

USNC-URSI Meeting Minutes
National Radio Science Meeting
Millennium Hotel
Boulder, Colorado
7:00 pm, Sunday, January 4, 2009
Prepared by Katie Bowman and Steven C. Reising

Members Present: Yahya Rahmat-Samii (Chair), Steve Reising (Secretary), George Uslenghi (Past Chair), Katie Bowman (NAS Representative), Ozlem Kilic (Comm A), Sembian Rengarajan (Comm B, representing Chair Nader Engheta), Dev Palmer (Comm C), Jennifer Bernhard (Comm D, representing Chair John Papapolymerou), Dave Giri (Comm E, representing Chair Danilo Erricolo), Al Gasiewski (Comm F), Gary Bust (Comm G, representing Chair John Sahr), William Amatucci (Comm H), James Cordes (Comm J), Erdem Topsakal (Comm K, representing Chair Susan Hagness), Umran Inan (URSI Vice President), Ross Stone, William Davis (Int'l URSI Commission A Vice-Chair), Tatsuo Itoh (IEEE MTT-S Representative)

Guests Present: Sharad Laxpati (2008 URSI GA Treasurer), Lot Shafai (2010 Toronto IEEE AP-S/URSI Joint meeting), V. Chandrasekar (Comm F Vice Chair), Mike Newkirk (Comm F Secretary)

1. **Welcome:** Yahya Rahmat-Samii, Chair of the USNC-URSI, opened the meeting a few minutes past 7:00 pm. This was followed by introductions.
2. **Approval of January 2008 Minutes:** The minutes of the previous USNC-URSI meeting were unanimously approved.
3. **Discussion of Agenda:** The items to be covered during the meeting were briefly reviewed. No modifications were proposed, and the agenda for the meeting was approved as submitted.
4. **Report by the Chair:**
 - I). Yahya briefly described the composition of the USNC and also expressed the committee's thanks to George Uslenghi (2006-2008 Chair), Umran Inan (2006-2008 Past Chair), Chalmers Butler (2003-2008 URSI Vice President), and to all 2006-2008 commission chairs, members-at-large, and society representatives. He expressed his excitement in working with the committee as chair for the upcoming triennium and described several recent committee initiatives, including continuation of the successful student travel support program, plans to pursue additional fund raising, and plans to assemble a USNC operations manual. He reported that the name of URSI Commission E had been changed by International URSI at the GA in Chicago. The new name is "Electromagnetic Environment and Interference". All commissions were also encouraged to provide updated website information to Bill Davis.
 - II). In terms of the URSI NRSM in Boulder, it was requested that a comment be added to the meeting's website for future meetings to inform attendees which businesses will be open for lunch during the meeting. Yahya reminded everyone that the special luncheon

for all supported students during the 2009 NRSM will be open to all USNC Officers, Commission Chairs and those representing them at the Boulder meeting. He said that it would be good to track statistics of the NRSM, such as the number of supported students in each Commission, number of papers presented by each Commission, etc. Historically, the funding to each Commission to help their members travel to the URSI GA has been based on their level of participation in the NRSM. Finally, Yahya reminded everyone that we need to plan to nominate U.S. radio scientists for major URSI awards to be given at the 2011 URSI GA in Istanbul. Awards are based on performance during the 6 years preceding the GA. The USNC Committee for Senior Awards consists of Don Farley, Akira Ishimaru and Tom Senior. The junior awards are recommended by the Booker Award Committee.

5. **Report by the Past Chair**

I). George began by giving the committee an overview of the August 2008 URSI General Assembly, hosted by the U.S. Over 1200 attendees participated in the Assembly, including 125 URSI Young Scientists and 262 students. Over 1450 scientific papers were presented. The USNC also sponsored a successful student paper competition, chaired by Steve Reising. This was the first time such a competition was held at a GA. Former USNC chair Umran Inan was elected an URSI Vice President, and several U.S. scientists were elected to be Chairs and Vice Chairs of international URSI commissions.

Sharad Laxpati provided an overview of the GA finances. Funds were raised from several foundations and the USNC made a substantial contribution as well. After all accounts have been settled, approximately \$14,000 will be transferred back to the USNC private account.

