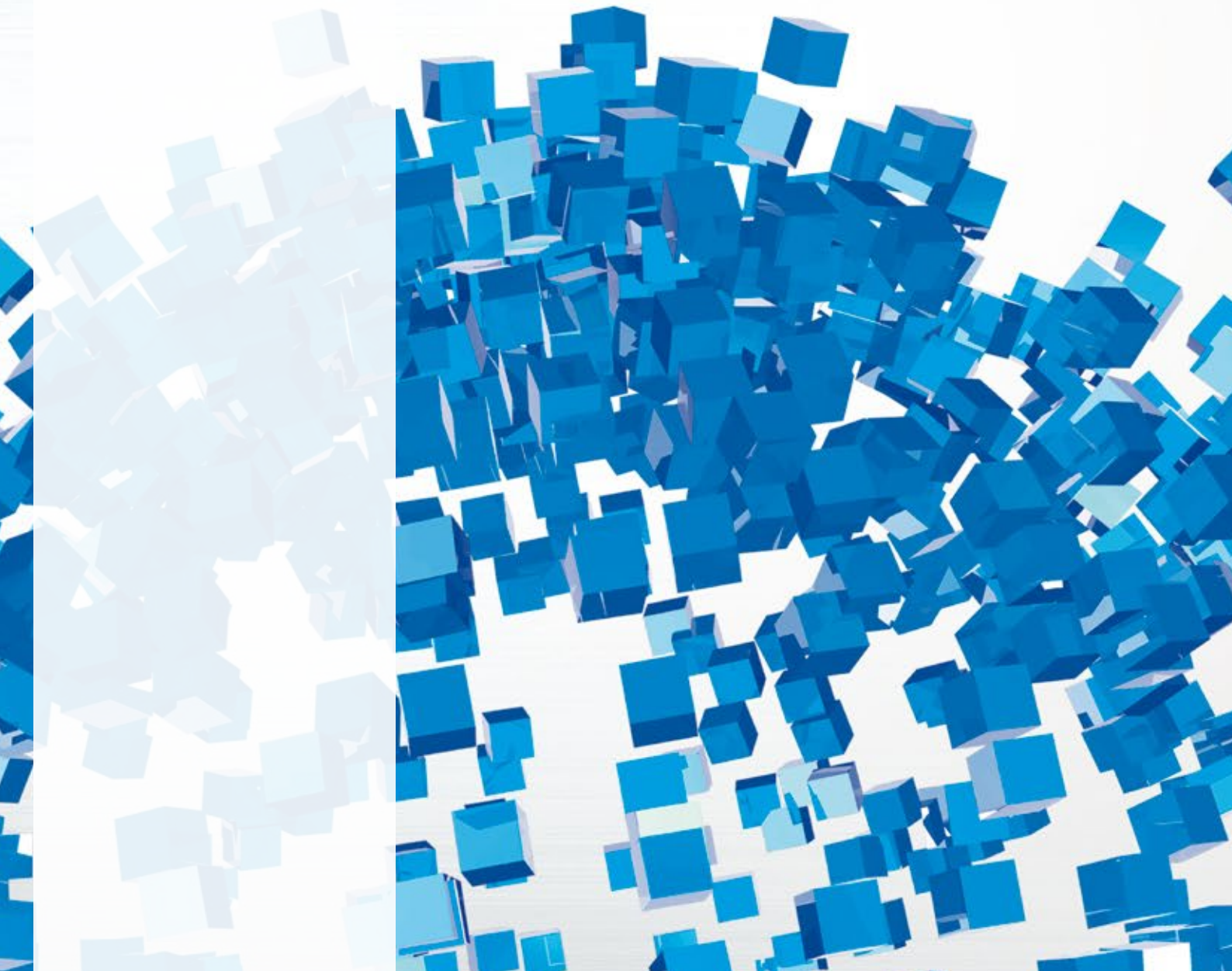




# ASIAVISION ANNUAL REPORT





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# Summary



*Sedrick (Se-Deuk) Ahn  
Director ABU News  
1 September 2013*

On behalf of Asiavision, this is the report of the ABU News Director, to the ABU News Group Chairs as well as to AVN members on the collective achievements over the past year, since the Hanoi News Group Meeting in 2012. First, there has been remarkable change not just in our platform but also in the operational system since AVN Members agreed to introduce a cloud-computing platform, called **Akamai**, at the Hanoi Meeting. Consequently, the old platform, PrimeDrive is to be officially closed down at the end of this year (2013). Most members have indicated a willingness to go forward with the online platform, while depending less on satellite transmission, compared to a year ago. In cases where some members changed the uploading platform from satellite to online, the introduction of the cloud-computing platform seemed to lead to budget savings by reducing the up-link payment to domestic earth stations which carry a high cost. Still, the newly installed Akamai platform has a long way to go. For instance, according to the recent survey in July, about 60% of the 21 responses mentioned that it takes more than 15 minutes to download a single news file from Akamai platform.

Second, with ABC-Australia re-joining Asiavision from 1 July 2013, the total number of AVN members now stands at 28, which is the highest in its history. If two more members amongst those we are approaching in Central Asia or in the Philippines join, membership may reach 30 within the year.

Third, with respect to quantity of AVN New feeds exchanged, there is no visual progress in statistics. Although AVN now has 28 members, far higher in comparison to the 19 in 2010, total number of news feeds exchanged in 2012 was 8,974, which is slightly less than the 9,004 items exchanged two years ago. It could be easily assumed that we might stand still, or at most mark time. Thus, the Asiavision leadership may have to come up with an efficient solution to encourage members to contribute more by leading the taking-only members to the original reciprocal framework. To catch up with SNS crowd-sourcing news being led by citizen journalists, it is worthwhile taking into account the introduction of SNS news providing service such as Storyful in the coming years.

