

Minutes of the Nonlinear Circuits and Systems Technical Committee meeting 2014

Location: Melbourne, Australia (in the framework of IEEE ISCAS 2014)

Date: June 2nd 2014

Time: 12.40-14.00 UTC/GMT +10

Members participant at the meeting (26)

- Soumitro Banerjee
- Elena Blokhina
- Sergio Callegari
- Xiang Chen
- Mario di Bernardo
- Dimitri Galayko
- Zbigniew Galias
- Giuseppe Grassi
- Herert Ho-Ching Iu
- Francis Lau
- Henry Leung
- Xiang Li
- Wing Kuen Ling
- Jinhua Lu
- Wolfgang Mathis (with Michael Pepp present at the meeting on his behalf)
- Bharathway Muthuswamy
- Yoshifumi Nishio
- Hiroo Sekiya
- Gianluca Setti
- Ljiljana Trajkovic
- Yoko Uwate
- Joos Vandervalle
- Mustak Erhan Yalcin
- Xing Zheng Wei
- Wong Kwok-Wo
- Michael Small

1. Welcome, introduction of new members and approval of minutes

At 12:45, the Chair Hiroo Sekiya opened the meeting, of the Technical Committee on Nonlinear Circuits and Systems (TC-NCAS), welcomed all the participants and presented the agenda.

Members introduced themselves starting with the officers.

New members were introduced by the Chair. Among them only Dimitri Galayko was present at the meeting.

Minutes from the past year were circulated and approved by the current participants.

The Chair illustrated how the the minutes and reports from the past meetings can be accessed from the new website

2. Report on activities

The activities were summarized and shown to members by the Chair.

The Chair thanked the members for providing information to prepare in the report and illustrated new points that, from the next year, will need to be included in the report. Most important point is the need to select '10 most relevant papers'.

Gianluca Setti commented on the fact that the Report should specifically highlight the added value of the committee, namely what has been done thanks to the committee and that would not have been done otherwise.

3. Report on the ISCAS track operation

Discussion moved on the third point on the agenda, the report on ISCAS track operation. The report was given by the Track Chair Herbert Ho-Ching Iu.

The track chair presented some statistical data on the organization of the track. As a highlight, the number of reviewers per paper has been high.

Clarifications were asked by the meeting participants. Ljiljana Trajkovic inquired on the difference between papers to be accepted and proposed number of papers, and the Track Chair clarifies that the paper recommended for acceptance must eventually converge to the paper budget allocated by the conference organization. Clarifications were also asked on special sessions. The track chair indicated that there is usually no formal report on them. A suggestion is made that special session organized or endorsed by the TCs should be marked as such in the conference program.

As further highlights from the statistical data, it was reported that the number of submissions was slightly decreasing. Sergio Callegari indicated that subtrack 9.0 (no special label) was in overlap with 9.10 (other topics) and that this should be avoided in next conferences. Ljiljana Trajkovic suggested 9.10 to be avoided instead. There was agreement that with either of these two actions the redundancy should be avoided in the future. In transient the Chair suggests that the sub-tracks are kept and that 9.0 is made not selectable in the submission system.

There were comments about the too high conference costs that discourage participation. Gianluca Setti provided information about actual costs for conference organization and informed that with the current rates it is already difficult for conference to break even. So there is no margin for the TC to suggest to the Society that participation costs get reduced.

Francis Lau commented on the fact that in any case the items provided during conferences are on the rise, including free tutorials.

The issue of overlap between regular and special sessions was risen. This existed also in the past years. Ljiljana Trajkovic suggested that the next year Track Chair should really make an effort in contacting the people in charge of scheduling to avoid session conflicts.

4. Technical Committee Review Report

The TC members involved in the CAS Society management provided some information.

The Chair recalled some actions to be taken in the next years:

- move to a two year term for officers;
- possible reduction in the number of officers (otherwise the officer rotation mechanism could get too extended in time as a consequence of the 2 year term).

In view of forthcoming recommendations from CASS a suggestion was made too keep the TC management rules as they are for some more time (possibly up to 5 years) and to make the change after the recommendations are finalized.

Some comments were made by Ljiljana Trajkovic about the fact that the TC rotation mechanism already allows people to participate as officers for more than 1 year. Consequently she asked if moving to a 2-year term was really necessary. Gianluca Setti commented on the fact that having 2 years for the chair is often a necessity to assure that topics that are brought up are not forgotten and get taken care of.