George next presented two motions to the committee:

- a. In recognition of Chalmers Butler's excellence service to the USNC and to URSI international, George asked the committee to consider making Chalmers an honorary USNC member. This motion was seconded and unanimously approved.
- b. The cost to the USNC to run the General Assembly student paper competition is \$5,000. George asked the committee to consider sponsoring a student paper competition at the 2011 GA in Turkey. The committee approved this motion and Steve Reising agreed to run the competition for the second time. George will take this proposal to the URSI Board.

II). George reported on the status of the USNC. New elections must be held for 6 members at large. This is an opportunity to engage additional scientists in the work of the USNC and also provides a path to potential future election as a USNC officer. Commissions are asked to provide names of potential nominees to Steve. [Note that commissions must also verify that any candidates put forward are willing to serve if elected]. An email election will be conducted in January. Commissions are also asked to consider suggestions for two government agency representatives to the USNC (from an agency other than NSF). Selection of government agency liaisons offers an opportunity to increase awareness of the USNC-URSI. Finally, George highlighted the importance of

cooperation and assistance from USNC commission chairs in assembling the NRSM technical program.

III.) George reminded the committee that we need to decide whether or not to participate in the IEEE-APS/URSI summer meeting in Toronto, since it will be outside the U.S. The decision was made to participate. George reminded us that the North American Radio Science Meeting occurs only every 5-7 years. The last one was held in Ottawa in 2007.

6. **Report by the Accounts Manager:** Gary Brown was unable to attend the USNC-URSI meeting. In his place, George briefly reviewed the finances of the private account, which is held at the NAS and includes income generated by USNC-URSI meetings. The USNC made a large financial contribution to the success of the 2008 URSI GA. After taking this expense and any resulting surplus into account as well as the expenses associated with student travel for the 2009 NRSM, the USNC will be left with a private account balance of approximately \$80,000. This amount includes the surplus received from the 2008 joint meeting but does not include any additional profit likely to be realized from the 2009 NRSM.

7. **Report by the NAS Representative**

Katie Bowman updated the committee on the NSF funds that support core expenses of the USNC-URSI. This grant is competitively submitted by the National Academies to NSF every few years, and covers seven USNCs in the math and physical sciences. The current grant extends through June 2010 and covers items including annual dues to URSI and partial support for the NRSM student travel program.

Katie also briefly reminded members that USNC-URSI is a standing committee of the National Academies. Therefore, all USNC members are officially appointed by the NAS President, Ralph Cicerone. A nomination package will be submitted for Dr. Cicerone's review and approval. Katie will submit this package (which will include all the 2009-2011 commission chairs, members at large, society representatives, etc.) as soon as all of these names are known. After Dr. Cicerone reviews and approves the roster, USNC members will receive an official letter of appointment from the National Academies. Katie will also send a brief bias and conflict of interest form that must be completed.

8. **Distribution of Commission Reporting Forms**

Commission Chairs were reminded that the forms should be completed and returned at the Executive Council meeting on Thursday, January 8.

9. **Preliminary Report on the 2009 NRSM**

As of January 4, there were 139 regular registrants and 118 student/retiree registrants. Additional walk-in registrations are expected and are likely to bring the total to around 300 attendees. George reported that he expected the meeting to generate a surplus to be returned to the USNC private account.

George presented data on the numbers of papers for each USNC commission, and noted that commissions C, D, E, and K are low. Commissions were reminded that the paper statistics are important in the allocations of funds to attend the 2011 GA in Istanbul.

Steve reported on the student paper competition and student travel support program for Danilo Erricolo, who was unable to attend. This year 14 papers were submitted to the competition, and these have undergone a rigorous review process to identify the three finalists who will present in the plenary session. The committee discussed whether a limit should be placed on the number of co-authors on student paper competition papers. The commissions are asked to discuss this question in their business meetings.

This year the USNC provided \$600 travel fellowship awards to 91 students. The program continues to be very successful and for 2009 a special lunch is also being arranged for the supported students, USNC commission chairs, and USNC officers. This lunch will be held after the Wednesday plenary session. Commissions were asked to consider whether a limit should be placed on the number of times a student could receive the USNC travel support (such as a maximum of two times).