Fourth, as most AVN members wished for more than a decade, Asiavision successfully launched, together with the ABU Secretariat, the high profile roundtable for TV news decision makers in the Asia-Pacific to announce Asiavision on the global stage. The Global News Forum 2013 – *Breaking the News in the Media 3.0 Era* - was to be held on 5 September 2013, back-to-back with the annual ABU News Group Meeting in Seoul, Korea. Among 150 participants registered were mainly Chief Editors of the region's TV newsrooms, Directors of International News and CEOs of foreign language channels. They were committed to grapple with the challenges posed by the advent of digital game-changers in the SNS era.

Finally, AVN financial management should be open, transparent and monitored in real time. This can be achieved by embracing modern financial practices and technology including Internet Banking. In brief, it is necessary for AVN Centre to apply the efficient systemic check and balance tools such as Internet banking access to its own AVN Fund accounts not just to monitor the fluctuation of income, expenditure and outstanding debts, but also to share the financial information with all the AVN members paying the fee. In that sense, the three Chairpersons have the high expectation of the AVN Centre to submit AVN financial reports shedding light on our actual financial situation using data directly reported by our banks.

# Key Performance Indicators

## Membership Enlargement

As ABC-Australia re-joined Asiavision on 1 July 2013, the total number of AVN members reached 28, the highest in AVN history. The list of the 28 AVN members is as follows:

RTA-Afghanistan, Saba TV-Afghanistan, TV-Indonesia, NHK-Japan, KBS-Korea, ABC-Australia, BTV-Bangladesh, BBS-Bhutan, RTB-Brunei, CCTV-China, RTM-Malaysia, TV5-Mongolia, TDM-Macau, MBC-Maldives, NTV-Nepal, CTN-Cambodia, FBC-Fiji, Forever Group-Myanmar, MBC-Mauritius, TVB-Hong Kong, DD-India, IRIB-Iran, Metro TV-Indonesia, NHK-Japan, KBS-Korea, RTM-Malaysia, TV5-Mongolia, TDM-Macau, MBC-Maldives, NTV-Nepal, CNA- Singapore, SLRC-Sri Lanka, TRT-Turkey, MCOT- Thailand, RTTL-Timor-Leste, and VTV-Vietnam.

