



General Regulations – Proposal

GREAT BRITAIN, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Create the following new article 131bis:

Article 131bis

Voluntarily funded groups

1 Congress, the Council of Administration or the Postal Operations Council may authorize designated operators to cooperatively establish voluntarily funded groups to further the objectives of the Union through activities that are considered optional under the UPU Convention and outside the scope of the mandatory obligations that all member countries must fulfil.

2 Each voluntarily funded group shall set forth its rules of self-governance by agreement among the designated operators that choose to join. These rules shall take into account the needs and means of all interested member countries and, when appropriate, offer classes of membership that ensure access for those countries able to benefit from their designated operators' membership in the group.

3 Except as otherwise determined by Congress, the participating postal administrations shall be responsible for the funding of the activities carried out by a voluntarily funded group.

4 The rules established by the voluntarily funded groups shall include provisions for directing the expenditure of their funds and for transparency in their accounts, which shall be subject to audit by the Council of Administration.

Reasons. – The Seoul Congress noted that "adherence to the principle of 'zero real growth' in the Union's budget has helped maintain strong budgetary discipline and has limited the financial burden on member countries" in resolution C 96/1994. In that same resolution, Congress urged the Council of Administration and the Postal Operations Council to "explore new avenues for financing the diversification and development of the Union's activities." Since that time, the successful efforts of cooperatives, such as the Express Mail Service (EMS) Cooperative and the Telematics Cooperative, have advanced the mission of the Union, even as the Union's budget has been further limited to a policy of zero nominal growth.

The voluntary efforts and funding of postal administrations with the commitment and resources necessary to address specific issues that pose impediments to the progress of the Union as a whole should be formally supported and incorporated into the structure of the Union. This new article provides a framework for establishing voluntarily funded groups. Requiring approval of the establishment of such an organization by Congress, the Council of Administration or the Postal Operations Council ensures that the efforts of the interested postal administrations will be in alignment with the mission of the Union. In the formational document, Congress, the Council of Administration or the Postal Operations Council will be able to determine the scope of authority of the voluntarily funded group and instruct them in conformity with the strategic plan, and the Programme and Budget of the Union. Audits by the Council of Administration will ensure that the ongoing activities of the voluntarily funded groups continue to function in accordance with those instructions.

The ability of these groups to establish their own rules of governance, subject to the limits set by the Congress, the Council of Administration or the Postal Operations Council, is essential to their efficient operation and to the commitment of the postal administrations that form their membership. Because the funds to support their efforts will substantially be provided by the participating postal administrations, they should be allowed to agree among themselves the rules of governance for their organization and how to prioritize the expenditure of their funds. To protect the interests of the participants in the groups and the interests of the Union, the Council of Administration will have authority to audit the accounts of the organizations, which must be transparent to financial review.

The entire membership of the Union benefits from the additional voluntary contributions made by cooperating postal administrations in organizations such as the EMS Cooperative and the Telematics Cooperative. Formalizing the establishment of such organizations and ensuring their self-governance will encourage postal administrations to form additional organizations to address common matters of concern that are priorities of the Union, but which may not be able to be included within the fixed operating budget of the Union.

Related proposals: 15.102.5.Rev 1, 15.104.3.Rev 1, 15.112.3.Rev 1, 15.112.4.Rev 2 and 15.128.2.Rev 1.

The latest revision of paragraphs 1 and 2 aims to clarify the fact that voluntarily funded groups could be authorized by either of the Councils or by Congress to further the objectives of the Union through activities that are optional, rather than mandatory, under the Acts. The amendments also ensure that such groups, when established, serve the needs and interests of the participating designated operators and also ensure the broadest level of participation of member countries and their designated operators that is appropriate to the activities of the group.