

## REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, FIG OFFICE

### General

The FIG Office has now been in function for more than one year. The first year was used to establish the administration structure and day-to-day operation of the Federation. This includes the arrangements of the FIG meetings, support to the arrangements of the Working Weeks and other FIG events, producing publications and other information material, building and updating databases, hosting the FIG home page and taking care of the accounts.

The Director, FIG office has also been involved in the professional activities of FIG. These include co-operation and contacts to the ten technical commissions, task forces, member associations and international organisations. During the first year the Director visited 11 FIG member countries and used about 25 per cent of his time when attending meetings and events outside Denmark.

### Visits

In 1999 the Director visited annual meetings of the member associations in Denmark, Sweden, Finland normally giving also presentations about FIG during these visits. Further he met with the representatives of the Institution of Surveyors of Kenya during his visit to the UNCHS (Habitat) 7<sup>th</sup> Session in Nairobi in May 1999. This visit was repeated some weeks later when the FIG high-level delegation visited UNCHS and UNEP on the way to the FIG Working Week in Sun City and met also with the members of ISK, the University of Nairobi and the Surveyor of Kenya.

The Director also met with Dr. Klaus Toepfer, Ag. Executive Director of UNCHS (Habitat) during the Informal EU Meeting of Ministers of the Environment in Helsinki in July 1999. In September he attended the Intergeo 1999 in Hanover, Germany together with Robert Foster, President elect of FIG. During the Intergeo informal meetings with the sponsors and commission chairs were arranged.

After the Intergeo both Robert Foster and the Director visited Prague to check the arrangements for the 23<sup>rd</sup> Working Week in Prague 2000.

In October 1999 the Director attended the FIG/UN Conference in Melbourne following the UN/FIG Workshop in Bathurst. He also participated to the round table between several UN agencies and FIG representatives at the Melbourne University. On the way back from Australia the Director met with Gerda Schennach, the Secretary General of CLGE, in Vienna.

In 2000 the Director has participated the annual meetings of the member associations in Denmark and Finland. He also attended the Steering Committee Meeting of the Habitat Professionals Meeting in Frankfurt in March. Before the FIG Working Week in Prague the Director is invited to attend the International Seminar on Cadastral System, Land Administration and Sustainable Development in Bogotá, Colombia in May.

Further he will represent FIG and the Habitat Professionals Forum at the First Substantive Session of the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly on the over all review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda (called Istanbul+5) in Nairobi, Kenya, 8-12 May 2000.

## **Member support**

The FIG office has assisted member associations by providing material and information about FIG and distributing FIG publications. The main focus has been in improving information delivery to the member associations. This includes both materials like publications, bulletins, annual review and congress proceedings both in printed and electronic formats. Lot of efforts has been used to improve the FIG home page so that it could become the main distribution channel for FIG information to members and individuals of the member associations. However, the Bureau is very well aware that all member associations do not yet have Internet connection or their own web site and that therefore the printed material is important also in the future. The Bureau has decided to go on also with the printed material so that all material is also available in printed versions. However it seems that the web site will be the best way for the individuals to get information about FIG and its services.

The FIG office has finished to update all membership and contact databases. All contact information is now also available on the FIG home page. The current address of the home page is still: <http://www.dll.org/figtree>. On the home page there are e.g. following information available:

- Contact information to the member associations, affiliates, correspondents, academic members
- Sponsor information
- Commission information; work plans, contacts to the Commission officers and delegates
- Publications; FIG publications, bulletins, congress and seminar proceedings, FIG leaflet
- Commission, task force and permanent institutions web sites
- Statutes and internal rules, FIG logos
- Events and Congress/meeting programmes
- Links to commissions, international partners

The FIG home page is updated daily and the goal is to offer material and news to the member associations so that they are able to use it for their own newsletters and journals.

