

Minutes of SPCOM-TC Meeting at ICASSP-2012

Wednesday, 28 March 2012, 12:30 - 14:00

In attendance: 12 TC Members, 1 Associate Member, 1 Affiliate Member, 4 others

Zhi-Quan (Tom) Luo, Timothy Davidson, Chong-Yung Chi, Erik Larsson, Amir Leshem, Gerald Matz, Matthew McKay, Daniel Palomar, Alejandro Ribeiro, Dirk Slock, Zhi Tian, Rui Zhang

Geert Leus

Visa Koivunen

Saeed Gazor (Queen's, Canada), Sam Sherman (National Instruments, USA), Slawomir Stanczak (T.U. Berlin, Germany), Abdelhak Zoubir (T. U. Darmstadt, Germany)

Apologies: 18 TC Members

Paolo Banelli, Mats Bengtsson, Shuguang Cui, Huaiyu Dai, Eduard Jorswieck, Geoffrey Li, Roberto Lopez-Valcarce, David Love, Xiaoli Ma, Urbashi Mitra, Hamid Sadjadpour, Akbar Sayeed, Gesualdo Scutari, Milica Stojanovic, Wolfgang Utschick, Sergiy Vorobyov, Zhengdao Wang, Wei Yu.

1. Introduction of new members:

The meeting began with a welcome to our attending associate and affiliate members, and to our visitors. The new members of the TC were then introduced: Gesualdo Scutari, Urbashi Mitra, Rui Zhang

2. Vote of thanks for retiring members:

There was a formal vote of thanks to the retiring members of the TC: Geert Leus, Athanasios Liavas, Luc Vandendorpe, Qing Zhao. Particular attention was drawn to Geert's astute leadership of the TC as Vice-Chair and Chair, and for his sage advice as Past-Chair.

3. Presentation from Visa Koivunen,

Before the formal business of the meeting began, Visa Koivunen, who is a member of the Society's Standing Committee on Industrial Relations and a former member of the TC, gave a presentation on the activities of that the Industrial Relations Committee. He said that the Society leadership is keen to enhance the Society's engagement with industry. This initiative is being led by Marzin Gilbert of AT&T Labs Research. The standing committee has suggested that as the SPCOM TC we ought to be in a position to support the Society's efforts in this direction. There were suggestions that we invite industrial members to TC activities, and that we consider constructing special sessions at SPAWC for reporting results with immediate industrial impact, or, perhaps, for reporting standardization activities. There was also the suggestion that we cultivate ambassadors for the TC in industry. It was pointed out that we might consider setting aside a quota of the membership of the TC for industrial members. Our industrial/government relations subcommittee will continue to interact with the Society's Standing Committee as these activities make progress.

4. TC Subcommittees and Representations 2012:

For the record, note was made of the TC's subcommittee structure for 2012

- Awards subcommittee: Erik Larsson, Gerald Matz, Tim Davidson, Tom Luo (Chair)
- Nominations and Elections Subcommittee: C.-Y. Chi, Geoffrey Li, Gerald Matz, Milica Stojanovic, Tim Davidson (Chair)
- Industry/Government Subcommittee: Dirk Slock, Erik Larsson, Robert Cui (Chair)
- Newsletter Subcommittee: Paolo Banneli, Roberto Lopez-Valcarce (Chair)
- Education representative: C.-Y. Chi
- Maintenance of SPCOM homepage (Zhengdao Wang)

Note was also made of positions held by TC members, and others, in representation of the TC:

- Technical Directions Board (Tom Luo)
- Steering Committee of the IEEE Transactions on Wireless Communications (Robert Heath, U. Texas, Austin)
- IEEE WCL Steering committee (Erik Larsson)

5. Minutes of ICASSP'11 Meeting

It was pointed out that the minutes of the meeting at ICASSP 2011 are available on the web at <http://www.signalprocessingsociety.org/technical-committees/list/spcom-tc/>

However, due to a lack of quorum, no motion was put to approve these minutes.

6. TC Review

The final report on our TC following the formal review at ICASSP 2011 was discussed. Overall, the report from the TC Review Committee (TCRC) was positive. However, some important comments were made. The comments and the TC's response are recorded below.

1. **TCRC comment:** *The main area for improvement is in the diversity of membership. The 38.7% representation from region 8 is out of balance compared to the 29% representation in the SPS for that region, and the 9.7% representation from region 10 is low compared to its 21% representation in SPS. Having only 2/30 women on the committee is low. There are no industry members currently on the TC, despite the concern about this raised in the last review.*

SPCOM TC response: We have made effort to diversity our membership.

