

Online Journal of Space Communication

Volume 8
Issue 15 *Women in Space (Spring 2009)*

Article 2

October 2021

Profile of Audrey Allison

Mary Frost

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ohioopen.library.ohio.edu/spacejournal>



Part of the [Astrodynamics Commons](#), [Navigation, Guidance, Control and Dynamics Commons](#), [Space Vehicles Commons](#), [Systems and Communications Commons](#), and the [Systems Engineering and Multidisciplinary Design Optimization Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Frost, Mary (2021) "Profile of Audrey Allison," *Online Journal of Space Communication*: Vol. 8 : Iss. 15 , Article 2.

Available at: <https://ohioopen.library.ohio.edu/spacejournal/vol8/iss15/2>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the OHIO Open Library Journals at OHIO Open Library. It has been accepted for inclusion in Online Journal of Space Communication by an authorized editor of OHIO Open Library. For more information, please contact deborded@ohio.edu.



Audrey Allison is the director of Frequency Management Services, Enterprise Service Delivery, in Boeing Shared Services Group (SSG). She reports to Tom McClelland, director of Enterprise Service Delivery in Communications and Business Services. In this role, she leads Boeing's domestic and international spectrum management in support of Boeing products, testing and operations - including licensing, compliance, and strategic regulatory planning and policy development.

Additionally, Allison represents Boeing on a broad range of industry telecommunication policy and spectrum advocacy before the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (CITEL), and U.S. government agencies, such as the Federal Communication Commission (FCC). She was named to this position in December 2007 and is located in Washington, D.C.

Frequency Management Services is part of the Shared Services business unit that provides common, cost-effective and innovative services to Boeing business units across the enterprise. The FMS group is located in three U.S. regional offices, Ottawa and London. In December 2008, Allison was elected as Chair of the United States ITU Association. In 2007, Allison was elected to serve as the vice-chairman of the ITU's Radiocommunication Advisory Group in Geneva, Switzerland, for a 4-year term. Since 2003, she's been a visiting lecturer on international satellite regulation at the International Space University in Strasbourg, France. Additionally, she chaired informal working groups on regulatory issues for the FCC's World Radiocommunication Conference Advisory Committees for 2003, 2007 and 2011.

Allison joined Boeing in August 2000 as leader of International Regulatory Affairs for Connexion by Boeing. In this capacity, she secured a global radio frequency allocation and associated international standards, as well as 200 operating licenses from countries around the world. Now known as the Boeing Broadband SATCOM Network, Connexion continues to be operated by Boeing's Integrated Defense Systems business unit under U.S. government contract with continuing regulatory support from Frequency Management Services. Before coming to Boeing, Allison previously held legal positions with the FCC, Iridium Satellite LLC and law firms in Washington, D.C. She also was a consultant on international communication policy and regulatory issues to the U.S. Department of Defense.

Allison has a Master of Law in International and Comparative Law from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.; a Juris Doctor in Communications Law Studies from the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.; and a Bachelor of Arts in Communications from Pennsylvania State University.

Born in Los Angeles, Calif., Allison has lived most of her life on the East Coast of the United States. She resides near Annapolis, Md., on the shores of the Chesapeake Bay with her husband and 8-year-old daughter.

1) How did you get started in the satellite business?

I became interested in the field while studying communications as a college student at Penn State. I had a course that explored international policy issues associated with mass communications, such as the impact of exported television programs beamed by satellites to distant cultures in developing countries. That was the first time I had ever heard about the International Telecommunication Union and the real concerns felt by governments as new technologies took hold. I was hooked!

My first position in the satellite field was an attorney for the Satellite Division of the Federal Communication Commission's International Bureau in Washington, D.C. My role included facilitating development and advocacy of industry and government proposals and positions for international conferences and regional meetings concerning spectrum allocations and satellite procedures. One of the issues I dealt with in detail was the "Paper Satellites" issue of the 1990's, which spun off into satellite network cost recovery and administrative due diligence procedures.

