European Broadcasting Union
Addendum to the Progress Committee Report

Ed. Note: This report (prepared by Rudolf Gressmann, Director of the European Broadcasting Union) arrived at SMPTE Headquarters on 12 May 1980, although it had been mailed by air mail from Belgium on 25 March. We are pleased to present it here as an addendum to the Progress Committee Report.

Although probably only a handful of specialists were aware of it, one of the most significant events of 1979 for the European television community took place on 12 April, when the Eurovision technical staff said goodbye to the cramped and inaccessible installations in the Brussels court building and moved into the spacious new international coordination center in leased premises at the national production center of the Belgian broadcasting organization, BRT. The new suite has a total floor area of 500 m^2 and it accommodates new technical facilities for the operational supervision of live international television program transmissions between the broadcasting organizations in the 25 countries that participate directly in Eurovision by means of terrestrial circuits. A full description of the new coordination center was published in the June 1979 issue of the EBU Review,* which also records the 25th anniversary of the inauguration of Eurovision, and it is unnecessary to mention more than a few highlights here.

The main hub of activity is the International Television Coordination Center (CICT), which is equipped with extensive sound and vision monitoring facilities based on a vision matrix having 9 inputs and 36 outputs, and a sound matrix having 30 inputs and outputs. The latter is used mainly to interconnect incoming telephone lines from the participating organizations in what is known as a conference mode, so that discussions of any aspect of the transmissions may take place as easily as if all concerned were in the same room. Other available facilities include comprehensive measuring equipment and units for inserting and decoding data transmitted in the field blanking period, which is used to provide a convenient indication of the origin of each incoming vision signal. All equipment is, of course, able to operate on any of the recognized color television systems.

The new Eurovision Centre had been in service for only a few weeks when it was used for the most elaborate series of Eurovision transmissions that have yet been undertaken: the interchange of news items and coverage of the first direct elections of the Parliament of the European Economic Community, which were held in the nine countries concerned during the week 3–10 June 1979. Because of the importance of the occasion, a special international working party was formed to plan the arrangements for handling the numerous transmissions required by the EBU member organizations. These consisted basically of two loop networks linking Brussels with Paris, Milan, and Frankfurt, together with spurs feeding Dublin, London, Luxemburg, and Hilversum.

One network was reserved exclusively for transmissions of general interest available to all participants, known as multilaterals, while the other was used only for transmissions specifically requested by a receiving organization. The latter were coordinated from the main control desk, while at the same time the multilaterals were being supervised from a temporary control room specifically established for the purpose. A particularly noteworthy feature of the arrangements was the use of a closed-circuit teletext system to distribute information about the network configuration and transmission schedules to all the participating organizations. This provided a particularly flexible medium of communication, and it undoubtedly made an important contribution to the successful coordination of more than 200 multilaterals and request transmissions in one day, which set a new record for Eurovision.

There were three interesting technical developments in 1979 concerning the television program services broadcast by the organizations participating directly in Eurovision. In the spring, the French-language commercial station RTL in Luxemburg opened a UHF transmitter broadcasting with system G-PAL in order to facilitate reception in Belgium. RTL thus became the first station broadcasting the same programs with three different television systems, as it already operated a VHF transmitter with system C and a UHF one with system L-SECAM. Another commercial station, Tele Monte-Carlo (TMC), which had introduced an Italian-language program service using system G-SECAM before Italy had decided to adopt the PAL color system, changed those transmissions to system G-PAL in the autumn; however, the French program service of TMC remains in SECAM.

Finally, the RAI in Italy introduced its third television network on 15 December 1979. Unlike its first two networks, each of which broadcast the same programs throughout the country, the third network has a regional structure, and will ultimately be subdivided into 21 groups of transmitters, fed from individual studio centers. In order to ensure high productivity and operational flexibility, lightweight equipment and electronic newsgathering facilities are being provided to all stations.

Elsewhere in Europe, there was relatively little progress to report. Two countries announced their choice of a color television system; in Portugal the PAL system will be used, whereas in Greece SECAM is preferred. The broadcasting organizations in both countries have already begun experimental tranmissions in color. The only network to acquire substantially more high power transmitters was TRT (Turkey), which is still expanding the coverage of its national program service; there were also numerous new low power rebroadcast transmitters in mountainous regions of other countries. For most organizations, however, figures given in Table I for 1979 are much the same as those for 1978, indicating that resources for further expansion were not available.