- We changed nomination form and solicited industry candidates to fill the TC openings in 2011. But none of the industry candidates were elected.
- At the time the TC was reviewed, we actually had 4 female members, not 2. At the end of 2011, Qing Zhao stepped down from the TC after serving two terms, and Urbashi Mitra was elected to join the TC. So we still have 4 female TC members. It will be great if we can have more woman TC members. We need to think about good female candidates and nominate them this year.

2. **TCRC comment:** *The number of Associate Members is very high compared to other TCs; many of these would be Affiliate Members in other TCs.*

SPCOM TC response: We plan to reshuffle the list and move most of the Associate Members to the Affiliate Members list.

3. **TCRC comment:** *There is a perception that the TC is inbreeding; too high a percentage of elections are extensions (7/10).*

SPCOM TC response: On the matter of inbreeding, we have adopted a fair mechanism to address this. The issue was first discussed within the Nominations and Elections subcommittee, and later adopted after an e-vote within the TC. The vote was close 13/12/1 (yes/no/abstain). We used this new election mechanism (attached) in the 2011 TC member election. We may revisit this issue in future if the need arises.

In terms of action items for the future, it was pointed out that the repeated review comment regarding members from industry

7. SP-COM related Workshops

- SPAWC-11: San Francisco (Hamid Sadjadpour) , Total submissions= 213 papers
Total accepted papers= 116 papers; Total Attendance= 137 (including 10 complimentary registration); Budget surplus = I am not sure the exact amount but it was approximately \$25K surplus.
- SPAWC-12: Cesme (Geert Leus) Geert reported that SPAWC 2012 had received 150 submissions. Although the special sessions associated with the plenary speakers should increase this number, the reduction in the number of submissions was viewed as an item of concern. One factor was that after the dates for SPAWC 2012 had been confirmed, the organizers of SAM 2012 chose dates that overlapped. The temporal proximity of ICC 2012 in Ottawa, Canada, may also have been a factor. Note was made of the small fraction of TC members who had submitted to their own workshop. It was suggested that TC members ought to consider making SPAWC a priority in their planning their submissions.
- SPAWC-13: Darmstadt (Abdelhak Zoubir and Slawomir Stanczak): Abdelhak and Slawomir provided a brief update on the status of their plans for SPAWC 2013. In spite of the fact that we had only chosen the site for SPAWC 2013 in February, the team reported significant progress.
- SPAWC-14: Toronto (Tim Davidson and Wei Yu)

8. Pool of potential Associate Editors

Gerald Matz maintains a list of potential nominations for Associate Editors. TSP, SPL and TWireless, and Wireless Communications Letters all need AEs in our area. If you or some good researchers you know are interested in serving on the editorial board, please let Gerald Matz

know. We will not carry out a voting procedure and simply let the respective EICs decide, unless they request a score from us.

9. IEEE and SP Soc. Awards

On behalf of the Awards subcommittee, Tim Davidson reviewed the status of the nominations that the TC made in 2011.

Technical achievement: **Yes**
Bjorn Ottersten

Society Award: **NO**
Georgios Giannakis

Best Paper Award: **YES**
"Transmit Beamforming for Physical Layer Multicasting" by Sidiropoulos, Davidson and Luo

Young Author Best Paper Award: **NO**
Mileounis and Babadi for "An Adaptive Greedy Algorithm With Application to Nonlinear Communications" co-authored with Kalouptsidis and Tarokh

Pescodolido for "Distributed Decision Through Self-Synchronizing Sensor Networks in the Presence of Propagation Delay and Asymmetric Channels", co-authored with Scutari and Barbarossa

On the topic of the young author paper award, special note was made of the fact that our 2010 nominee for this award,
"Analytical Performance of MIMO Multichannel Beamforming in the Presence of Unequal Power Cochannel Interference and Noise," *L Sun, M R McKay, and S Jin* 2721-2735, *IEEE Transactions on Signal Processing*, Vol 57, Issue 7, 2009.
was successful. It turns out that Matthew McKay (the advisor of L. Sun) also met the age requirement and therefore has been made a co-winner of the YABPA prize in 2010 as well.

Magazine Best Paper Award: **NO**
Gesbert et al for "From Single User to Multiuser Communications: Shifting the MIMO Paradigm"

Distinguished Lecturer: **NO**
Gerald Matz

Special note was also made of the fact that Matthew McKay won the Steven O Rice Prize in the field of Communication Theory, for the paper: Shi Jin, Matthew R. McKay, Xiqi Gao, Iain B. Collings "MIMO Multichannel Beamforming: SER and Outage Using New Eigenvalue Distributions of Complex Noncentral Wishart Matrices," *IEEE Transactions on Communications*, Vol. 56, No. 3, pp. 424-434, March 2008

With an eye on this year's activities, the following deadlines were noted. (The awards subcommittee will coordinate our nomination process.)