A point was made by the Chair about the need to better highlight the TC vision, also reporting that there is an idea to foster interaction between TC members more strongly with electronic collaboration tools, e.g. a forum.

5. Technical Activities

The Chair reported on the need to work more on the oversight of CASS sponsored conferences. Furthermore, Technical Committees should be pro-active with topics for CASS-FEST

Ljiljana Trackovic commented on the new models that CASS is going to have for CASS sponsored events and conferences, recommending that the NCAS TC is proactive and works for being involved in decision making. Gianluca Setti followed up on this also remarking that TC involvement is highly desirable.

Elena Blokhina provided some comments and information on this topic, as a member of the BOG and participated to the discussion. Highlights are that changes are going to be implemented starting from the next year and that some requirements homogeneous among all TCs, are going to be implemented.

Elena Blokhina, Gianluca Setti and Ljiljana Trajkovic provided their comments on the quality of technically co-sponsored conferences. As a summary, the situation is checkered and should be improved, also because the number of downloads of conference papers is considered by the IEEE.

Elena Blokhina commented on the suggestion to be propositive on CASS Fest indicating our need to follow the matter carefully as it is still in evolution.

6. Finalization and approval of the TC bylaws

The TC Chair quickly summarized the situation with the bylaws that are still marked as being in a provisional version. His suggestion on the policy that should be followed for modification is to first snapshot the current situation and practice. Once, that is done, amendments can be made to improve on the situation.

Highlights of the discussion were

- need to snapshot current practice of membership approval. Current practice is to have initial approval by the officers only that is then ratified by all members present at next meeting.
- need to formalize practice for members removal. Current practice is that removal follows 3 conditions: a member own request, a decision made by all members at the meeting decision, lack of activity determined by polling via email.
- number of officers and term duration
- definition of activities that the committee as a whole should carry on, as duties and requests from the CAS Society to the TC change over time
- definition of activities that members are expected to take.

Guanrong Chen asked if we needed a subcommittee for member removal. Ljiljana Trajkovic suggested keeping the current practice of polling members via email periodically, underlining that automatically removing people may be unkind, particularly to those who did a lot for the committee up to a recent past and whose contribution is now declining.

Gianluca Setti provided some information about other committees and best practices. For instance, one practice is the 'emeritus status' that lets people be removed from the day by day operation but not from the TC as a whole. Another possible practice is a two tier system: members and affiliates.

A comment was made about the possibility of not listing as a TC formal duty the suggestion of journal editors. Gianluca Setti offered his opinion that even if the TC does not always provide suggestions, this item is keep it as a possibility.

Gianluca Setti also commented on the fact that membership should be restricted to CASS members. Ljiljana Trajkovic supported this point.

Gianluca Setti also suggested that new membership is immediately approved by all members via an electronic vote, rather than by the Officers only. The matter is postponed after recommendations for all Technical Committees are received.

A point was made about whether the NCAS TC is sufficiently well represented in the TCAS I and TCAS II editorial boards. To some it looked problematic that TC members are sending papers to other journals instead of TCAS I and TCAS II because they are advised to do so by the editors. Some TC members would like to have more participation in the journal boards to make sure that the journal scope is not restricted making it harder for the TC members to publish on the CAS Transactions.

The discussion was concluded by noticing that it is not possible to vote even on taking a snapshot of current practices for the ratification of bylaws without further discussion.

7. Any other business

No other business needed discussion.

8. Officers approval and Track Chair Election

Rotation was approved for the Past Chair, Chair and Secretary position.

Three people got indicated as candidates for the Track Chair role: Elena Blokhina, Wei Chi Chen and Bharathway Muthuswamy. They received the opportunity to introduce themselves in front of all the TC members.

Elena Blokhina was elected. After the election, the officers for 2014-2015 are as follows:

Chair: Jinhu Lu

Past Chair: Hiroo Sekiya

Chair-Elect: Sergio Callegari

Secretary: Herbert Iu

Track Chair for ISCAS 2015: Elena Blokhina

After the election of the officers, the meeting was concluded.

Prepared by Sergio Callegari and Herbert Iu in 2015.