There were, of course, other developments that are not reflected in the table. The coverage of the various journeys of Pope John-Paul II provided the occasion for a particularly elaborate and extensive deployment of broadcasting equipment and personnel, which stretched to the limit the resources of the networks concerned. The lack of any major international sporting events, on the other hand, facilitated the work of the members of the EBU Operations Groups in planning the arrangements for coverage of the Winter and Summer Olympic Games, which were due to be held the following year at Lake Placid and Moscow respectively. This situation was reflected in the statistics for transmissions over the network of vision circuits linking the participants in Eurovision. The total duration of these transmissions in 1979 (3404 hours) was not significantly different from that in 1978 (3462 hours), but during the same period the number of transmissions other than news decreased by 7% to 7115, whereas the number of news items originating in the three daily transmissions increased by 14% to an all-time record of 6296.

Finally, at the end of 1979, the first successful launch of the three-stage Ariane rocket, which was designed and built in Europe on behalf of the European Space Agency, took place at the Kourou Space Centre in French Guiana. The final stage of Ariane can place a mass of 1700 kg, including approximately 1000 kg of payload, into a geostationary orbit. It is intended to use the rocket to launch various European telecommunications satellites, provided that the qualifying flights are successful. The implications for broadcasting of direct-broadcasting satellites and other new communications techniques such as teletext and domestic video equipment will be discussed in next year's Progress Report.

*"The New Eurovision Control Centre" by W. Potter, *EBU Review (Technical)*, No. 175, pp. 128–131.

The figures in the table below indicate the principal characteristics of the television services participating regularly in Eurovision by terrestrial circuits. The data correspond to the situation at the ends of 1978 and 1979, except for the number of television transmitters, where the first column refers to 1st November, 1979.

