

Minutes: ATSC Applications Subcommittee

8 February 2005, 10:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m. EDT
NAB, 1771 N 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 the National Association of Broadcasters in Washington, D.C. He thanked NAB 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 February 4 (**Attachment 2**). He suggested the addition of a new item under Other Business, "Streaming Text Requirements." This change was agreed to by the committee and the draft agenda was approved as modified.

3. APPROVAL OF DRAFT MINUTES OF 18 NOVEMBER 2004

Chairman Davis asked for consideration of the draft Minutes of the November 18 meeting, posted to the AS reflector on December 15 (AS-0771, **Attachment 3**). No changes were requested and the document was approved as submitted.

4. REVIEW OF ACTION ITEMS FROM THE LAST 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.
Completed. The conference call was held on January 26. This item is on the agenda for further discussion.
- 2) Chairman Davis and Art Allison to post a note to the admin reflector calling attention to AS-065r5, asking for feedback by 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.
On agenda.
- 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.
Noted and closed. Chairman Davis reported he has held some discussion on this point, but that more work remains. He said the future direction of this AHG will be discussed later in the meeting.
- 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.

Noted and closed. This item will be discussed later in the meeting.

- 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.

Completed. A revised document was posted on the AS Home Page of atscmembers.org (and a link distributed to AS members via the reflector) on February 7 (**Attachment 4**). Chairman Davis noted this issue will be discussed later in the 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]

Closed. Chairman Davis noted that a liaison statement was received from the TV Anytime Forum on December 16 and shortly thereafter posted to the AS reflector (**Attachment 5**).

- 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]

Closed. Specific comments were offered on the document by Mr. Eyer and Mr. Goldberg (**Attachment 6**). For reference, revision 1 of AS-055 is given in **Attachment 7**. Chairman Davis said this issue will be discussed later in the meeting.

5. OPENING REMARKS OF THE CHAIRMAN

Chairman Davis recognized that the committee has a relatively light agenda today. He went on to thank those present for their contributions to the Applications Subcommittee.

6. GOALS DISCUSSION REGARDING FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR THE COMMITTEE

Chairman Davis called attention to the 2005 ATSC Goals, approved on January 18 by the Board of Directors (**Attachment 8**). He noted that some changes are in store for the Applications subcommittee. First of all, there is a proposal that the Applications Subcommittee be renamed the “Planning Committee,” in recognition of its refined role within the ATSC. Specific goals for 2005 include the following:

- More focus on commercial opportunities and requirements, less on technical requirements
- Take actions to broaden contributions from business, service, and product planners
- Provide a forum to allow international ATSC members to influence ATSC work
- Support specialist groups as necessary
- Develop non-technical white papers as appropriate on DTV matters that are relevant to ATSC work

Discussion followed on how to make AS more valuable to ATSC members.

Art Allison (NAB) suggested that the Implementation Subcommittee education and training activities should be incorporated into the AS. Mark Richer (ATSC) noted that staff typically handles education and training activities, but agreed that some clarification of this role might be in order. He went on to suggest that the role of the AS in the area of education and training should focus more on non-technical venues, such as the planned DTV Roadmap Summit. Wayne Luplow (Zenith) agreed, noting that the first goal for the AS (as listed above) is to focus on commercial opportunities and requirements. Mr. Allison concluded that he just wants to make sure the education and training activities from the IS find an appropriate home. Bob Rast

(Micronas) suggested that this concern could be addressed with an occasional AS agenda item on the subject of education and training, thereby making sure all appropriate bases are being covered. Matthew Goldman (Tandberg) offered there is more that can be done to educate the industry on important elements of standards that are not currently being implemented on a widespread basis. He cited Active Format Description as a case in point.

Mr. Richer said there is a role for the AS after a standard is developed, namely how the affected industry segments can make the most of the specification. This outreach could include, for example, the establishment of user groups. He cited ACAP as a possible project on which the AS could focus this year.

