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Part 3: Unified speech and audio coding

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Partie 3: Discours unifié et codage audio*

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) and IEC (the International Electrotechnical Commission) form the specialized system for worldwide standardization. National bodies that are members of ISO or IEC participate in the development of International Standards through technical committees established by the respective organization to deal with particular fields of technical activity. ISO and IEC technical committees collaborate in fields of mutual interest. Other international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO and IEC, also take part in the work. In the field of information technology, ISO and IEC have established a joint technical committee, ISO/IEC JTC 1.

International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

The main task of the joint technical committee is to prepare International Standards. Draft International Standards adopted by the joint technical committee are circulated to national bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the national bodies casting a vote.

ISO/IEC 23003-3 was prepared by Joint Technical Committee ISO/IEC JTC 1, *Information technology*, Subcommittee SC 29, *Coding of audio, picture, multimedia and hypermedia information*.

ISO/IEC 23003 consists of the following parts, under the general title *Information technology — MPEG audio technologies*:

- *Part 1: MPEG Surround*
- *Part 2: Spatial Audio Object Coding (SAOC)*
- *Part 3: Unified speech and audio coding*

Introduction

As mobile appliances become multi-functional, multiple devices converge into a single device. Typically, a wide variety of multimedia content is required to be played on or streamed to these mobile devices, including audio data that consists of a mix of speech and music.

This part of ISO/IEC 23003 Unified Speech and Audio Coding (USAC) is a new audio coding standard that allows for coding of speech, audio or any mixture of speech and audio with a consistent audio quality for all sound material over a wide range of bitrates. It supports single and multi-channel coding at high bitrates and provides perceptually transparent quality. At the same time, it enables very efficient coding at very low bitrates while retaining the full audio bandwidth.

Where previous audio codecs had specific strengths in coding either speech or audio content, USAC is able to encode all content equally well, regardless of the content type.

In order to achieve equally good quality for coding audio and speech, the developers of USAC employed the proven MDCT-based transform coding techniques known from MPEG-4 audio and combined them with specialized speech coder elements like ACELP. Parametric coding tools such as MPEG-4 spectral band replication (SBR) and MPEG-D MPEG surround were enhanced and tightly integrated into the codec. The result delivers highly efficient coding and operates down to the lowest bit rates.

The main focus of this codec are applications in the field of typical broadcast scenarios, multi-media download to mobile devices, user-generated content such as podcasts, digital radio, mobile TV, audio books, etc.

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) draw attention to the fact that it is claimed that compliance with this document may involve the use of patents.

ISO and the IEC take no position concerning the evidence, validity and scope of this patent right.

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Information technology — MPEG audio technologies —

Part 3: Unified speech and audio coding

1 Scope

This part of ISO/IEC 23003 specifies a unified speech and audio codec which is capable of coding signals having an arbitrary mix of speech and audio content. The codec has a performance comparable to or better than the best known coding technology that might be tailored specifically to coding of either speech or general audio content. The codec supports single and multi-channel coding at high bitrates and provides perceptually transparent quality. At the same time, it enables very efficient coding at very low bitrates while retaining the full audio bandwidth.

This part of ISO/IEC 23003 incorporates several perceptually-based compression techniques developed in previous MPEG standards: perceptually shaped quantization noise, parametric coding of the upper spectrum region and parametric coding of the stereo sound stage. However, it combines these well-known perceptual techniques with a source coding technique: a model of sound production, specifically that of human speech.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO/IEC 14496-3, *Information technology — Coding of audio-visual objects — Part 3: Audio*

ISO/IEC 23003-1, *Information technology — MPEG audio technologies — Part 1: MPEG Surround*