## avn 28 AVN Members (as of July 2013)



www.abu.org.my



## Introduction of a cloud-computing platform

As the majority of AVN Members finally agreed during the ABU News Group Meeting in Hanoi last year (2012) to introduce a cloud-computing platform, AVN Centre signed a biennial contract with Akamai, the world-wide cloud platform provider working for international news agencies like CNN. The new cloud-computing platform has far better facilitated news exchange processes, as well as producing long-term budget savings. However, most members are not happy with the slow download speed. Speed problems are mainly derived from the last mile in

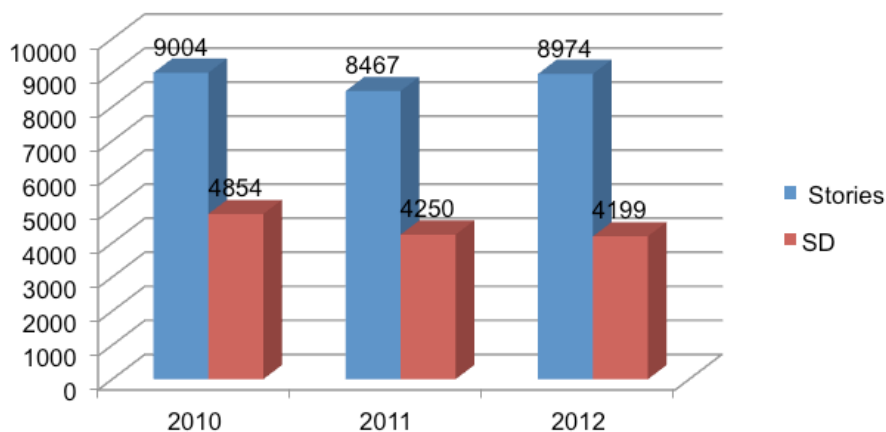
the respective infrastructure of members' countries, not from the AVN system in itself. Therefore, many of the members suffering from slow speed need to invest more resources in higher bit-rate internet infrastructure. The AVN Technical Advisory Task Force might be able to help them find a solution.



### The number of exchanged news feeds

According to the breakdown statistics of AVN news items that have been exchanged, the monthly average is now about 23-24, similar to what it used to be in the past when AVN had fewer than 20 members. It means that Asiavision did not witness any meaningful improvement on the issue of contribution, even after its membership has enlarged to the current 28. Given the developments in news, with greater diversification than before and thus government publicity-style news comes up less and less, some are arguing that we should not stand still or mark time. But others are looking in a different way that only half of the members are contributing and the rest are just taking others' news. In that regard, AVN leadership may well put forth more efficient solutions to encourage all to contribute more. The exact breakdown statistics of AVN news items is in the table below.

**Table1: Breakdown of the number of AVN news feeds by year**



**Table2: Where the AVN news feeds come from**



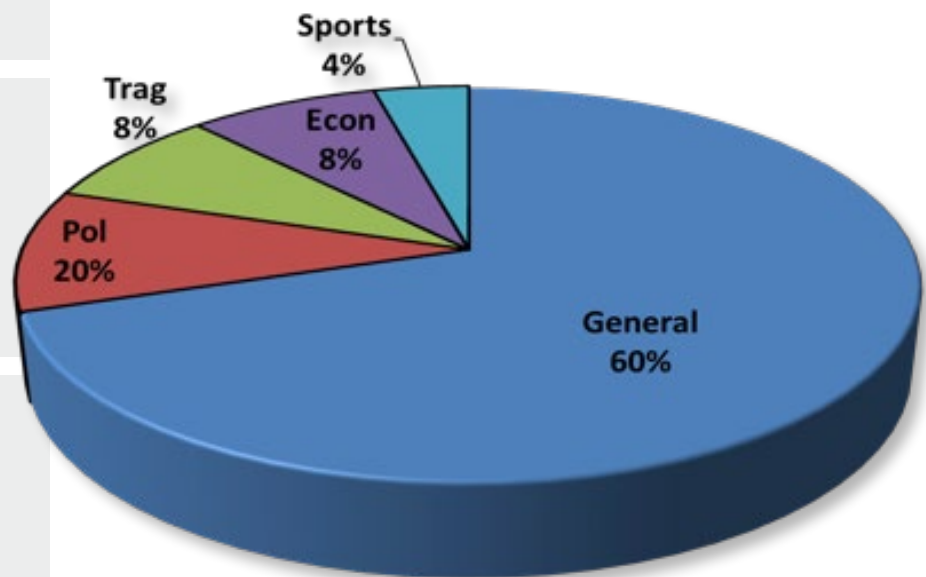
\*ABC Australia became an AVN member in July 2013