Mr. Rast suggested that the AS concentrate on how to make ATSC work more relevant to all members, specifically international members. Brian Smith (Philips) said the AS should have some mechanism to recommend to the Board that a project (such as a standards activity) be stopped after it has begun if industry support for the intended application dissolves. Mike Dolan (TBT) suggested that if a specification is not wanted by the industry, the work will tend to cease on its own. He said we need to be careful in trying to stop a project if members are actively working on it. Mr. Luplow acknowledged both sides of this argument, and added there are anti-trust issues that could come into play if one group attempts to stop the development efforts of another. Mr. Rast suggested that, should marketplace realities make it clear that a different set of Requirements is appropriate for a given specification, the AS should feel free to make that recommendation to the Board. Mr. Allison argued it is ATSC's role to develop standards, not to attempt to make business decisions regarding whether standards are used in the marketplace. He agreed with Mr. Dolan that if there is no interest in a project, the specification will not be completed. Mr. Richer said there is a balance that must be struck among the points raised. He added that the standards development process is currently being reviewed by the Board. Mr. Allison suggested that perhaps the Scope of the AS should be changed to include periodic assessment of the DTV environment and application needs over time.

Jeff Krauss (NCTA) noted the White Papers goals listed above. He said we need to have a more formal template for what such documents should cover. For example, he suggested they be structured similar to a business plan.

Mr. Luplow said the key areas needing further attention by this group include international participation and increasing business and product-planning participation in the AS. With regard to the 2005 Goals, he said we need to "put some meat on the bones" and come up with some specifics. Mr. Richer said that special events, such as the planned DTV Roadmap Summit, would be a good vehicle for attracting product planning specialists.

Mr. Luplow noted the considerable implementation work that has occurred outside of North America, specifically in Korea. He also pointed out countries and regions that may need support in their rollout of digital television, and argued there is a role for the AS to encourage the participation of international members and representatives, and thereby influence ATSC activities going forward. Chairman Davis suggested that an AHG be formed to identify ways of increasing international participation in the AS. Mr. Luplow said he would be willing to lead such a group. Mr. Rast and Mr. Richer volunteered to participate.

Chairman Davis summarized the discussion, noting the AS can serve as a vehicle for valuable input to the Board and T3. He recognized that more discussion (and work) remains to be done. Mr. Rast suggested that Chairman Davis report to the Board that the committee is in favor of the planned name change from AS to PC. Chairman Davis observed consensus agreement on this point. He took an action item to report accordingly to the Board at the next meeting.

Mr. Richer said that based on the discussion today, the committee might want to begin updating the Scope with the goal of taking a revised document to the Board at its March 14 meeting. Chairman Davis agreed and took an action item to begin the process through a posting to the AS reflector.

7. REPORT FROM SMPTE S.22 (CHRIS LENNON)

Chairman Davis reported that Chris Lennon (Harris) was unable to attend today's meeting. He summarized that Mr. Lennon has 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, with March 1 the target date for a first draft of the specification. He said the short timeline is necessary because of marketplace pressures to complete the work.

8. MANAGING TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION, A DTV ROADMAP, MEETING PLANNING (MARK RICHER)

Mr. Richer reported that the DTV Roadmap AHG met by teleconference on January 26 (**Attachment 9**). He said the group arrived at the following overall goal of the summit:

“To establish a baseline understanding between broadcasters and CE manufacturers about the future direction of terrestrial broadcasting.”

Mr. Richer said the target date for the program is October 26, probably in the Washington D.C. area. He said the focus will be on broadcast and CE executives. Objectives include the following:

- Educate attendees about the potential use of existing ATSC Standards and those under development.
- Solicit input about 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 said the agenda will include high level (non-technical) tutorials and demonstrations of potential services and applications. He said the next steps include:

- Draft letters of invitation
- Enlist executives in the effort
- Lockdown the date and announce the event
- Select the topics to be covered
- Develop a detailed agenda
- Arrange tutorials and demonstrations

Mr. Richer invited feedback on the DTV Roadmap plan. Mr. Smith suggested that it might be important to make certain the cable industry is at the table. Mr. Luplow agreed, saying that cable plays an important role in broadcasting today. Mr. Richer acknowledged the input, but said he would like the AHG to look at this question in more detail.

