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Newly created ITU group on IMT-2000

Work Plans for Future wireless Services and Systems

Experts from the wireless business are meeting to continue the global development of IMT-2000. Under its new name of "Working Party 8F", it is holding its first meeting under newly appointed chairman Stephen Blust of Bell-South Cellular Corporation (US). The group appointed as vice-chairpersons Stuart Cooke from Nokia (United Kingdom), Shumin Cao from the Ministry of Information Industry of China and Kyu-Jin Wee from the Ministry of Information and Communications of the Republic of Korea. The inaugural plenary meeting, was attended by more than 150 representatives of regulators, mobile operators and manufacturers.

Working Party 8F is the global focal point for the continuing vision of next generation wireless services and systems, acting as a forum for user requirements and as a catalyst for translating those requirements into technical reality. It is responsible for the overall system aspects of IMT-2000 with a focus on wireless terrestrial components. Included in the work assigned to WP8F are issues such as spectrum needs, higher data rate capabilities, Internet Protocol (IP)-based service needs of mobile systems such as IMT-2000, and the development of systems beyond IMT-2000.

"The group has the challenging task of supporting the near term needs of the IMT-2000 marketplace while exploring where we might go in the wireless world of the future" said Blust in his opening statement. He stressed the need for a neutral and pragmatic organization like the ITU to continue activities aimed at fostering a truly global wireless marketplace. "I am determined to continue to position ITU as a leader of future public wireless communications", Blust said. WP8F is a follow-on to Task Group 8/1, which previously held primary responsibility for development of IMT-2000 and completed its activities in November 1999 with the successful adoption of release 99 of the IMT-2000 radio interface standard. Among the tasks of the first meeting is the development of the work plans for the years 2000 and 2001 to rapidly start work on the evolution and future development of IMT-2000, together

with deliverables and timeframes. The experts will also address the type of global co-operative arrangements and the appropriate coordination mechanisms needed within ITU and with external organizations.

Considering that applications and borderless services will be key drivers for the business success of IMT-2000, the ITU decided to organize a workshop during the meeting of WP8F to provide a perspective on some of these issues. The purpose is to exchange views on how to bring IMT-2000 to developing economies, the impact of the mobile information society, the issues of global circulation of IMT-2000 terminals the impact of content provision and applications as well as developments in mobile wireless internet access, mobility, and IP-based networks.

Immediately preceding the Working Party 8F meeting, the Operators' Harmonization Group met at ITU Headquarters to approve an international charter that formalizes the organization's commitment to promote the rapid development and commercialization of globally-harmonized IMT-2000 wireless systems and operations. Professor Michael Walker, Technical Executive, Vodafone AirTouch Plc, has been appointed unanimously as the first Chairman of the OHG.

"The synergy of action between your group and the ITU has so far proved beneficial to the successful development of a truly global third generation mobile system", ITU's Secretary-General Yoshio Utsumi told the OHG. He recalled ITU's

response to operators' requirements and concerns in the preparation of the IMT-2000 radio interface standard and the OHG's support to the process of global standardization and spectrum identification. Many companies which are founding members of the OHG are also members of ITU and are currently taking part in their individual capacity in the work of Working Party 8F.

Wie sicher ist «sicher»?

Elektronische Verschlüsselungssysteme sind um so sicherer, je grösser das elektronische Schlüsselwort ist. Die USA haben offenbar ihren – durch den CIA forcierten – Widerstand gegen die Verwendung von elektronischen Schlüsseln mit Wortlängen von 128 bis 256 bit weitgehend aufgegeben. Jedenfalls wird im August dieses Jahres mit einer entsprechenden Entscheidung gerechnet. Nun wetteifern viele Unternehmen weltweit auf dem Weg zu einem «ultimativen» Schlüssel, der niemals geknackt werden kann. Den Vogel scheint jetzt NEC abgeschossen zu haben: Das Unternehmen hat eine Verschlüsselungstechnik entwickelt, die selbst mit Supercomputern in Millionen Jahren nicht entschlüsselt werden kann – das Durchrechnen aller theoretischen Codemöglichkeiten würde mehr als 1020 Jahre brauchen. Das mit der Bezeichnung «Cipher Unicorn A» versehene System möchte NEC gern als ISO-Standard sehen – jedenfalls wird man es schon im laufenden Jahr in eigenen E-Commerce-Systemen einsetzen.

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