**Table3: Number & source of contributed items January – July 2013**

Member	Number of items	Member	Number of items
RTA - Afghanistan	16	METV - Indonesia	5
Saba TV - Afghanistan	0	NHK - Japan	612
ABC - Australia *	1	KBS - Korea	293
BTV - Bangladesh	194	RTM - Malaysia	677
BBS - Bhutan	0	TV5 - Mongolia	81
RTB - Brunei	9	TDM - Macau	18
CCTV - China	503	MBC - Maldives	6
CTN - Cambodia	192	NTV - Nepal	4
FBC - Fiji	0	CNA - Singapore	27
Forever Group - Myanmar	0	SLRC - Sri Lanka	231
MBC - Mauritius	0	TRT - Turkey	94
TVB - Hong Kong	158	MCOT - Thailand	1095
DD - India	250	RTTL - Timor Leste	0
IRIB - Iran	736	VTV - Vietnam	17

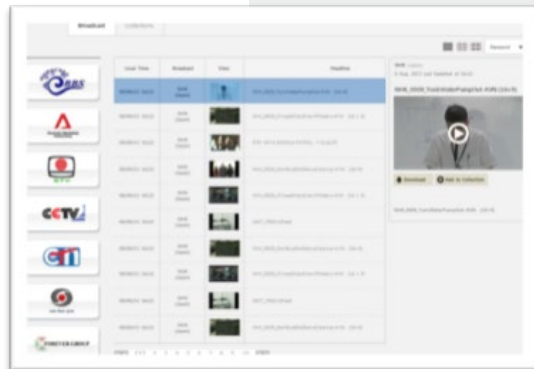
\*ABC Australia became an AVN member in July 2013

**Table4: Item Categories by percentage**



## User Interface Upgrade

Following the recommendation of its Coordinators' Meeting in Tokyo, AVN Centre is developing version 2.0 of the User Interface in the Akamai software. As the first version of operational software is not user-friendly, most of Coordinators wish to amend the existing software to enable easy operation such as in YouTube, where video clips can be uploaded and downloaded by a simple click. In order to meet their needs, we found one of the best software developers among the KBS contractors in Seoul, **Webvista**, and asked them to do it.



## Global News Forum

Asiavision has organised a high-profile round-table for TV News Editors in the Asia-Pacific to publicise the AVN service as well as to share information, experiences and innovation. This idea culminated in an initiative now known as the Global News Forum, taking place in Seoul, Korea on 5 September. It is designed as an open stage for debate and discussion for Asian TV news leaders and held back-to-back with ABU News Group Meeting. The number of participants outside Korea is around 150, including the AVN delegation. Most participants are Chief Editors, Directors of International News and CEOs of Foreign Language Channels who are grappling with the challenges brought on by the digital SNS wave. Thanks to a donation of tablets (Galaxy Note 8.0) by Samsung, the GNF in Seoul will proceed in a new concept format: paperless, multi-faceted communication via SNS and on the spot touch-screen discussions.