Mr. Krauss noted that, giving the timing of AS meetings, the DTV Roadmap AHG will be operating with little direction between meetings. Chairman Davis acknowledged this situation, but said he is comfortable with the arrangement. He noted that the Board has been kept informed of this work as well. Mr. Rast said he was comfortable with the situation.

Mr. Allison suggested that the full committee endorse the direction presented here and encourage the AHG to move forward with updates posted to the AS reflector as appropriate. The committee accepted this approach.

The committee broke for lunch at 12:15 p.m.

The meeting resumed at 1:00 p.m.

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. Eyer, Brian Smith, Steve Smith (Liberty), Mr. Allison, C. B. Patel (Samsung), James Fang (Mitsubishi), and Wayne Bretl (Zenith).

Chairman Davis took an action item to contact Mr. Paxinos and discuss how the AHG effort could move forward.

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

Chairman Davis called attention to the revised version of the "Surviving the Era of the DVR" background document first brought to AS at the November 18 meeting (**Attachment 4**). He said this is an interesting concept that deserves consideration by AS, and invited specific comments from committee members.

Mr. Krauss commented that the document requires additional work before AS can move it to the next level. He said the paper needs to be more even-handed with regard to potential downsides, such as commercial-skipping applications. Discussion followed on specific points made in the paper. Mr. Luplow observed that this document is an informational paper and should move forward toward larger distribution and consideration.

Mr. Allison suggested that the subtitle be changed from "A White Paper" to "A Potential Applications Paper" and then distributed to a larger group within ATSC. He acknowledged there is a copyright question that still needs to be resolved.

Mr. Rast urged the committee to find a way of moving this document forward, perhaps with the addition of a cover note stating that "this is an interesting proposal and the Applications Subcommittee invites comments." Mr. Allison noted that S8-3 is currently writing requirements mapped in a general way to this document.

Chairman Davis proposed that an AHG, led by Mr. Allison with participation from Mr. Rast and Mr. Krauss, prepare an appropriate cover letter to AS-073, "Surviving the Era of the DVR" (revised). Chairman Davis took an action item to resolve any copyright issues relating to AS-073 and, once the AHG has completed the cover letter, distribute AS-073 to the ATSC "admin" list, which includes all participants in the ATSC process.

11. LOW BITRATE REQUIREMENTS DOCUMENT

Chairman Davis summarized the current situation with regard to AS-055, "Requirements for Low Bit-Rate Video and Audio Program Streams," (**Attachment 7**). Ed Williams (PBS) led the effort to develop AS-055, and at a previous meeting the need for certain changes was identified by Mr. Eyer and Mr. Goldberg, who agreed to provide input on the document (**Attachment 6**). Chairman Davis noted that work on AS-055 has been in progress for some time; he said we need to either move it forward to shelve it. He summarized that we are not necessarily talking about new functionality, but rather an implementation issue. He said an informational communication on this issue might be the best route forward.

Mr. Dolan said that, if AS believes this topic is one of interest from a business standpoint, he would volunteer to take AS-055 and turn it into the type of Requirements document AS is looking for. Mr. Allison stated that low bitrate services are essential to broadcasting because they

provide the capability to deliver valuable information to consumers without unduly limiting other services. He said there is no question this is an important need. Mr. Krauss endorsed the idea of having Mr. Dolan refine AS-055. Mr. Allison volunteered to assist Mr. Dolan.

Mr. Dolan took an action item to revise AS-055r1 and bring back a formal Requirements document for final consideration by AS at the next meeting.

12. OTHER BUSINESS

12.1 Streaming Text

Chairman Davis reviewed briefly the discussion at the November 18 meeting on this subject. He noted that an action item (#2 above) resulted; however, the AI has not yet been completed. Discussion followed on specific issues relating to AS-065r5, "Streaming Text Data Services Application Requirements." Mr. Dolan noted that there are ways to accomplish the tasks outlined—for example, within ACAP. He added, however, there are some important infrastructure issues that go with such approaches. He said that to accomplish an efficient streaming text data service using a minimum of infrastructure complexity, some standardization work is needed.

