

**Report for the 26<sup>th</sup> General Assembly  
FIG Working Week in Paris, 13-17 April 2003**

**An End of Term Report of the  
US Council of FIG**

**General**

The FIG Work Plan 2000–2003 listed over 40 specific tasks, which the American Bureau determined to accomplish during its administration. Some tasks are general and difficult to measure as to accomplishment. Others may be identified and described in specific terms. A few of those tasks considered most important by the American Bureau relate to the governance of FIG, its financial condition, the operation of the commissions, communication with the FIG members, external relations and the development of the FIG Foundation.

**Governance**

Selection of FIG's governing body, the Bureau (now the Council), had been historically a *de facto* process whereby a site for a future Congress was first chosen by the General Assembly after which the local FIG Member Organization, responsible for planning and running the Congress, would provide the Bureau. In this process the General Assembly had no knowledge of the personnel who would be responsible for administration of FIG during the subsequent four-year period. The 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly in Prague, in 2000, adopted the recommendations of the Task Force on the Future Governance of FIG that the president and vice presidents of the Federation be elected directly by the General Assembly. In subsequent actions by the General Assembly amendments to the FIG statutes and internal rules were enacted to democratize the process giving the General Assembly, and indirectly the member organizations of FIG, the power to determine the administrative direction of the Federation. In order to facilitate the transition the US Bureau agreed to limit its term to three years rather than the normal four-year term.

**Financial affairs**

When the United Kingdom Bureau handed administrative responsibility over to the U.S. Bureau in 1999 there were no funds available to continue operations of the Federation. A major objective of the US Bureau was to build a reserve account for the Federation and to provide a positive financial balance of funds to meet operating expenses at the handover of the Bureau to our successor, the German Council. At the time of the formal handover at the end of 2002, the FIG bank balance amounted to more than 330,000 Swiss francs.

**The commissions**

The commissions of FIG do the work for which the Federation has its purpose in being. Reports of the commissions as recorded at the 25<sup>th</sup> General Assembly at Congress 2002 show the accomplishments of the commissions in carrying out their work plans. The permanent office for FIG established in Copenhagen in the beginning of 1999 has operated under the able direction of Markku Villikka providing for smooth and efficient communication between the commissions and the other elements of FIG. In addition, the commissions are now

represented on the FIG Council under the new governance scheme by the appointment of a representative from the Advisory Committee of Commission Officers as a representative on the Council.

### **The Member Organizations**

A major objective of the US Council has been to meet with as many member organizations of FIG as possible and to facilitate communication with the members. We have continued to hold meetings at Working Weeks and at the 2002 Congress with leaders and representatives of the member organizations where we can discuss issues of prime importance to our members. At the 2002 Congress we held a special session to which we invited Presidents of the member organizations to report on events of current interest in their countries. Though limited by time (a term of only three years) and the expense of travel, the President visited the countries of 31 member associations of FIG. It has also been an objective of the US Council to grow the Federation. At the time of the 1998 Congress in Brighton there were 73 member associations, 4 correspondent members and 10 sponsor members of FIG. By the end of 2002 FIG had 88 Member Associations, 11 Affiliate Members, 13 Correspondent Members, 21 Corporate Members and 55 Academic Members.

During the term of the US Council FIG added ten titles to its list of important publications. Of special interest to practicing surveyors were “Models and Terminology for the Analysis of Geodetic Monitoring Observations” (#25), “Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualification” (#27), the “FIG Guide on Standardization” (#28), and “Business Matters for Professionals” (#29).

### **External relations**

Since the breakup of the International Union of Surveys and Mapping (IUSM) in 1999 FIG has chosen to enter into bilateral agreements for cooperation with our sister professional organizations. We have since signed memoranda of understandings with the International Society for Mine Surveying, the International Cartographic Association, the International Association for Geodesy, the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing and the International Federation for Housing and Planning. As well, we have continued to build relationships with agencies of the United Nations and the World Bank. The FIG President signed an extension to the 1997 memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements in 1999 and again in 2002 and signed a MOU with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in 2002.

FIG publications resulting from work with the UN and the World Bank include “The Bathurst Declaration on Land Administration for Sustainable Development” (#21) and “Cooperation Between FIG and the UN Agencies 2000–2003” (#22). These two publications resulted from conferences in Bathurst, Australia near the end of the UK Bureau. “FIG Agenda 21” (#23), an agenda for implementing the concept of sustainable development and the Habitat Agenda, was produced by the FIG Task Force on Sustainable Development. “The Nairobi Statement on Spatial Information for Sustainable Development” (#30) and “Land Information Management for Sustainable Development of Cities – Best Practice Guidelines in City-wide Land Information Management” (#31) were products of cooperation between UN-HABITAT and FIG Commission 3 and others.

## **The FIG Foundation**

An FIG Education Foundation was created in 1996 and established in Australia. It was moved to Denmark and re-organized as the FIG Foundation and has accumulated more than 120 thousand Swiss francs for distribution as grants in support of education and capacity-building projects. The first grants from the Foundation were made during 2002. In addition the Foundation has forged a strong relationship with the Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI), whose president, Jack Dangermond, has accepted the position of Honorary Chair of the Foundation Fundraising Committee.

## **Conclusion**

Among all the accomplishments of the Federation during the past three years, perhaps the most important for the future health and strength of the organization are the creation of a stable financial base, the democratization of the Federation through the new governance model and the advancement of the FIG Foundation to a point of sustainable growth and support of education for the world-wide surveying profession.

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President 2000-2003