

Minutes: ATSC Applications Subcommittee

18 November 2004, 10:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m. EDT
WRF, 1750 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

1. WELCOME AND ROLL-CALL

Chairman Sterling Davis (Cox Broadcasting) called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. at the headquarters of Wiley, Rein, and Fielding in Washington, D.C. He thanked WRF for hosting today's meeting and asked the participants to identify themselves. The attendance list is given in **Attachment 1**.

2. APPROVAL OF DRAFT AGENDA

Chairman Davis asked for consideration of the draft agenda, which was posted to the AS reflector on November 10 (**Attachment 2**). He suggested the addition of a report on SMPTE S.22 activities, to be presented by Chris Lennon (Encoda). This addition was accepted by the committee. No further changes were requested and the draft agenda was accepted as amended.

3. APPROVAL OF DRAFT MINUTES OF 21 SEPTEMBER 2004

Chairman Davis asked for consideration of the draft Minutes of the September 21 meeting, posted to the AS reflector on October 29 (AS-0671, **Attachment 3**). Jerry Whitaker (ATSC) reported that Mike Dolan (TBT) had submitted suggested changes that clarified text relating to him. Both Mr. Whitaker and Chairman Davis considered the change to be editorial in nature. (See **Attachment 4**.) No further changes were requested and the document was accepted as modified.

4. REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS FROM THE LAST MEETING

The following action items were developed at the September 21 meeting of the Application Subcommittee. Bracketed dates indicate items carried forward from a previous meeting [date].

- 1) Kelly Williams to contact Skip Pizzi of the TV Anytime Forum to explore liaison with regard to PVR digital program insertion work currently underway in AS. Mr. Williams to invite Mr. Pizzi to prepare a presentation to AS on the work of TV Anytime. [12-09-2003]

Carried forward. Kelly Williams (NAB) reported that he has spoken with Skip Pizzi (Microsoft) and learned that Mr. Pizzi is not currently involved with the TV Anytime Forum, but that he would be willing to brief AS on the subject of PVRs. Mr. Williams questioned whether this action item was still appropriate. Mark Richer (ATSC) suggested that this AI is still relevant, especially with regard to the video browsing proposal on the table today. Art Allison (NAB) concurred. Mr. Williams said he would continue to work on this action item.

- 2) Chairman Davis to contact NAB with the goal of having the "Roadmap to Products and Services" seminar placed on the agenda for an upcoming NAB Board of Directors meeting [06-08-2004].

On agenda.

- 3) Chris Lennon to keep AS updated on the progress of work within SMPTE S-22 relating to traffic/automation content delivery.

On agenda.

- 4) Chairman Davis to raise to the “DTV Roadmap” project at the next ATSC Board of Directors meeting as a topic for discussion.
On agenda.
- 5) Consumer electronics manufactures to provide feedback on the concept of streaming text data services in time for the next AS meeting.
On agenda.
- 6) Chairman Davis to solicit feedback from broadcasters on the concept of streaming text data services in time for the next AS meeting.
On agenda.
- 7) Chairman Davis to contact Craig Smithpeters, chair of T3/S2, and invite his comments and participation in moving the streaming text data services document forward.
On agenda.
- 8) Jim Therberge and Sangoon Sull to work up a summary paper detailing the concept of advanced advertising/segment-based video browsing, the business case(s) for these proposals, and why it is important to broadcasters—both commercial and non-commercial.
On agenda.
- 9) Ed Williams to work with Mark Eyer and Adam Goldberg refine AS-055 based on today’s discussion for consideration by AS at the next meeting.
Carried forward. Ed Williams (PBS) reported there has been insufficient time to devote to this issue. He said the AI should be completed in time for the next AS meeting.

5. OPENING REMARKS OF THE CHAIRMAN

Chairman Davis recognized that the committee has a relatively light agenda today because of the large amount of work completed over the past couple of months.

6. MANAGING TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION—A DTV ROADMAP, MEETING PLANNING (MARK RICHER, AHG)

Mr. Richer said this project remains on hold pending the resolution of certain ongoing issues. He reminded the committee that one interesting suggestion was that this event be held in conjunction with the ATSC Annual Meeting, set for May 2005. He said the idea of getting the various industries to sit down and in a constructive and productive way to agree on a path for product and application development remains an important objective.

