Part C

Communications, Electronics, and Media
Advanced Television Systems Committee, Inc.

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I. Introduction

The Advanced Television Systems Committee, Inc. (ATSC) is an international non-profit organization whose aim is to develop voluntary standards for digital television technology (ATSC 2002a; ATSC 2006a). The organization brings together representatives from the broadcast, broadcast equipment, motion picture, consumer electronics, computer, cable, satellite, and semiconductor industries (ATSC 2006a). ATSC comprises approximately 170 public and private sector organizations from various countries (ATSC 2006b). Standards developed by the ATSC have been adopted across the globe, including in the United States, Canada, South Korea, Argentina, Mexico, and Honduras (ATSC 2006a). The organization is headquartered in Washington D.C. and was incorporated in 2002 under the District of Columbia Nonprofit Corporation Act (ATSC 2007a).

II. Origins and Development

The ATSC was established in 1982 by the Joint Committee on Inter-Society Coordination (JCIC), an industry coalition comprised of the Consumer Electronics Association (CEA), the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE), the U.S. National Association of Broadcasters (NAB), the U.S. National Cable Television Association (NCTA), the Electronic Industries Association (EIA), and the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers (SMPTE) (ATSC 2006a; ATSC 2006b). Traditionally, the responsibility for developing technical standards for television had been entrusted to the JCIC. The decision to form the ATSC in the early 1980s derived from the need for a single responsible body for the development of voluntary technological standards for advanced television systems (ATSC 2007a). ‘Advanced television system’ is an all-encompassing term used to describe television systems which use digital or advanced technologies that enhance the audio quality and the video resolution of the signals transmitted (Ulloa 1995). The