## GNF concept and topic: *Breaking the News in the Media 3.0 Era*

Today's newsrooms have access to an unprecedented array of digital tools to cover breaking news. The revolution in communications technology allows journalists in the field to disseminate text, photos, audio and video in a flurry of real time updates. The proliferation of social media allows for interaction between news organisations and media consumers like never before, and adapting to these changes has proven to be a critical component in the work of news media professionals. The hallmark of the Media 2.0 Age was its profound shift from the linear media paradigm of the past. While experts remain divided on how exactly to define the coming Media 3.0 Era, social interaction between media consumers and producers will likely come to play an even larger role. Basic questions that face journalists, producers and editors are now thrust in the torrent of incoming information and audience demands. How can journalists succeed in this environment while holding true to journalistic principles? How will they meet their obligations to provide the public with accurate and reliable information needed to function in society?



### **Advisory service in 2013**

By taking advantage of the budget allocated to the Advisory service in 2012-13 fiscal year, the AVN leadership has sent experts from AVN members as speakers, consultants and trainers to various forums and events where members needed that particular expertise:

- (1) Support to send three AVN Speakers to Central Asia Media Forum The ABU Technical Department and News Department initiated the regional forum in Central Asia for the first time, titled ABU Central Asia Media Forum. It took place on 26-28 August 2013 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan and was a good chance for Asiavision to promote what benefits it can provide to broadcasters in Central Asia. Chairpersons approved AVN Centre to carry out the advisory service by sending three speakers from AVN members – *NHK*, *MCOT* and *KBS*. The topics were selected according to the members' expertise: *NHK* – disaster reporting, *MCOT* – lessons from the coverage of devastating flood in 2011, and *KBS* – new media backing the switch-over to digital. It was also regarded as a good opportunity to recruit more new members.
- (2) Supporting the MBC-Maldives training program In May, MBC-Maldives planned to conduct an intensive journalism training program in-house for its journalists and thus requested AVN Centre to send experienced journalists who can take on-the-job training sessions on creating modern news content for television, radio and new media. Asiavision Centre felt it was efficient and effective for us to support the MBC-Maldives training program by sending two experts from *KBS-Korea* on the basis of the Advisory Service. With the hotel covered by MBC-Maldives, the cost to AVN was just the flight fares for two trainers. From now on, benefits from advisory services should be shared according to the principle of equal opportunity, under the rotation framework.

### **Asiavision Promotional Reel production**

As recommended in the Hanoi Meeting last year, AVN Centre is producing a promotional reel highlighting the history, activities and members of Asiavision. As such we requested all members to provide some well-edited archive and up-to-date video clips of their own. With 10 reels sent from long-standing members, the AVN promotion reel is in the process of compilation using not just short inputs from each member, but also relevant recent video clips.



### AVN Coordinators' Meeting in Tokyo

The AVN Coordinators' Meeting in 2013 was successfully held in Tokyo. Given the fact that 25 AVN members attended the meeting from a total of 27, it was the highest turnout ever since our news exchange service was launched in 1984; the no-show rate was roughly 30% in the past. This is a clear indication that more AVN members are actively involved in AVN annual activities than before. Thanks to the high presence and active discussion, the Tokyo Meeting also marked another turning-point - the extended schedule including a study tour of the NHK Newsroom gave participants a rare opportunity for hands-on experience on the job. The case-study seminar enriched results of the meeting. For the first time, AVN Coordinators adopted the official recommendation to the ABU New Group so that the two annual meetings are knit together through it.



2013 AVN Coordinators Meeting participants. Hosted by NHK in Tokyo, Japan

### New channel for AVN satellite feeds in August 2013

The EBU informed Asiavision that its feeds via satellite moved to a new channel in mid-August 2013 as part of last year's migration from 9 MHz to 6 MHz. The transition date of the Asiavision feeds from channel 11K6 on transponder C11V to channel 12F6 on transponder C12H started from 15 August, 2013. With the exception of polarity (horizontal downlink for the new channel) and uplink and downlink frequencies, all other satellite parameters remain the same.

