

This document contains the report containing the answers and the required plan required by the Technical Committees Recertification Committee (TCRC) in its report about the Recertification of the IEEE ComSoc Satellite and Space Communications Technical Committee. In the following the parts in black represent the report proposed by the TCRC while the answers and the required plan are reported, as this text, in red.

On Recertification of ComSoc Satellite and Space Communications Technical Committee

The Technical Committees Recertification Committee (TCRC) has completed its evaluation of the Satellite and Space Communications TC. This TC has a long history of contributions to ComSoc and to the field; however, it has fallen behind other TCs in recent years. Membership and activities have increased recently, but still not to the level of most other TCs. The TCRC will recommend recertification of the TC to the BoG at *Globecom* with an eye toward the possibility of merging with another TC in the future. **The TCRC would like a detailed plan for and growing membership and increasing the activity level of the TC. Please try to provide this within three months of *Globecom 2013*.** In addition, there are a number of minor issues that we suggest you address, if possible, in the next couple of weeks.

On behalf of the IEEE ComSoc Satellite and Space Communications Technical Committee members, I want to deeply thank the Technical Committees Recertification Committee (TCRC) that has revised the recertification questionnaire fulfilled for our committee and has provided its opinion and many useful suggestions.

First of all, we are proud to receive a positive answer concerning the recertification. It represents a stimulus to continue the effort of the SSC TC Officers and of the members that are cooperating in the many ongoing activities of the committee. Obviously, the positive recertification is also a strong motivation to increase the obtained results and the SSC TC activity to reach the excellent level, usual for our TC, and to match the requirements highlighted in the review comments provided by the TCRC.

Second, below you can find *i)* an answer to the main issues proposed by the TCRC and *ii)* an activities plan concerning the activities that the SSC TC is developing and will develop in the next months. Moreover, we have provided also the answers to the minor issues addressed by the TCRC.

Answers to the main issues

Aggregation. As reported in the Recertification Questionnaire, we indicated that there is no overlap between the SSC TC and others such as Wireless Communications and Radio Communications. I confirm this affirmation. The SSC TC has a peculiar heterogeneity. Indeed, even if for historical reasons the name of the TC includes only the keyword “communications”, actually, it is composed of experts in the field of communications and networking. The proof is that, recently, the IEEE ComSoc GITC asks for three Symposium co-chairs candidatures: one for the SAC Symposium, where a dedicated track about SSC is always scheduled, and for the Wireless Communications and Wireless Networking Symposia. The Satellite and Space environment is a common area of interest for several researches in the communications, networking and other related fields linked to the Electrical and Electronic Engineering.

An aggregation under the sole umbrella of the Wireless Communications (or Radio Communications) could imply the migration of many members because they cannot find a common area of interest represented by the Satellite and Space environment. For example, the members of the community working on satellite networking issues could leave our Society towards others.

Participation to Meetings. The average number of attendees is really low. Actually if the meeting agenda do not include delicate issues, usually the attendants number is not so high. In other case, for example in case of officer elections (not in the last two cases because the elections took place electronically) the number of attendees is significant. Anyway, understood the importance of the presence to the SSC TC meetings, the last meeting held in Atlanta during IEEE GLOBECOM 2013 had around 40 attendees.

A second reason of the limited participation to the meetings is the travel costs. In the last years, a lot of academic and industry institutes dramatically reduced the travel costs. Unfortunately it has an impact to the conference, and meeting, participation. Considering again the importance of the meeting attendance for

the next meetings, the virtual presence for those members that, for cost related reasons, cannot attend will be realized.

Ongoing and Planned Activities

Below you can find several actions that are currently under development or will be developed in the next months. In particular:

Operative Policies and Procedures (OP&P)

The SSC TC had OP&P not completely coherent with the ComSoc rules. Modifications of the OP&P have been carefully taken into account and discussed in the last meetings. Indeed, a new Charter and OP&P document has been prepared and approved by the SSC members during the last meeting held in Atlanta during IEEE GLOBECOM 2013. The final document, revised by the Past VP-TA Len Cimini, has been sent to the ComSoc to update the related website. Simultaneously, the same document has been uploaded in the SSC TC website. The delicate Voting Member issue has been addressed: the definition (coherent with the ComSoc by-law) is provided and the list of voting members is currently under preparation. This is useful also considering the imminent new officer election.

Membership Management

As the TCRC highlighted, the SSC TC has a good number of members. A future action should be two-fold: to continue with the acquisition of new member and, more important, to involve old and new members in the TC activities (as Symposium Chairs, Guest Editors, etc.).

Extended Cooperation

The specific nature of the SSC TC allows significantly extending the cooperation. A strict cooperation with Industries, research institutes, standardization institutes (e.g., CCSDS, ETSI), space agencies of several countries (NASA, JAXA, ESA) is necessary. Other important cooperation could be began with the AIAA and other similar societies with common interest in the satellite and space communications and networking fields.

Review of the Advisory Committee

Coherently with the previous points, the Advisory Committee must be reconsidered. It will be evaluated in the next meetings of the SSC TC. The involvement of new members for those roles will be considered highly welcome to increase the level of involvement in the TC activities.

SSC Website and Mailing List

The SSC web site needs a partial revision. Considering the websites of other TCs, I think that only the essential information can be provided (the one needed by following the ComSoc P&P). The Secretary will evaluate the other TCs' websites and will propose possible modifications. Obviously, the suggestions provided by the TCRC about the SSC TC are currently under deep consideration by our webmaster. All the requested modifications will be done in the next months. Concerning the Mailing List, the usual maintenance will be continued.

