

Here are just a few of the highlights of the upcoming APEX TEC meeting (May 13-14 at the Universal Hilton – see www.apex.aero for more info):

PED's Inflight Expanded Usage & Voice Calls – to be moderated by Rich Salter, CTO of Lumexis Corporation

PED inflight restrictions have been lifted and usage has increased. This session will take a deeper look to explore gate-to-gate usage and voice calls. Presenters will include Brian Regan from the FCC Wireless Bureau talking about FCC rule changes proposed for voice for cellphones onboard, and Doug Murri of Row44 who will present new data from Southwest Airlines' experience showing increased take-up rate of connectivity purchases since gate-to-gate went into effect six months ago. Bring all your questions re PEDs onboard to ask these experts as well as other panelists from the FAA Rulemaking Committee.

Onboard Payment Technologies – to be moderated by Michael Planey, Co-Founder, HMPlaney Consultants

This session will kick off with an overview of onboard payment technologies and what is currently seen inflight by Michael Planey. Following, Deanna Karhuniemi of ChasePaymentech will offer her first-hand banking-industry knowledge about upcoming changes to payment cards including the transition to Chip & PIN technology. Note that it has been announced that October 2015 is the deadline for retailers to switch over from mag stripe to Chip&Pin with the goal to cut down on the fraudulent duplication of mag stripe (credit/debit) cards. What does this mean for all the mag stripe readers on IFE displays on seatbacks?! The final speaker will be Mark Reed of IFPL, who will present the perspective of what it takes to bring the new payment technologies into the IFE space on aircraft. Bring all your questions to this session, as it promises to be very educational and interactive.

Closed Captions – to be moderated by Michael Childers (Chief Consultant, Content and Media Strategy, Lufthansa Systems), Jonathan Norris (Vice President, Sales, Lumexis Corporation), and Bryan Rusenko, consultant to APEX on this subject.

APEX recently conducted a survey of its members for data on closed captions in IFE. 59 members responded, 18 of which were airlines, 20 were content providers, 6 were CSPs, and 3 were post-production facilities. The results will be analyzed and discussed at the TC. This is a critical issue for our industry and participation is essential. A summary will be prepared for submission and review with the DOT.

A discussion of the results of this survey will be on the agenda, along with a detailed report of the most recent contact with the DOT and what additional information they have requested. The DOT is making a concerted effort to understand the issues facing airlines and content providers as a result of their proposed rule, and is looking to APEX and the TC to be the source of this information. A detailed discussion of what data the DOT wants, and how we as an industry will respond, will be a critical part of this meeting. Those who do not participate risk having their voices not heard.

And finally the Closed Captions Working Group (CCWG), headed by Jon Norris, will discuss the technical issues that still must be addressed in order to establish the standards for closed captions in IFE. The WG will consider the existing bitmap standard in 0403, the SMPTE Timed Text standard, and the nuances of the W3C TT spec. Long-time industry expert Andrew Rosen will join consultant Bryan Rusenko in a close look at what our standard should address.

Interoperable Master Format (IMF) – to be led by Annie Chang (Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures) and Andy Rosen (Industry Consultant)

Participants in IFE's first 0395 digital standard will be happy to know that an instrumental contributor to that standard,

Andrew Rosen, will be a guest speaker and participant at this TC, offering insights on the Interoperable Master Format alongside the chair of SMPTE's IMF Working Group chair Annie Chang. Rich Salter, Pierre Schuberth, Michael Childers and others from 0395 will celebrate a reunion of sorts.

The Interoperable Master Format (IMF) has been a continuing subject at TC meetings for more than three years. The SMPTE standard has finally been codified, and will be described in this session by the person who led the effort as the Working Group chair, Disney's Annie Chang. Andy Rosen will join Ms Chang in discussing how the IMF will apply to IFE.