Wayne Luplow (Zenith) argued for moving this project forward sooner rather than later. He said the industries involved in ATSC need this type of program more than ever. Mr. Richer did not disagree with Mr. Luplow, but pointed out that someone needs to drive it, and right now it was not practical for him to undertake this task. Mr. Luplow suggested that the next Chairman of the ATSC might be a good person to organize the Roadmap program. Brian Smith (Philips) agreed that moving forward with the DTV Roadmap meeting is important; he added that many CE companies want to see this project move forward. Mr. Richer encouraged AS members interested in getting the Roadmap project off the ground to pick up the ball and run with it.

Chairman Davis suggested that clarification of the Roadmap concept might be appropriate. Mr. Richer reminded the committee of the background on this issue and identified the following key goals:

- Educate attendees about the potential use of existing ATSC Standards and those under development.
- Solicit input regarding the likely market roll-out of related products and services.

- Recruit new non-technical participants in the ongoing work of the Applications Subcommittee.

Mr. Richer summarized that the concept is to bring the various industries together for a dialog on the future of DTV.

The committee discussed various options and the relative merits of the proposed approaches. Mr. Smith said an open forum where new ideas could be placed on the table for discussion might be the best way to proceed. Craig Tanner (Sharp) suggested the idea of *concept development*, something that was not necessarily part of the ATSC process, but a place where engineers could talk about new idea without worrying about marketplace realities. He suggested that this type of work could be moved up to a standardization track when it reaches a certain level of maturity.

Mr. Richer endorsed the general concept proposed by Mr. Tanner, but said he thought it was something that could be developed within AS. Mr. Tanner argued that the threshold for beginning work on a standard needs to be better defined so that an idea can be discussed and evaluated without the assumption that it will inevitably wind up as a standard. He said we need a non-threatening place to talk about new ideas. Mr. Tanner commented that the ease with which a specification goes to ballot is the result of much of the friction existing today among various industries.

Hal Protter (Warner Bros.) pointed out that this discussion was not just about the CE industry and broadcasters, but needs to include cable and satellite. He said the consumer product mix is changing and emphasized that we need to address the marketplace realities. Kelly Williams suggested that this type of discussion could be done within an ad-hoc group of AS.

Mr. Allison suggested that the DVB Commercial Module example of product development might fit nicely into the work of AS. Matthew Goldman (Tandberg) recognized the value of the Commercial Module example but cautioned that anti-trust laws need to be examined. Mr. Richer offered that, anti-trust issues aside, much of the work done by the Commercial Module could be addressed within the current structure of AS.

Mr. Tanner suggested that broadcasters need to be more involved in product planning and development. He endorsed the idea of looking at the DVB Commercial Module to find out what works and what doesn't. Mr. Goldman noted that a different set of people are involved in the Commercial Module as opposed to the Technical Module. He said DVB has a number of successes, but also has its share of unused standards.

Chairman Davis said we don't need to assume that work done in AS necessarily needs to move to the Board and ultimately to T3 for standards development. He said it is important to have a venue where ideas can be discussed openly. He suggested that we could begin this process at the next meeting. If it is useful, he argued, we should just do it.

Bob Rast (Micronas) recognized the important and difficult issues raised here. He said we need to continue an outreach to bring the right people to AS work. He observed that AS has somewhat dual roles—one focused on development of requirements documents and white papers, and the other focused on advanced planning. He said AS needs to continue to evolve.

Mr. Allison suggested that some form of "cooling off period" might be worthwhile to build into the AS process, whereby a given output is slated for additional consideration prior to reporting it out to the Board. He also suggested some form of trial program as a way to measure the business support for something prior to moving it forward.

Kelly Williams emphasized the importance of bringing a diverse group of high-level individuals into the AS process. He said we need to have program and product development people at the table.

Mr. Richer said the concept of business trial programs is interesting, but something that would best be handled outside of ATSC. He added that while there are improvements that can be

made to the AS process, we don't need to invent something new here—just carry forward on the work.

