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Report on the Mid-year Meeting of the Technical Bureau

TBM 2020 focuses on changes to operations due to COVID-19

The ABU organised the Technical Bureau mid-year meeting as a two-day virtual event on 28-29 July 2020.

Sunil ADG Prasar Bharat

Mr Masashi Kamei

The meeting was chaired by TC Chairman, **Mr Hamid D Nayeri** of IRIB-Iran, and attended by Vice-Chairmen, **Mr Sunil** of DD-India and **Mr Masashi Kamei** of NHK-Japan and Honorary Vice-Chairman, **Mr Nguyen Nang Khang** of VOV-Vietnam. Also in attendance were colleagues from NHK-Japan, KBS-Korea, DD-India, AIR-India, Mediacorp-Singapore, NBT-Thailand, TRT-Turkey, TVB-Hong Kong, Phoenix TV-Hong Kong, RRI-Indonesia, SBA-Saudi Arabia, EAP-Sri Lanka and MTV-Sri Lanka.

The ABU Secretary-General, Dr Javad Mottaghi, in his welcome remarks stressed the importance of sharing the lessons learnt from COVID-19 among the members so that we could learn from each other during this difficult time. He also said that we must find ways to organise more activities online so more members could join and benefit from them.
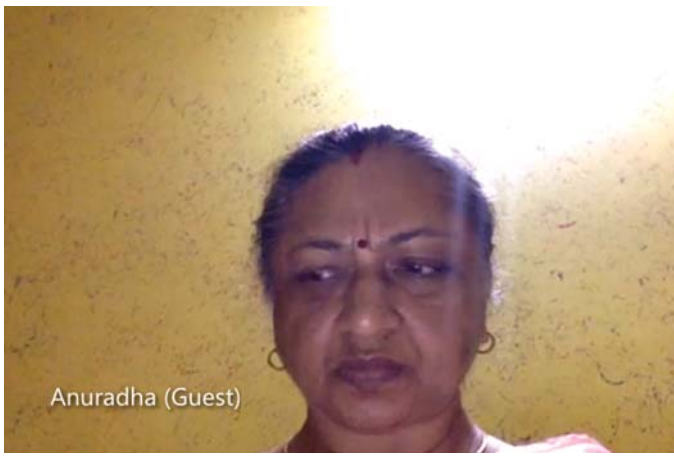
The meeting focused mainly on how the ABU can support its members given this pandemic where most of the usual operations have been disrupted. The meeting began with updates from all members on the current situation, the steps they have taken and what projects if any are currently being undertaken. This provided a great opportunity for members to learn from each other's experiences. Some key points with regard to actions related to the COVID-19 include:

- The activation and use of remote operation and monitoring applications on supported systems. Most modern systems do provide for remote operation although these have not been activated in some cases as there was no specific need for it. Such functionality was activated so that staff could monitor and operate those systems remotely from home.

- Since outdoor production in many cases was not allowed, many had to turn to their archives for support to fill on-air time. The digitisation of content helped in this case as most of the archives were readily available to playback on modern automated file-based systems. Other had to be digitised. Overall the importance of digitising and safeguarding the old content came to light.

- The splitting of operational teams was also noted as a good idea. Some members did this, dividing the operational staff who had to report to work into two teams taking turns every other day at work. This was to prevent a complete lockdown if a case among the staff was discovered as in this way it could more easily be segregated and handled. This was in addition to disinfecting the operational areas on a daily basis before and after each work shift.

- New SOPs have been drawn up and some old ones updated accordingly to include such pandemic or disaster recovery protocols. Many organisations have never prepared for such a difficult and unprecedented approach before, so a lot of these protocols had to be devised from scratch but will be a good addition to the existing

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SOPs in the future. This showed the importance of having SOPs for different kinds of operational scenarios and the need for these to be updated when required.

The above were some of the key discussions and points that were highlighted during the members' exchange. This information sharing was helpful with some members learning from each other and agreeing to implement such measures going forward.

The bureau was presented with the activity report from the Secretariat since the annual meetings in Tokyo last year. This included three face-to-face activities including the DBS2020, which was a very much scaled-down event compared to the past due to the travel restrictions being introduced by many companies who were otherwise prepared to take part in the event. Most of the other activities in the report were online webinar sessions on various topics of technology implementation and applications.

A total of 25 webinar sessions under 12 main themes were presented up to mid-July 2020.

This was noted as an excellent achievement by the members; more staff from member organisations were able to join these sessions and benefit from them. The report also highlighted updates on other activities managed by the Technology Department including the revamp of the Technical Review magazine, migration of email system to the Microsoft365 platform and the trial launch of the Asia-Pacific View (APV) Platform.

Among other issues, the bureau took a complete review of the tasks and action items since the last meeting. The meeting also discussed two new proposals on updates to the Training and

Services Topic Area and updating the Spectrum Topic Area in light of the new agenda items stipulated for WRC-23.

The meeting also reviewed the schedule of this year's annual meetings. Given the current health climate, the meetings have been pushed back to December.

The meeting concluded with the final remarks from the Chairman wishing everyone good health and the importance of keeping in touch during this time. The Chairman thanked all colleagues for their participation and contribution to the meeting. ■

Raman Kumar, Director IR Prasar Bharati (Guest)