

Technical Committee Meetings of the International Electrotechnical Commission

By **FREDERICK M. REMLEY, JR.** and **HERBERT E. FARMER**

TC 60-RECORDING

The Technical Committee TC 60-Recording of the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) met in Prague, Czechoslovakia, in late February and early March, 1981. The three Subcommittees of TC 60 held meetings during the sessions in Prague and reported the results of their work to TC 60. The Subcommittees of TC 60 are: SC 60A, Sound Recording; SC 60B, Video Recording; and SC 60C, Application of Educational or Training Equipment and Systems.

The Technical Committee and its Subcommittees meet at approximately 18-month intervals. Between meetings, they conduct work by correspondence among the members of the several Working Groups formed by the Subcommittees. They disseminate material to IEC National Committees from IEC headquarters in Geneva.

Approximately 115 delegates from 21 countries participated in the Prague sessions. The meetings took place in the large International Hotel, located some distance from the central part of the city, and most of the delegates were lodged at the hotel as well. Rapid travel to the city center was available by use of the modern Metro subway system, recently constructed in Prague. The weather varied from clear and cold to wet and chilly, and was typical of February or March weather at a latitude of 50 degrees North.

The Czechoslovak National Committee of IEC spared no effort to make the stay of the delegates in Prague pleasant and productive. Social and cultural events were arranged, and tours of the city and environs were conducted. The arrangements for the meetings themselves were quite satisfactory. A welcome improvement in communications was introduced at these meetings; the Czechoslovak secretariat published each day a newsletter for delegates, announcing the meetings scheduled for the day, other events taking place on that day and in the future, and also conveying miscellaneous useful bits of information concerning the country, the Czech language, the city, the hotel, and the meetings. This information and advice was enthusiastically received by the delegates and their wives.

AUTHORS: Mr. Remley, SMPTE Vice-President for Television Affairs, is Technical Director for Broadcasting Services, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan; Mr. Farmer, SMPTE Vice-President for Educational Affairs, Professor of Cinema, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California.

SC 60B VIDEO RECORDING

The remainder of this report will deal almost entirely with the work of SC 60B. Most of the U.S. input to SC 60B is through the work of the SMPTE Committee on Video Recording and Reproduction Technology. The SMPTE Staff Television Engineer serves as Technical Adviser to the U.S. National Committee for SC 60B, Video Recording. Three U.S. delegates took part in the Prague work of SC 60B: B. Dickens (CBS Technology Center), N. Ritter (3M Company), and F. Remley (Univ. of Michigan). In addition, J. Roizen (Telegen) continued throughout the meeting as Chairman of SC 60B, as he has since the first meeting of this Subcommittee in 1969.

The following items of work were dealt with:

1. An amendment to IEC Publication 347, describing the two-inch transverse (quadruplex) recording system has been approved. This amendment incorporates several relatively minor changes.
2. The IEC publication standardizing the one-inch Type B helical VTR format is ready for printing as Publication 602.
3. A proposal to standardize a "Type D" one-inch helical recording system was withdrawn.
4. The documentation of the one-inch Type C helical VTR format was completed and will be published soon by the IEC Central Office.
5. A document describing a two-inch audio frequency calibration tape will be published.
6. A document on measuring video tape properties will be published.
7. Documents describing the EIA-J Type I and the U-Format helical recording systems are ready for publication.
8. Documents are complete describing the two ½-inch video cassette formats "VHS" and "Beta." They will be forwarded to the EIA central office for publication.
9. A new ½-inch video cassette format has been submitted to Working Group 5 for standardization. It is the "V-2000" format developed in Europe.
10. Work has begun in earnest on the documentation of video disk systems. Contributions were examined describing the "Philips/MCA" format and the "JVC/VHD" format. The documents are assigned to Working Group 8.
11. Working Group 5 will prepare a request to National

Committees asking for information concerning measurement methods now applied to evaluating the performance of non-broadcast VTR systems.

In addition to the specific items of work noted above, a number of other tasks will face SC 60B in the months ahead. In the first place, it is expected that more contributions will be received on video disk systems. It will be necessary to arrive at a unified style of presentation and list of necessary parameters to be specified for the several formats. It is also expected that some digital video recording contributions will be received in the not-too-distant future, and SC 60B is prepared to deal with these as the need arises. It is fully recognized that it will be very important for SC 60B to keep well informed about the work being done in SC 60A concerning digital audio recording systems. Close liaison will be maintained between the two Subcommittees.