### Excerpt of AVN Coordinators' Recommendation to the ABU New Group

1. AVN should articulate its operational guidelines to regulate the overall work flow such as standardization in the article-writing format.
2. AVN needs to upgrade its online platform by introducing better user-interface.
3. AVN should maintain the second feed, though it is to be moved.
4. AVN should develop a communication tool including the real-time feedback loop.
5. AVN takes into account a news-sources-detecting service providing the relevant statistics: who, when, how often, what AVN feeds are put on air via whose bulletin.
6. AVN is to produce a promotional reel to publicise what it is in various regional events.
7. AVN Coordinators are encouraged to exchange their news feeds by the individual requests on an ad-hoc basis as well, whenever they are needed
8. AVN is advised to terminate PrimeDrive because it is not necessary any more.
9. AVN will formulate its Technical Task Force and make it open to every member.
10. AVN will try hard to bring an Attachment Scheme into practice as soon as possible.

# Roadmap & future plans

Within a year, the AVN Centre is planning to draft a long-term plan that will be practically supported by financial and human resources as well as strategy. The pyramid graphic below is an example.

## Where to in the future

When the founders of AVN built Asiavision in 1984, the goal was to set up an Asian TV news agenda from Asia's own eyes by sharing daily news and stories with each other, rather than heavily relying on other news sources outside Asia. Now, 29 years later, through increasingly better cooperation, partnership and mutual trust, we are getting closer and closer to that goal. However, we need to fully gear up



- (1) To upgrade both satellite and online platforms to better facilitate news exchange far more efficiently than now by adopting new digital technology and an SNS network;
- (2) To dramatically increase not just the number of news feeds but also the quality, while attracting more members and go beyond the 30 member barrier – now AVN has 28 members;
- (3) Keep organising high-profile events for news decision makers such as the Global News Forum, and participate actively in more regional ABU events such as the DBS – Digital Broadcasting Forum.

## Exploring introduction of new service: SNS News Feeds

In today's news environment, international news exchange networks and agencies are making the best of SNS video as a news source by subscribing to SNS news and verification services such as Storyful (*Reuters, EBU, BBC, ABC News, Bloomberg, and France24 are Storyful's current customers*). It is now time to start exploring the introduction of SNS news feeds for AVN. Given that there is no necessity for AVN to subscribe to this service in rush, the issue will be discussed, evaluated and addressed within the next year.

# Financial Report

From 2010 to 2012, the AVN Budget was in deficit. But from the next fiscal year it will be stabilised and turn out a surplus: as much as US\$66,000, mainly due to new AVN memberships. Despite an increasingly better outlook on the balance sheet of AVN, there is a chronic issue haunting the Asiavision budget every year. More than 10 members have not paid their fees. Currently, the total of outstanding fees amounts to US\$167,954. AVN leadership should come up with strong methods to reduce the default rate, recently almost 23% in comparison with the total budget. A few members paying the lowest fee have not paid for more than 12 months.

## Audit Result of fiscal year 2011/2012

The summary of result of audit on the AVN Fund in 2011/2012 fiscal year, in USD

Fiscal Year	2012	2011
Income	707,282	780,754
Expenditure	769,689	644,723
<b>Deficit /Surplus</b>	<b>-62,407</b>	<b>+136,031</b>

## Overhead Services Charges: Major cause of deficit in 2012

The Overhead Services Charges is the amount AVN should pay for all the routine services provided by ABU Secretariat, such as the cost of providing internet access, email facilities, and even some Secretariat staff. The amount, unilaterally imposed by the ABU Secretariat, has cost AVN a total of US\$31,000 per year (originally \$25,000 + additional charge of \$6,000 from 2010 onwards). But, after taking a close examination of the Overhead Services Charges from all angles and points more logically, AVN Centre came to a conclusion that this charge is neither reasonable nor fair. The AVN Centre therefore appealed to the ABU hierarchy (PSG) to look into the issue and to make a judgment. During the March PSG meeting in KL, the ABU Secretary General made an announcement officially that the Overhead Services Charge should be terminated immediately. As can be seen in the result of audit in 2012, roughly 50% of the AVN budget deficit in 2012 (US\$31,000 out of US\$62,407) came from the Overhead Service Charges. This practice started in 2007.