2) How have you been involved in changes brought about in or by this business (innovations, technologies, services)?

As an FCC attorney-advisor, I was in a position to help companies strategize on how to achieve international approvals for new technologies, including non-geostationary satellite networks. In 1999, I left the government and joined Iridium LLC where I worked on international arrangements to allow the cross border operation of Iridium's handsets.

I joined The Boeing Company in 2000 to assist in bringing about regulatory changes needed to for operation of its proposed service to provide broadband to airplane passengers, Connexion by Boeing.

3) What do you think was the greatest event/situation/opportunity you experienced?

One highlight was obtaining the global spectrum allocation for the Aeronautical Mobile-Satellite Service to make possible Boeing's Connexion service and similar services that are only now becoming widely available.

Prior to 2003, the Ku-band allocation contained in the international Radio Regulations allowed operation of mobile-satellite services networks, but excluded operation of such networks on airplanes.

As America's Regional Director for Connexion's International Regulatory Affairs team, I was responsible not only for obtaining licenses from the United States, Canada, and all countries of the Western Hemisphere for Connexion's operation, but also for obtaining proposals to the ITU's 2003 World Radiocommunication Conference from these governments to remove the aeronautical exclusion from the treaty. I had three years to do this.

Working with an international team of engineers and other experts, we developed a standard through the ITU's Radiocommunication Sector process; obtained licenses from the FCC and

Industry Canada; and developed papers showing that operation of our proposed broadband system in the Ku-band would not cause harmful interference to other systems in the band, including Fixed Satellite Service and terrestrial networks. We also developed procedures to avoid interference to radioastronomy observations at the top end of the band.

While obtaining Canadian, American and Brazilian proposals to WRC-03 in support of the allocation change, I worked through the Inter-American Telecommunications Commission (CITEL) to obtain an Inter-American proposal to the Conference. I was CITEL's spokesman at the WRC on this issue, where we faced strong opposition from Iran and the Arab States based on concerns of regulatory purity. Connexion is a converged system, like Orbcomm and MTN before it, which utilize FSS transponders to serve mobile terminals.

As CITEL's spokesman, I intervened on the microphone in the multi-level conference hall filled with over a thousand delegates from around the world. Ultimately, at the final substantive plenary session of the four-week conference, the Arab group dropped its opposition and we prevailed.

Today, there are several systems operating or planning aeronautical broadband services in the AMSS allocation. Although Boeing ended its commercial Connexion service at the end of 2006, it continues to utilize the allocation for its Boeing Broadband Satcom Network, a broadband aeronautical service provided exclusively to the U.S. Government for its executive fleet.

4) What was the greatest obstacle?

The international regulatory field is extremely specialized. My greatest continuing challenge is my lack of a technical background. It would also be useful to be proficient in a foreign language. However, my shortcomings notwithstanding, I was still able to find a useful role for myself as someone who has become an expert in the regulatory and administrative processes in this complex and layered field and is therefore accomplished on how to get things through the international regulatory process.

5) What do you see happening in the next five years in this industry?

The twin desires for untethered mobility and uninterrupted broadband connectivity will continue to drive the satellite market. We now see broadband access becoming easily achievable in the middle of the ocean and at 37,000 feet. We should now be seeing this capability extended to residents on the ground in isolated or otherwise underserved or unserved regions of the globe, helping to deliver opportunity for prosperity not only to satellite manufacturers and service providers, but to the residents of these areas.

6) What advice do you have for women interested in entering the industry?

My personal mantra has always been to keep your opportunities open. I also love a line I once heard Bill Moyers say, "Put yourself in luck's way." I got my opportunity to get into the highly specialized and technical international regulatory field as a consequence of my efforts to obtain an International Master of Laws degree at Georgetown University, which culminated in the

publication of my article on reform of the ITU. Based on my known interest and professional reputation, an opportunity was extended to me.

The other advice I would give to everyone is to learn another language. Even though English is widely spoken, other languages open doors and evidence your personal interest in things beyond your own borders.