New chairmen were approved for two Subcommittees of TC 60. This was necessary because of the IEC limitation of 10 years on the retention of the chairmanship by any individual. The chairmen are as follows — SC 60A: C. Henocq (USA); SC 60B: F. Remley (USA); SC 60C: H. Farmer (USA). At the conclusion of the final meeting of TC 60 it was announced by the Japanese delegation that Japan hopes to offer an invitation to TC 60 for the next meeting, probably in about 18 months.

— F. M. Remley

SUBCOMMITTEE 60C

At the meetings of the IEC Subcommittee 60C — Application of Educational or Training Equipment and Systems (former title), in Prague, Czechoslovakia, February 25 to March 5, 1981, seventeen delegates from eight countries were present, as well as observers from IEC/TX29, ISO/TC36, and UNESCO. Work was undertaken by seven Working Groups and the Steering Committee for the guidance of the activities of SC 60C. Five U.S. delegates took part in the work of SC 60C: Ray Wyman (Univ. of Massachusetts, Chairman of SC 60C); Herb Farmer (Univ. of Southern California, Chairman of the Delegation); Robert Beeler (Eastman Kodak Co.); Brian Boucher (Lockheed Training Systems); and John Wilshusen (Purdue Univ.).

The most important subject to come before the group was a proposal to extend the scope of the Subcommittee. At one time, much so-called audiovisual equipment was designed, manufactured, and sold specifically for the education and training market. Today, the needs are so diverse, the equipment that might be helpful so varied, the quality of consumer products so good, and the cost of special purpose equipment so high, that few special-purpose machines are manufactured. The alternative is to apply, adapt, modify, or combine high-quality mass-produced units or domestic market products for special purposes.

These special uses of common equipment require the careful selection of existing standards from many sources, the creation of new standards, and the preparation of recommended prac-

tices, in order that the resulting systems and equipment will meet the needs in specific settings with assurance of optimum performance, safety, life expectancy, and cost effectiveness.

Most users do not have the technical competence to select, adapt, combine, install, and evaluate such equipment without the help of appropriate standards and recommended practices. This technical assistance is particularly necessary in developing countries. It is the purpose of SC 60C to assemble representatives from industry, education, training, and consumer organizations to provide the liaison with many other committees including SC 60A, SC 60B, SC 29B, SC 12A, SC 12H, and of course, ISO/TC36 and ISO/TC42.

New Title of Subcommittee 60C

The new title and objective of Subcommittee 60C, approved by TC 60, is as follows:

Systems of Audiovisual and Electronic Technology for Information and Communication

Objective

1. To prepare standards and recommended practices for applications, adaptations, and combinations composed of audiovisual, video, or electronic products, including items intended for the domestic market.
2. To further the development of communication, presentation, education, and training, and to facilitate information and cultural exchange by the promotion of compatible, safe, effective, and economical systems.

Items of Work Considered

A sizable number of specific items of work were considered in the various working group meetings. The following list is only representative.

1. Documents are under preparation, covering the interconnection of automatic slide projectors (particularly with respect to dimming or light control for automatic operation), and the interconnection of video equipment.
2. Discussions were started on the electronic control of learning systems by microcomputers.
3. A number of documents were approved for distribution as Secretariat Documents on such subjects as: additional symbols for audiovisual equipment; the labeling of audio cassettes for audiovisual use; draft of an *IEC Report on Safety*.
4. The draft of a standard for *Audio Pages* was approved for circulation to national committees under the six months rule.

At the closing plenary meeting of TC 60, the appointment of Herbert Farmer as the new Chairman of SC 60C was confirmed. He replaces Dr. Wyman, who has been the Chairman since the Subcommittee was formed in Florence, Italy, in 1972.

The activities in Prague and the cordial reception by our hosts, the Czechoslovak National Committee of the IEC, are well described by Fred Remley in his report on TC 60 and SC 60B.

— H. E. Farmer

Invitation to Opryland

The next (16th) SMPTE Television Conference is scheduled for 5-6 February 1982 at the Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tenn. Readers are invited to make plans to attend — see future issues of the SMPTE JOURNAL or contact SMPTE headquarters for further information.