## Budget planning for 2013/2014 Fiscal Year

On 26 July 2013, a Vice-Chair of the News Group who is taking charge of finance, Mr Harjit Singh Gill visited the ABU to discuss not just AVN Budget planning for the 2013-14 fiscal year, but also to see the estimated result of the 2013 audit underway at the time. On behalf of AVN, the Director ABU News, Sedrick Ahn, reported to the ABU Secretary-General, Mr Javad Mottaghi, ABU Financial Officer, Ms Lian Chew, and Mr Harjit Singh Gill the grounds of budget planning for the 2013-14 fiscal year, in detail. On the spending side, in the 2013-14 fiscal year, the AVN Centre is planning to allocate more resources to capacity building and information sharing such as the Attachment Scheme and Advisory Service, to meet the changing needs of its members. It will also put more emphasis on enhancing its publicity by producing an AVN Promotional Reel, AVN Annual Reports and through more active participation in the regional workshops like the Central Asia Media Forum. In

terms of savings, as AVN is no longer required to pay an overhead service charge, the budget will be better off by US\$25,000. In addition, the termination of the PrimeDrive from 1 January 2014 will result in a further annual saving of more than US\$30,000. We have also found ways to reduce other monthly service charges (NHK G-Media Service) and therefore saved US\$16,000 annually. However, given that there are new allocations in spending, the savings will be invested as follows:

- (1) Production of the AVN Promotional Reel;
- (2) AVN Centre renovation including purchase of new flat TV sets for monitoring; and
- (3) Publication of an AVN Annual Report including all official documents.

All in all, the fiscal outlook for the 2013-14 financial year looks brighter than ever before, and we are expecting a US\$60,000 surplus mainly due to enlarged membership of AVN.

#### Outlook of Balance Sheet: AVN Budget soundness (Currency: US Dollar)

Income & spending	Breakdown	Approved Budget (A)	Unaudited estimate (B)	Budget Planning of Next Fiscal year (C)	Difference C-B	Difference C-A
Income	AVN Fee	474,000	523,400	603,600	80,200	129,600
	Content Sale	69,576	69,576	69,576		
	Interest from AVN Fund	64,200	100,129	111,000	10,871	46,800
	<b>Total</b>	<b>607,778</b>	<b>693,105</b>	<b>784,176</b>	<b>91,071</b>	<b>176,400</b>
Expenditure	Activity Expenses	38,2100	402,965	528,600	125,635	146,500
	Staff Labor Costs	217,160	179,546	200,600	21,054	-16,560
	Travel & Conference	30,000	36,853	40,400	3,547	10,400
	Overhead Service Charge	25,000	25,000	0	-25,000	-25,000
	Others (see file attached)					
	<b>Total</b>	<b>716,860</b>	<b>698,981</b>	<b>827,170</b>	<b>128,190</b>	<b>110,310</b>
<b>Surplus/ Deficit</b>		<b>-109,084</b>	<b>-5,876</b>	<b>-42,994</b>	<b>-37,119</b>	<b>+66,090</b>

# Survey Response Summary

<Appendix>

Ahead of the ABU News Group 2013 Meeting in Seoul, the AVN Centre conducted a survey in July to gauge the trends and expectations of Asiavision members. Of the 28 AVN members, the survey received 21 responses. Below is a summary of the results on the main issues that AVN Coordinators, during their meeting in April in Tokyo, Japan, had put forward as their recommendations.

Among the recommendations that were raised in the survey for members' feedback were:

- 1) EBU's request to move the AVN second feed to an earlier time slot.
- 2) AVN's revamped attachment scheme.
- 3) Exploring the introduction of social network content to AVN as offered by Storyful.
- 4) Exchanging feature items and sports events via the file-based platform.