Chairman Davis noted that a Requirements document has been created and he asked the committee whether it is ready to go to the Board for consideration. Mr. Dolan suggested that we either need to move this document to the Board or shelve it. Mr. Allison agreed.

Chairman Davis took an action item to report to the Board of Directors the consensus recommendation of AS that AS-065r5, "Streaming Text Data Services Application Requirements," be forwarded to T3 for further work.

13. NEXT MEETING OF THE APPLICATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

The next meeting of the Applications Subcommittee is scheduled for 11 May 2005.

14. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Applications Subcommittee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m. EST.

Action Items Developed at this Meeting

The following action items were developed at the February 8 meeting of the Application Subcommittee. Bracketed dates indicate items carried forward from a previous meeting [date].

- 1) Chairman Davis to report to the ATSC Board of Directors the consensus recommendation of the Applications Subcommittee to support the proposed name change to Planning Committee. Furthermore, he will report that the 2005 Goals were reviewed and a plan to implement those goals was agreed to, including an examination of the current Scope.
- 2) Chairman Davis to begin a discussion on the AS reflector regarding updating the AS Scope based on the 2005 Goals.
- 3) Wayne Luplow to lead an AHG to examine ways of increasing international participation in the Applications Subcommittee. Participating members of the group will include Mark Richer and Bob Rast. Mr. Luplow will post a note to the AS reflector inviting additional participants.
- 4) Chairman Davis to contact Garry Paxinos to determine the status of the Advanced Codecs in the Main Stream AHG and how this effort might move forward.
- 5) An AHG, led by Art Allison with participation from Bob Rast and Jeff Krauss, to prepare a cover letter to AS-073, "Surviving the Era of the DVR" (revised).
- 6) Chairman Davis to resolve any copyright issues relating to AS-073 and, once the AHG has completed the cover letter, distribute AS-073 to the ATSC "admin" list, which includes all participants in the ATSC process.
- 7) Mike Dolan to revise AS-055r1 and bring back a formal Requirements document for final consideration by AS at the next meeting.
- 8) Chairman Davis to report to the Board of Directors the consensus recommendation of AS that AS-065r5, "Streaming Text Data Services Application Requirements," be forwarded to the Technology Group on Distribution for further work.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Attendance List

http://www.atscmembers.org/sg/AS/2005_02_08_Meeting/AS-075_02-09-05_AS_Attendance.doc

Attachment 2: Draft Agenda

http://www.atscmembers.org/sg/AS/2005_02_08_Meeting/AS-076_Draft_Agenda.doc

Attachment 3: AS-071, Draft Minutes from 18 November 2004 Meeting

http://www.atscmembers.org/sg/AS/2005_02_08_Meeting/AS-071.doc

Attachment 4: AS-073r2, Revised “Surviving the Era of the DVR” Report

http://www.atscmembers.org/sg/AS/2005_02_08_Meeting/AS-073r2_Surviving_the_Era_DVR.doc

Attachment 5: TV Anytime Liaison

http://www.atscmembers.org/sg/AS/2005_02_08_Meeting/AS-078_TV278-LSfromTVA.doc

Attachment 6: Comments on AS-055

http://www.atscmembers.org/sg/AS/2005_02_08_Meeting/AS-080_Comments_on_AS-055.doc

Attachment 7: AS-055, rev. 1

http://www.atscmembers.org/sg/AS/2005_02_08_Meeting/AS-055r1_Low_Bit_Rate_Video-Audio.doc

Attachment 8: ATSC 2005 Goals

http://www.atscmembers.org/sg/AS/2005_02_08_Meeting/AS-079_ATSC_Goals_2005.ppt

Attachment 9: DTV Roadmap Status

http://www.atscmembers.org/sg/AS/2005_02_08_Meeting/AS-077_Summit.ppt