

Received: 28 March 2013

Subject: Question ITU-R 135-6

Reference: Document [6C/105](#), Annex 2

Document 6C/135-E
3 April 2013
English only

North American Broadcasters Association (NABA)

ADVANCED STEREOPHONIC MULTICHANNEL SOUND SYSTEMS

The North American Broadcasters Association (NABA, www.nabanet.com) is an association of broadcasters in Canada, Mexico, and the United States, and the NABA Technical Committee is its standing technical body. NABA is thus in a position to present the technical viewpoints of the most authoritative association of professional North American Broadcasters in television and sound programme production, post-production, and distribution for terrestrial, satellite, and cable broadcasting.

NABA is a Sector Member of ITU-R and a long-time participant in ITU-R Study Groups, Working Parties, Task Groups, Rapporteur Groups, etc. NABA numbers among its members Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen and members of the above groups. NABA also participates widely in the ITU work on radio, television and multimedia services and has a strong interest in spectrum issues, as well as all audio and video issues.

NABA has studied the proposed new Recommendation on advanced multichannel sound, Document [6C/105](#), Annex 2. NABA does see reason for advancement beyond the 5.1 channel sound system specified in Recommendation BS.775 “Multichannel stereophonic sound system with and without accompanying picture”. However, NABA does not support moving the proposed Recommendation forward at this time.

NABA is aware that different types of advanced multichannel sound systems are being studied and introduced to various markets. Types of systems include: channel based systems where individual sound channels are intended for individual loudspeakers that are placed at specified locations; object based systems where the location of sound objects are specified irrespective of loudspeaker locations; and scene based systems such as B-Format and Higher-Order Ambisonics.

The proposed new Recommendation considers only channel based systems, and only for production. The document does not specify one multichannel system, rather it specifies three different systems; one 22.2 channel system and two different 10.2 channel systems.

NABA is strongly supportive of having ITU-R specify an advanced multichannel sound system by means of either an update to Recommendation ITU-R BS.775, or in a new Recommendation. However, the new specification should ideally be of one system that can be used in production, delivery and reproduction.

Given the development work that is on-going, it is not clear to NABA what type of new system should be recommended for use. NABA is concerned about the practical issues associated with outfitting production rooms and reproduction rooms with 22.2 loudspeakers. NABA also notes that an object based system has been successfully used for a number of recent motion pictures with good results.

NABA urges rapid completion of studies underway on the various types of advanced multichannel sound systems, and suggests that Working Party 6C await the results of those studies before specifying one new multichannel sound system for use by broadcasters.

NABA also notes that it is important for new developments in audio systems to consider features such as Descriptive Video for the visually impaired, enhanced dialog intelligibility for the hearing impaired, and multilingual versions of the programme. Methods for the efficient delivery of these services should be studied in parallel with the studies on new multichannel sound systems.