In the future all FIG working week and congress proceedings will be available on the FIG web site. At the moment you can find the proceedings from the FIG/UN conference in Melbourne and all papers from the FIG Working Week 2000 in Prague.

Since the General Assembly 1999 all agenda papers and minutes from the General Assemblies are also available on the home page.

## **Surveying Education Database and academic membership**

The newest service on the FIG home page is the FIG Surveying Education Database. This includes information about 400 surveying courses from almost 200 universities and institutions. All institutions in the current database will receive a password during the spring so that they are able to update their information directly into the database. The SEDB will be the main benefit for the academic members of FIG. The academic members have the additional benefit to use the SEDB to promote their institution. The SEDB includes also discussion group services that give the academics a platform for discussions, exchange of information and looking for new partners to their projects. There are also separate pages for the surveying students.

The Bureau thinks that after the launching the SEDB in Prague the interest on the SEDB and also for the academic membership will increase remarkably.

## **Commission support**

The Bureau has increased the support to the Commissions. Part of this support is the administrative help given through the FIG office. The Bureau knows very well that the need for support varies a lot between the different commissions. To help the Commissions and to coordinate the work it has jointly agreed that the information of national delegates is now collected by the FIG office. The member associations are therefore requested to submit all changes in names and contacts of the delegates directly to the permanent office that will then forward the information to the Commissions. The member associations are further encouraged to check their delegate lists and nominate new delegates wherever needed. Further they should encouraged the delegates to be more active in the commission work. Many commissions are considering the possibility to organise regional activities and for that they need more active delegates in the regions. This approach will at the same time make it easier for the delegates to participate in the commission activities when the need for travels decreases.

## **Bureau meetings and activities**

The UK Bureau had three full Bureau meetings during 1999 (Copenhagen, Sun City and Washington, DC.). In addition the UK Bureau members met almost monthly in London. There were totally five such meetings before the handover to US Bureau. These meetings were attended also by Director FIG office. The US Bureau has met twice – in Washington during the handover and in Copenhagen in January - and will meet next time in Prague. The Bureau is planning to have its next meeting after Prague in connection to a surveying conference in US in fall 2000. Meanwhile the decisions have been made by teleconferences and by e-mail.

## **Visits and meetings to the FIG Office**

The FIG office has hosted two Bureau meetings since it was opened 1 January 1999. The first meeting was in January 1999 in connection to the formal opening of the office. The second meeting was the first full Bureau meeting for the US Bureau after it took over the administration from the UK Bureau. This meeting 15-16 January 2000 was arranged in connection to the ACCO meeting that took place at the FIG office 13-14 January 2000. It was also the first time for most of the Bureau members and Commission officers to visit the permanent office.

The experience from this biggest meeting by now organised at the FIG office showed that the meeting facilities at the Surveyors House can easily accommodate a meeting or seminar of 20-25 people. The FIG office is available for the Commission meetings and seminars and the FIG office is also able to assist the commissions with the practical arrangements. This offer is available also to the Commission working groups.

After establishment of the permanent office in Copenhagen the office has been visited by Presidents or Executive Directors of the member associations from Australia, Finland and Ireland. In addition there has been visitors from Austria, Australia, Denmark, Germany, Ghana, Finland, France, Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland. The Council of the Geometer Europas visited the FIG office in February 2000 during their meeting in Copenhagen. Further the office has been visited by the President of the International Institution on the History of Surveying and Measurement and Juha Talvitie, Honorary President of FIG. The FIG office is happy to welcome visitors also from other member associations.

The work of the FIG office could not have been managed without the support from my personal assistant Jørgen Springborg, who is so devoted to his work for FIG that his amount of work easily exceeds half of his working time that is scheduled for FIG. In addition I would like to thank our Danish member association Den danske Landinspektørforening DdL and its staff at the Surveyors House for their personal and financial support. Without this support the starting period of the FIG office would have taken much more time and efforts.

*Markku Villikka*  
*Director*  
*FIG Office*

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