10. Draft MOU and Report on 2008 AP-S/USNC-URSI Meeting

Ross Stone explained that IEEE is enforcing its policy that joint meetings such as the annual AP-S/USNC-URSI meeting have signed MOUs. As a result, he drafted an MOU which has now been approved by IEEE. It is currently being reviewed by the National Academies. Ross asked for committee feedback on the MOU and for a motion for committee approval of it in principle. USNC approved the draft MOU in principle and authorized the USNC leadership to work with AP-S / IEEE and the NAS to resolve any issues.

Ross then presented a summary of the 2008 joint meeting in San Diego. Total registration was 1638 and all USNC commissions except H and J participated. Of the papers, 78.8% (1237) came from AP-S and 21.2% (333) came from USNC-URSI. The USNC-URSI share of the surplus has already been sent to the USNC private account held at the NAS.

11. Future Meetings

Bill Davis presented the list of upcoming joint AP-S /USNC meetings. The locations are:
2009: Charleston (May 31-June 6)
2010: Toronto (July 10-17)
2011: Spokane (July 3-9)
2012: Chicago
2013: Orlando (*proposed*)
2014: Memphis (*proposed*)

Commissions are asked to please decide whether they will participate in the 2010 Toronto meeting.

Bill reported that the joint meetings committee is exploring Turn Key Conference Management System as a potential alternative to 3D. Bill also reported that he is looking into potential additions and updates to the NRSM submissions software and requested volunteers to assist in testing and review.

12. **2010 NRSM**

The 2010 NRSM will be held from Wednesday, January 6 – Saturday, January 9. The usual USNC-URSI business meeting will be held on Tuesday evening, January 5, and the Executive Council meeting will be held on Saturday morning, January 9. Commissions are also asked to discuss whether they prefer the meeting to be held in 3 days when possible, as is the case for the 2009 meeting, or if they prefer a 4-day meeting.

For the past several years the NRSM plenary session has been organized by pairs of commissions, which select the theme and each identify one speaker. It is the turn of commissions C and E to organize this session and so those two commissions are asked to discuss the issue. Plenary sessions at past meetings focused on the following: 2005: Electromagnetism in Non-invasive Biomedicine (B&K), 2006: Spectrum Management (F&J), 2008: Electromagnetism in Nanotechnology (A&D) and 2009: Electromagnetism in Natural Plasmas: from the Upper Atmosphere to Space (G&H).

For presentations during future NRSMs, it was suggested that monitor cables switches be provided in each room to allow those using Macs to hook up their own laptops in order to display complicated graphics or animations.

13. **Old Business**

No additional old business was identified

14. **New Business**

Steve and Yahya raised the general item of strengthening the USNC-URSI and recruiting new members.

The issue of enforcement of registration for the NRSM was discussed. It was suggested that a reminder sheet should be posted by the door of each lecture room that registration is required for attendance.

The issue of inactive URSI members was discussed. George clarified the policy that if a member has not registered for a USNC-URSI conference or attended a Commission business meeting for three years, he or she can be dropped from USNC-URSI Commission membership.

George suggested that the summer joint meetings are already planned or proposed through 2014, and that the 2010 joint meeting will not be a North American Radio Science (NARS) meeting even though it will be held in Canada. The most recent NARS was held in 2007 in Ottawa, and such meetings are generally held every 7 years. Therefore, he suggested that 2015 should be a NARS. Lot Shafai will discuss this idea

with the Canadian National Committee and the idea will also be put before the joint meetings committee.

15. Review of Action Items for the Commissions

- a. Discuss preference for 3-day versus 4-day NRSM
- b. Discuss whether a limit should be placed on the authors for a student paper competition paper (such as only the student and 1-2 advisors).
- c. Discuss whether a limit should be placed on the number of times a student can receive the student travel support (such as two times).
- d. Decide whether commissions will participate in the 2010 IEEE-APS/URSI summer meeting, to be held July 10-17 in Toronto
- e. Provide suggestions for USNC members at large and government agency liaisons
- f. Complete the commission reporting form that includes names and contact information of newly elected members and also ideas for special sessions for the 2010 NRSM.

16. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 pm. The Executive Council Meeting will be held from 6:30-8:00 am on Thursday, January 8, 2009 in the Century room of the Millennium Hotel.