferences had played a significant role in this achievement by effectively promoting the economic use of broadcasting spectrum.

The Chairman of the High Frequency Coordination Committee, Oldrich Cip, said there had been an increase in the public awareness of shortwave coordination and this placed the conference's work under increasing public scrutiny.

On the sidelines of the conference, meetings of the ABU-HFC and HFCC/ASBU Steering Committees took place where several significant decisions on the future development

of the frequency coordination were taken. Emphasis was placed on monitoring of quality of transmissions and elimination of 'wooden transmissions' – those frequencies which are assigned but not used. Technical experts of all the Coordination Groups also finalised procedures for a more enhanced interference detection system.

The Global Coordination Conferences have evolved over the years after the three coordination groups, the ABU-HFC, HFCC and ASBU decided to work together on a worldwide scale where the objective of the annual conferences is to produce methods and tools to resolve interference and improve the quality of shortwave radio service. The ABU-HFC group, set up by the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union in 1996, celebrates its 10 years of working in 2006. The group has participation from 38 broadcasters in Asia-Pacific and in Europe, Africa and North America. The next meeting of the group will take place in Kuala Lumpur in January 2007. ■

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## About the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU)

The Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) is a non-profit, non-government, professional association of broadcasting organisations, formed in 1964 to facilitate the development of broadcasting in the Asia-Pacific region and to organise co-operative activities amongst its members. It currently has over 150 members in 55 countries, with its broadcaster members reaching a potential audience of about 3 billion people. The ABU provides a forum for promoting the collective interests of television and radio broadcasters, and engages in activities to encourage regional and international co-operation between broadcasters. For more information, please visit [www.abu.org.my](http://www.abu.org.my) ■