**Q) EBU (who owns the lease on the satellite transponder AVN uses) has proposed moving the AVN second feed from 12:15~12:35 GMT to 10:30~10:50 GMT.**

(1) Yes, let's move (2) No, keep it by looking for another service provider



<b>Option 1</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>70%</b>
Option 2	6	30%

The majority of respondents (70%) voted to accept the time slot movement. This matter will be discussed in the Seoul News Group meeting. There are three options on the table: (i) accept the new time slot, (ii) drop the second feed entirely, (iii) find a new service provider in order to maintain the existing time slot.

**Q) On revamping the Attachment Scheme, the survey asks for suggestions on setting the basis for selecting the beneficiaries**

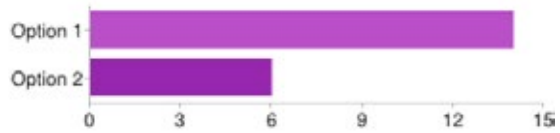
- (1) The member who sends the most number of stories;
- (2) The member most active in hosting AVN annual meetings;
- (3) The decision should be made in the News Group meeting through discussion;
- (4) Other.

Option 1	4	17%
Option 2	2	8%
<b>Option 3</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>54%</b>
Option 4	1	4%
Other	4	17%

A suggestion from one respondent was "Preference should be given to members from developing countries." The majority (54%) opted for this matter to be discussed in the Seoul News Group meeting.

**Q) On introducing Storyful news service which provides SNS news feeds to AVN:**

(1) Yes (2) No

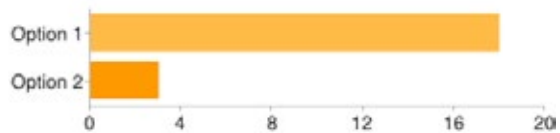


<b>Option 1</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>70%</b>
Option 2	6	30%

The majority (70%) is agreeable to introducing social network content.

**Q) On exchanging Sports News events through the AVN file-based platform:**

(1)Yes (2) No



<b>Option 1</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>86%</b>
Option 2	3	14%

The majority (86%) voted yes on exchanging features and sports events via AVN's file-based platform. This matter is up for discussion in the Seoul News Group meeting as the sports content will also involve the ABU's Sports Department.

Other main matters put forward in the survey were:

**Q) On suggestions for upgrading AVN's Akamai file-based system to be more user-friendly:**

- (1) Downloading & Uploading: faster, easier, and simpler.
- (2) Screen layout for easy pasting and handling of the scripts & other details.
- (3) Archive & Search tools.
- (4) Other.

<b>Option 1</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>57%</b>
Option 2	6	20%
Option 3	3	10%
Option 4	1	3%
Other	3	10%

The majority (57%) suggested looking at better ways to upload/download video clips to Akamai. This matter is also up for discussion in the Seoul News Group meeting.

**Q) On allowing AVN news content to be sold to other news agencies (CNN currently subscribes to AVN):**

(1) Yes (2) No

**Option 1 17 81%**

Option 2 4 19%

The majority (81%) is in favour of selling AVN content to other news agencies.

**Q) On what topics the News Group Meeting in Seoul should focus on:**

(1) Technical improvement such as updating the Akamai platform.

(2) Sharing information & experiences with each other.

(3) Financial situation and budget planning.

(4) Finding other news sources & AVN news content sale.

Option 1 10 27%

Option 2 11 30%

Option 3 5 14%

Option 4 11 30%

**Explanation:**

Sharing information and experiences as well as finding other news sources and AVN content sale garnered 30% of responses each.

Suggestions received on what to discuss in the upcoming News Group Meeting:

- how to produce more interesting news stories;
- ways in which other broadcasters can effectively use uploaded items in their programs;
- training for members from developing countries;
- finding ways to help non-contributing members to start contributing;
- to make news item scripts more detailed and long enough to use in broadcasting;
- enhancing quality of stories and scripts to ensure they represent an international flavour and not only suit local needs.

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**Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU)**

2nd Floor, IPPTAR Building Angkasapuri, 50614 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Tel: +60 3 2282 3592 • Fax: +60 3 2282 5292 / 7562

[www.abu.org.my](http://www.abu.org.my)