Chairman Davis drew the wide-ranging discussion to a close and sought to sum up with a recommended path forward. He suggested that AS affirm that it wants to go forward with the Roadmap project and bring new people to the table. Mr. Protter volunteered to join the existing Roadmap AHG. Mr. Tanner said the next order of business for the AHG is to get the right people involved, notably broadcast decision-makers. Chairman Davis observed there is an interest in proceeding with this project. Mr. Allison commented that the project needs someone to drive it. Chairman Davis suggested that the group meet via a teleconference and see what the participants can come up with.

Mr. Richer said he will convene a conference call of the Roadmap AHG and redistribute the briefing document developed previously as a way of moving this project forward.

7. SMPTE S.22 UPDATE

Mr. Lennon reported good progress on the SMPTE S.22 work, with a high level of participation in the AHG. He said an aggressive timeline for completion has been set—1 March 2005 for a first draft of the specification. He said the short timeline is necessary because of marketplace pressure to complete the work. Mr. Lennon said a call for volunteers has been issued to help with various tasks, with good response. He added that PMCP harmonization is on the agenda for the group.

8. STREAMING TEXT DATA REQUIREMENTS (MIKE DOLAN, AS-065R5)

Chairman Davis reviewed the background on this issue. He noted that he was tasked at a previous meeting with an action item regarding how ACAP might intersect with the streaming text requirements. He said Craig Smithpeters, chair of T3/S2, reported that the two do not appear to overlap.

Chairman Davis reported that Mr. Dolan, who chaired the AHG which developed the document, feels that the group has completed its work and that the future of the proposal is now up to AS. Mr. Allison suggested that AS members take the output document back to their companies and return to AS with an assessment of whether to move forward with a recommendation to the Board.

The best route forward was discussed by the committee. Chairman Davis suggested that a note be posted to the “admin” reflector calling attention to AS-065r5, asking for feedback by early January, and given generally positive feedback that it be forwarded to the Board at its January meeting with a recommendation for moving forward. This approach was accepted by the committee. Art Allison and Chairman Davis took the appropriate action item.

9. REPORT FROM AHG ON ADVANCED CODECS IN THE MAIN STREAM (GARRY PAXINOS)

Chairman Davis noted that Garry Paxinos (US-DTV) was unable to attend today's meeting. He invited input from other AHG members, which include Mr. Smith, Mark Eyer (Sony), Steve Smith (Liberty), Mr. Allison, C. B. Patel (Samsung), James Fang (Mitsubishi), Wayne Bretl (Zenith), and a representative from Tribune.

Mr. Richer observed this AHG was formed to address a very serious issue and he encouraged the members to renew their efforts to move forward. He suggested that one outcome of the AHG's work could be a day-long AS meeting focused specifically on the possible use of advanced codecs in the main stream.

Chairman Davis suggested that time be set aside at an upcoming meeting to explore this question in detail, including who wants it. He took an action item to work with Mr. Paxinos to plan such as meeting.

10. ADVANCED EPG, VIDEO BROWSING JOINT PROPOSAL (JIM THEBERGE, SANGHOON SULL)

Chairman Davis reviewed the genesis of the submitted document (**Attachment 5**). He said that because the document arrived only yesterday, he was not in a position to recommend doing anything with it at this point in time.

Mr. Tanner questioned the level of interest on the part of broadcasters in doing creative work in the area of PVRs. Discussion followed on what broadcasters are planning in this realm. Mr. Allison noted that work in this area is currently underway within S8-3. He suggested that AS review the document at this meeting and provide some feedback to the authors.

Chairman Davis noted the document provides an overview and rationale for advanced DVR systems, but no specifics regarding the mechanisms for accomplishing these functions. He invited feedback from committee members.

Mr. Tanner said the paper presents a number of good ideas and added that he was generally supportive of the concept. Jeff Krauss (NCTA) commended that the ideas presented are interesting, but that some level of interest on the part of broadcasters in these applications is essential. Mr. Protter said there are a number of potential applications apart from those suggested by the authors. Mr. Lennon urged that we need to take this proposal seriously, since it could move forward quickly within a closed distribution systems. Mr. Allison noted that any implementation of segment-based program content raises considerable broadcast infrastructure issues. On the other hand, he added, this could be a defensive mechanism for broadcasters.