SPS:

BPA, YABPA, SP Magazine BCA and BPA: by Oct. 1 to Michael Zoltowski
Education, Service, Technical Achievement, Society: by Oct. 1 to Michael Zoltowski

IEEE:

W. R. G. Baker Award: by 1 July, for more information see
<http://www.ieee.org/about/awards/recognitions/baker.html>

Donald G. Fink Prize Paper Award: by 1 July, for more information see
<http://www.ieee.org/about/awards/recognitions/fink.html>

9. Reflections on ICASSP 2011

papers submitted to SPCOM TC

ICASSP03	320
ICASSP04	360
ICASSP05	408
ICASSP06	420
ICASSP07	380 (174 accepted, or ~ 46%)
ICASSP08	283 (150 accepted, or ~ 53%)
ICASSP09	293 (133 accepted, or ~ 45%)
ICASSP10	297 (142 accepted, or ~ 48%)
ICASSP11	355 (168 accepted, or ~ 47%)
ICASSP12	219 (115 accepted, or ~ 53%)

Joint sessions

The SPCOM TC, the SPTM TC and the SAM TC joined forces in organizing four joint sessions at this ICASSP.

The significant decline in the number of submissions to ICASSP 2012 (~38%) was observed with some concern. There we an energetic discussion for some of the reasons behind this. Some of the candidates as contributing factors that were identified include: the proliferation of communication conferences, and the fact that some SPCOM related papers are being submitted under the auspices of other TCs.

10. Upcoming TC Meetings:

Face-to-face: SPAWC-12 (17-20 June 2012, Cesme, Turkey)

11. New Business

Tim Davidson updated the TC on the outcomes from the meeting of the Technical Directions Board. There were a number of issues that are of interest to the TC:

- The new arrangement for the leadership of TC's is going to be in place for elections in 2012. As a result, the leadership of TC's will consist of a Chair and a Vice-Chair in one year, and a Past-Chair and Chair in subsequent years. This will require some slight re-writing of our policies and procedures, and will likely result in expanded responsibilities for members of our subcommittees.

A number of TC members expressed regret at this decision.

- ICASSP 2013 is planning to modify the instructions to authors of submissions so that there can be one extra page (a fifth page), but that page can only contain references. There was some concern expressed amongst the TC that the set of factors that were motivating this decision included some that were more aligned with research accounting rather than research progress. However, on the whole the TC was willing to go along with the experiment.

- Information was released on a proposal for a new major conference run by the Signal Processing Society. The conference will consist of various "symposia", in a model inspired by some of the conferences run by SPIE. The goal was to create a workshop-style atmosphere in the setting of a large conference. The symposia may be run by TCs themselves, or may be run by members of TCs, or others, who band together to construct a symposium on a particular topic. There would be no compulsion for any TC to participate every year. The plan is for this conference to be held in the USA for the first 3-5 years, with the timing slated to be in the Fall.

Several members of the TC expressed concern at the establishment of yet another conference. In particular, there was concern that this conference may have a negative impact on SPAWC, and may even diminish ICASSP.

- Information was also released on a proposal to run an ICASSP-like conference in China each year. This was proposed as a way to increase the Society's engagement in China. The plan was for the review of papers for this conference to be handled by "Technical Interest Groups" based in China. These groups would be mentored by a subset of members of the corresponding TC. The hope was that this conference would grow initially, and then shrink, as newly engaged members of the Society based in China begin to contribute their papers to ICASSP.

In the TC's discussion of this proposal it was noted that ComSoc already has a flagship conference in China and that there are some other Signal Processing and Communications conferences in China that are technically co-sponsored by the IEEE.

- Finally, there was a call for discussion on the review process for ICASSP papers. In particular, is the review form effective, and should we require that authors describe the changes that were made to their papers in response to the reviewers' comments? Members of the TC thought that it might be a bit cumbersome to require the authors to describe the changes. They were also unsure as to who would be required to vet the changes, and what would be done if they were deemed to be insufficient. There was an over-riding theme that submission to ICASSP should remain an attractive proposition for authors.

One other suggestion that was made by several TC members was that the decision email that is sent to the authors and includes all the reviews should be "bcc'ed" to all the reviewers, just as is done for journal papers. This was deemed to provide useful feedback to reviewers, and was seen by many as one of the rewards for reviewing papers.