Current Journals/Magazines

As previously mentioned, a first action in this sense concerns the organization of a Special Issue on the IEEE Selected Areas in Communications Journal (JSAC). The last special issue has been organized in 2004. The first action in this sense has been to compose the Guest Editorial Team. Actually two initiatives have been promoted: one in IEEE Communications Magazine (COMMAG) and one in the IEEE JSAC. The work-groups are composed by Kul Bahsin (NASA, USA), Naoto Kadowaki (NICT, Japan), Fred Vong (AsiaSat, China) e Claudio Sacchi (University of Trento, Italy) in the case of the COMMAG initiative and by Nei Kato (Tohoku University, Japan), Sandro Scalise (German Aerospace Center, Germany), Frederik Simoens (Newtech, Belgium), Alessandro Vanelli-Coralli (University of Bologna, Italy) in the case of the JSAC. Prof. Sacchi and Prof. Vanelli-Coralli are leading the two teams. The proposal of the COMMAG special issue has been already scheduled and the paper submission is opened. The proposal for the JSAC special issue has been submitted and is under evaluation by the JSAC editorial board.

Conference Activities (ICC/GC and others)

In ICC/GC is consolidated the SSC Track. In the recent years the SSC track has been quite successful. In the future, officers and active members must cooperate in the dissemination of the CFP so avoiding an oscillating trend of the number of submission. An average of 50 submissions should be guaranteed in the future. It guarantees a "long life" of the track. Recently, moreover, the SSC TC is asked to propose candidatures for the Wireless Networking and Wireless Communications Symposia. It increases the involvement of members.

Finally, the SSC TC is recently endorsing several interesting conferences for the IEEE ComSoc Technical-Co-sponsorship. In the last two years 3-5 conferences have been endorsed, In all of them several members of the SSC TC are actively involved in the organization.

Awards

The SSC TC will work on two kinds of awards: the SSC Awards and the other IEEE/ComSoc Awards. The SSC Award rules have been recently restructured. Its current rules' structure does not need any revision. Concerning the second kind, the SSC TC will be more active in advancing members for IEEE/ComSoc awards. An ad-hoc committee will be appointed to work on this issue in the next months. The subcommittee will have the duty to individuate, among the SSC active members, the highest scientific profiles to be proposed for the important IEEE/ComSoc Awards.

SSC Newsletter

The SSC newsletter is a very interesting initiative. In the future, we would enforce the initiative and manage the newsletter as electronic publication distributed to all members by employing the mailing-list.

Minor Issues

Below you can find several actions related to the minor issues. If the issue has been addressed in the response/plan above, the sentence "see above" is reported. In particular:

WEBSITE

- 1.) The website could use an overhaul. Please consider a new design.
- 3.) Please include the Standards Liaison in the list of officers or on the Liaisons page.
- 3.) The ComSoc and IEEE logos are old versions. Please contact Natasha Simonovski (ComSoc Staff) for the current versions.
- 4.) The URL needs to be modified to be more natural and consistent with other TCs (e.g., communities.comsoc.org/spce). Please contact ComSoc IT Staff to have this changed.

All the points are currently under consideration. The Secretary/webmaster is addressing all the request.

MEMBERSHIP

- 1.) The number of members is reasonable and growing, but the average attendance at meetings is very low (only 13). How can you increase the attendance at meetings?
- 2.) Can you provide information on the percentage of members who are "active?" Especially given that, on average, there are only 13 attendees at TC meetings.
- 3.) The TCRC is concerned that the full list of members (names, email addresses, street addresses in some cases) is available on a public website; only one other TC does this. Member privacy is a serious issue, and you should discuss this with ComSoc IT Staff.

Concerning first point, please see above. Moreover we can consider very active tens members who are participating in the organization of the aforementioned activities (Journal Special issues and Conference organization). Finally we consider active all members, that are hundreds, that usually submit papers to the SSC track of ICC/GLOBECOM. Concerning the third point, the list has been removed. It is accessible only to the SSC TC Officer and if needed to the IEEE ComSoc officers/employees.

CHARTER/POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Please upload the new P&Ps to the website as soon as they are approved by the TC.

See above.

CONFERENCES

Please be aware that TCs do not *sponsor* conferences or workshops. ComSoc sponsors these; the TCs *endorse* or *organize*. Please change the wording where necessary,

We have clarified that point in the new OP&P.

PUBLICATIONS

No issues.

STANDARDS/INDUSTRY

Please appoint a Standards Liaison. The TC should make a stronger effort to get involved in standards activities and to actively recruit industry participation in the TC. At a minimum, the Standards Liaison should provide a report of his interactions with the ComSoc Standards Activities Board.

Done during the last meeting. The appointed Standard Liaison is:

Henry Suthon, P.E.
Barrios Principal Senior Engineer
Boeing C&DH Subsystems
International Space Station
email: h.suthon@ieee.org

It has been communicated to the IEEE ComSoc Executive and administrative support to update the ComSoc website. The same update will be done on the SSC TC website.

COLLABORATION

Your response on the questionnaire indicates that there is no real overlap, but the TCRC could envision a merger with the Wireless Communications and Radio Communications TCs. Why should ComSoc not move in this direction?

See above.

AWARDS

The TC needs to be more active in advancing members for IEEE/ComSoc awards.

See above.

OTHER

Please contact the appropriate ComSoc VPs to help you with any initiatives you might come up with for improving your participation in conferences and publications.

Thank you for the suggestions. We will take carefully in consideration the possibility.