Country and programme designation		Transmission system*	No. of television transmitters		Coverage of population %		Programme hours per week		Network length km radio-relay		cable		Estimated No. of receivers (thousands)		Estimated No. of receivers per 100 pers.	
			1979	1978	1979	1978	1979	1978	1979	1978	1979	1978	1979	1978	1979	1978
Algeria:	RTA	B-PAL	40	40	90	90	64[4]	64[4]	6400	6204	0	0	870	760	4.8	4.2
Austria:	ORF-1	B(G)PAL	222(132)	223(121)	93.8	93.4	74.6	66.0	7976	7976	72	72	2120	2070	28.3	28.4
	ORF-2	G(B)PAL	320(29)	301(28)	91.1	90.6	56.9	47.3								
Belgium:	BRT-1	B(H)PAL	3(3)	3(3)	99.8	90	51.5	53.4	2097	2097		0	2950	2885	30.0	29.3
	BRT-2	H-PAL	6	6	99.8	99.8	10.6	10.7								
	RTBF-1	B(H)PAL	11(2)	11(2)	94.9	94.9	55.7	56.3	1979	1979		0				
	RTBF-2	H-PAL	5	5	78	78	15.6	11.5								
Denmark:	DR	B-PAL	30	30	99.9	99.9	48.5	47.1	4278	4278	124	124	1850	1810	36.1	35.5
Finland:	YLE-1	B(G)PAL	64(7)	64(5)	99	99	60[4]	54[4]	12942	12037	0.5	0.5	1510	1502	31.6	31.6
	YLE-2	G(B)PAL	29(18)	26(18)	95	89	33	32								
France:	TF-1	L-SECAM(E)	444(1169)[7]	316(1171)[7]	75(99)	54(99)	76.6[4]	77.4[4]								
	A2	L-SECAM	1271	1122	99	99	80.3[4]	73.5[4]	54800	51212	420	419	15800	15750	29.5	29.4
	FR3	L-SECAM	532	348	98	97	35.3[8]	35.2[8]								
Germany, FR:	ARD-1	B(G)PAL	1068(328)	1066(307)	98.6	97.2	68.5[6]	68[6]								
	ZDF	G(B)PAL	1868(2)	1847(2)	98.2	98.2	66.5	66.5	33521	33521	749	749	20800	20310	34.3	33.5
	ARD-3	G(B)PAL	1866(3)	1837(2)		96.8	45[5]	45[5]								
Greece:	ERT	B(G)SECAM**	108(3)	77	95.2	95	55	60	4600	4600	26	26	1400	1385	16.0	15.8
Ireland:	RTE-1	I-PAL(A)	32(3)	33(3)	98	98(5)	65	65	2078	2078	11.5	11.5	600	560	18.6	17.4
	RTE-2	I-PAL	17	9	90	90	32									
Italy:	RAI-1	B(G)PAL	827(3)	828(3)	98.8	98.8	65.2	65.3								
	RAI-2	G-PAL	473	480	97.3	97.0	65.1	65.5	40042	34300	299	294	13200	12900	23.5	23.1
	RAI-3	G-PAL		0	45.2	0	25.4	0								
Libya:	LJB	B-SECAM	13	13	85	85		64		3000		0	160	145	6.5	7.2
Luxembourg:	RTL	L-SECAM	1	1	92	92	54.1	51	96	16	0	0	89	88	24.9	24.8
		G-PAL(C)	1(1)	0(2)	95(99)	99										
Malta:	TVM	B-	1	1	99	99	40	40	5	5	0	0	90	88	31.9	27.5
Monaco:	TMC-1	L-SECAM	3	3	99.9	99.9	34	40	16	16	0	0	17	10	51.5	50
	TMC-2	G-PAL(G-SECAM)	1	(1)	99	99	41	42								
Morocco:	RTM	B-SECAM	24	24	80	80		42		6863		0.2	750	659	4.2	3.6
Netherlands:	NOS-1	B(G)PAL	4(10)	4(9)	100	100	47.3[4]	47.7[4]	3068	3068	218	218	4110	4050	29.1	29.0
	NOS-2	G(PAL)	14	13	99.9	99	39.6[4]	37.3[4]								
Norway:	NRK	B(G)PAL	1110(21)	1062(12)	97.1	96.5	47.2[4]	46.1[4]	12163	12163	26	26	1200	1150	29.4	28.1
Portugal:	RTP-1	B-PAL**	38	37	85	85	73	76	3524	3524	0	0	1250	1200	12.7	12.7
	RTP-2	G-PAL**	6	6	32	32	33	20								
Spain:	RTVE-1	B(G)PAL	729(2)	730(2)	95.9	95.5	63.3	75	17500	17423	0	0	9450	9070	26.3	25.2
	RTVE-2	G(B)PAL	93(5)	89(5)	65.2	64.4	35.3	36								
Sweden:	SR-1	B(G)PAL	222(39)	225(35)	99.6	99.6	41.9	41.1	33500	33500	790	790	3150	3120	38.1	37.7
	SR-2	G-PAL	301	285	99.4	99.4	38.6	37.4								
Switzerland:	SRG	B(G)PAL	202(167)	202(151)	99.0[1]	99.0[1]	60.0	65								
	SSR	B(G)PAL	67(275)	67(263)	99.0[2]	96[2]	60.4	57	2320	2320	0	0	1975	1928	31.2	30.6
	TSI	B(G)PAL	52(293)	52(280)	96.0[3]	96[3]	53.0	55								
Tunisia:	RTT	B-SECAM	14	14	98	98	60[4]	60[4]	3350	3350	0	0	300	300	4.8	4.8
Turkey:	TRT	B	81	68	84.5	84	40	45	5935	3968	0	0	3100	2637	7.8	6.6
United Kingdom:	BBC-1	I-PAL(A)	405(110)	340(110)	98.6	98.3	96.9	97.8	9689	9425	922	899	19100	19050	34.2	34.1
	BBC-2	I-PAL	399	337	98.6	98.3	79.1	73								
	IBA	I-PAL(A)	416(47)	366(47)	98.6	98.3	104[5]	104[5]	6294	6074	688	688				
Yugoslavia:	JRT-1	B(G)PAL	433	431	89	89	85[4]	42[4]	25068	21169	0	0	4150	3957	18.8	17.9
	JRT-2	G-PAL	332	264	73	73	47[5]	23[5]								

Notes:

Where the same programme is transmitted by means of two different systems, the brackets () identify the corresponding characteristics.

* The various transmission systems are identified by means of the letters used in CCIR Report 624

** Experimental colour transmissions

[1] Proportion of population within the coverage area of at least 1 programme service

[2] Proportion of population within the coverage area of at least 2 programme services

[3] Proportion of population within the coverage area of at least 3 programme services

[4] Data include duration of educational programmes that are not broadcast throughout the year

[5] Average figures applicable in the regions in which this service is provided

[6] Certain transmitters broadcast a further 19 hours per week

[7] Some broadcasting in 819 lines in monochrome

[8] Certain transmitters broadcast a further 32 hours per week, relaying TF1 in colour