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Manual

3.2.1. Videoconferencing Equipment - Image

49. In cross-border videoconferencing it is expected that the screen can be used for three different views:

A focusing view; for transmitting images of the participants in the other room

An overview view; for an overview of the situation in the other room

An information view; for transmitting documents and other information - (this includes also any screens located in participants' "work stations").

50. In order to guarantee objectivity, each participant should as far as possible be portrayed in the same way on screen. The lighting intensity, resolution and frame rate should be compatible for each participant. The lighting should as far as possible be such that facial expressions are always readily discernible, there is no shadowing around the eyes and there are no reflections on screens. As far as is possible, eye contact should be imitated.

Positioning of equipment

51. Equipment should be positioned in such a way that cases can still be handled without videoconferencing in the relevant courtroom. It should be possible to position cameras, screens, lighting and participants in such a way that the entire set-up is suitable for video hearing and video pleading in both civil and criminal proceedings. Care should be taken in positioning cameras to, where possible, avoid filming participants from above or below since this can give distorted view and affect the way the participant is perceived.

Screens

52. Viewing angle and viewing distance should be such that all participants can use the same screen in the same way. The size of the screen may be large enough to ensure that - in terms of viewing angle - the persons involved can preferably be shown to the same scale as would be perceived at a normal meeting. A minimum resolution of WXGA standard should be achievable. As to the frames/sec, a minimum of 30 frames/sec may be required. Facial expressions should be readily discernible and viewing comfort high.

Cameras

53. The cameras should preferably be fixed and they should have several pre-set positions for panning, tilting and zooming; one of the possible positions should be pre-set as a preference. This allows the person operating the equipment to quickly change the views without minimal disruption to the court proceedings. The angle size of focusing cameras should be large enough to ensure that the participant's face, shoulders and upper body are clearly visible and. All participants should be able to move and turn towards other persons within an area of 80 x 80 cm without disappearing from view.

54. Usually two cameras will be sufficient in the court room: one tracking camera directed at the examining judge, public prosecutor or lawyer, witness or suspect, depending on who is speaking (fixed points) and one camera to provide an overview of the court room when necessary. In some situations the overview picture can also be provided at the beginning of a session by panning a tracking camera.

55. Portable equipment is not able to provide multiple cameras, so the provision of overview views would be limited where such equipment is used. The use of a witness room may be necessary in some cases, requiring the installation of a camera. Consideration will need to be given to the need for a witness in such a room to confer with legal professionals out of sight of cameras.

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