Chairman Davis summarized the discussion, observing there is considerable interest in the concepts proposed and that the AS sees this as a project worth pursuing. He said we need some more specificity, including a list of requirements, before moving forward. He proposed this would be a good topic for extended discussion by AS, and suggested that the two authors be invited back to AS for a full discussion of DVR-related issues.

Chairman Davis took an action item to discuss with the authors the need to expand the submission to include further detail, including user requirements, and to arrange for a detailed discussion of this topic at a future AS meeting.

Chairman Davis took an action item to contact the authors of the “Surviving the Era of the DVR” submission to address any permissions issues. Following resolution of any outstanding issues, the document will be distributed to the “admin” reflector to raise the level of visibility.

Mr. Tanner suggested that NAB distribute a note to its members calling attention to this work and inviting participation in the work going forward. Kelly Williams said he would explore the possibility within NAB.

11. ACAP WHITE PAPER AHG DISCUSSION AND PLAN (STEVE SMITH, MARK RICHER, CRAIG TODD, BRIAN SMITH)

Chairman Davis noted that no work is currently underway in this AHG. He expected that some activity could happen as the ACAP specification nears completion.

12. OTHER BUSINESS

There were no other items brought before the committee.

13. NEXT MEETING OF THE APPLICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

The next meeting of the Applications Subcommittee is scheduled for 8 February 2005.

14. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Applications Subcommittee, the meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m. EST.

Action Items Developed at this Meeting

The following action items were developed at the November 18 meeting of the Application Subcommittee. Bracketed dates indicate items carried forward from a previous meeting [date].

- 1) Mark Richer to convene a conference call of the Roadmap AHG (which includes Mr. Richer, Craig Tanner, John Henderson, Lynn Claudy, Ed Caleca, Wayne Luplow, and Hal Protter), to redistribute the briefing document developed previously by the group, and to explore a method of moving the project forward.
- 2) Chairman Davis and Art Allison to post a note to the admin reflector calling attention to AS-065r5, asking for feedback by a early January, and—given generally positive feedback and a reasonable level of interest in the streaming text concept—Chairman Davis to forwarded the Requirements Document to the Board for consideration at its January meeting.
- 3) Chairman Davis to work with Garry Paxinos to set up an extended discussion at an upcoming AS meeting to explore the use of advanced codecs in the main stream, including what organizations might want this capability and the advisability of developing a standardized method for such use.
- 4) Chairman Davis to contact the authors of the “Surviving the Era of the DVR” submission and resolve any permissions issues. Following resolution of any outstanding issues, the document will be distributed to the “admin” reflector.
- 5) Chairman Davis to discuss with the authors of the “Surviving the Era of the DVR” submission the need to refine and expand the submission to include further detail, including user requirements, and to arrange for a detailed discussion of this topic at a future AS meeting.
- 6) Kelly Williams to contact Skip Pizzi of the TV Anytime Forum to explore liaison with regard to PVR digital program insertion work currently underway in AS. Mr. Williams to invite Mr. Pizzi to prepare a presentation to AS on the work of TV Anytime. [12-09-2003]
- 7) Ed Williams to work with Mark Eyer and Adam Goldberg refine AS-055 based on today’s discussion for consideration by AS at the next meeting. [09-21-2004]

Attachments

Attachment 1: Attendance List

http://www.atscmembers.org/sg/AS/2004_11_18_Meeting/11_18_04_attendance.xls

Attachment 2: AS-070, Draft Agenda

http://www.atscmembers.org/sg/AS/2004_11_18_Meeting/AS-070_Draft_Agenda_AS_04_11_18.doc

Attachment 3: AS-067, Draft Minutes from 21 September 2004 Meeting

http://www.atscmembers.org/sg/AS/2004_11_18_Meeting/AS-067.doc

Attachment 4: AS-067r1, Revised Draft Minutes from 21 September 2004

http://www.atscmembers.org/sg/AS/2004_11_18_Meeting/AS-067r1.doc

Attachment 5: Advanced EPG Proposal

http://www.atscmembers.org/sg/AS/2004_11_18_Meeting/Surviving_the_Era_of_the%20DVR.doc