

**Report to the 29th General Assembly
FIG Congress in Munich, October 2006**

Task Force on FIG Governance Structure

Report to the Task Force to the General Assembly

The Task Force on FIG Governance Structure was established by the FIG General Assembly in Cairo in April, 2005 with the following Terms of Reference:

1. Terms of Reference

The Task Force shall conduct a review of the FIG Statutes and Internal Rules. In particular the Task Force will:

- review the Commission structure
- review the term of office of Commission Chairs
- review the election procedures including the role of the Nomination Review Group and the Commission Review Group
- review the Statutes and Internal Rules for inconsistencies and redundancies regarding the new governance structure subsequent to 2006.

The Task force shall hold an open forum at each General Assembly in 2005 and 2006 in order to receive feedback from FIG member associations and commission officers on issues relevant to the Statutes and Internal Rules.

The Task Force shall complete its review and submit its recommendations to Council by the end of December, 2006 so that any amendments to the Statutes and Internal Rules may be submitted to the General Assembly in 2007 for ratification.

Additionally, President Magel asked the Task Force to examine the issue of the limitation of one term of office for the President which is presently contained in the section 5.5 of the Statutes.

2. Members

Ken Allred (Chair), Iain Greenway, Teo Chee Hai, Stephen Djaba, and Matt Higgins.

3. Observations

3.1 Introduction

The Task Force was formed in 2005 partially in response to a lack of candidates for the positions of vice-chair elect at the 2004 Working Week in Athens. The Task Force in addressing this concern conducted a survey by questionnaire to the membership. The results of the questionnaire were inconclusive with regard to specific questions regarding the number

of commissions and the terms of office. The responses did however outline serious concerns regarding the financial resources available to commission officers and the time commitments required of them.

3.2 Overview

In its deliberations the Task Force has determined that the concerns regarding the Commission structure and terms of office are perhaps somewhat overblown. The Commissions are the work horses of FIG and while they may be somewhat overworked they operate quite efficiently given the limited resources provided to them. There is definitely a concern that many qualified candidates for Commission office do not have the time or fiscal resources at their disposal in order for them to make the contribution that they feel is required. Nevertheless the candidates that do make the commitment do an admirable job given the available resources and the Commissions contribute a lot to the sustainability of FIG. In view of these major concerns Council needs to examine the funding structure for Commissions activities.

3.3 FIG Goals and Objectives

In the broader context it is the opinion of the Task Force that FIG Council needs to conduct a broader soul searching exercise to determine what the goals and objectives of FIG are; and to map out a vision for the future. Such a strategic planning exercise will help Council focus on the priorities of the organization and from there determine where limited resources can best be distributed. FIG has evolved in the last ten years with a permanent office, a broader membership base, three permanent institutions, major annual working weeks plus regional conferences. The basic governance structure has been modified to make FIG more representative of nearly 100 member associations around the world. FIG needs to examine its strengths and weaknesses and consider where its resources need to be applied for the greater benefit of the global surveying community.

3.4 Joint Commission Activities

The Task Force is concerned that Commissions are not interacting sufficiently, and have a tendency to operate as silos, each focused on delivering their respective workplans as agreed at the preceding Congress. This reduces the ability of FIG to mobilise appropriate resources to respond to issues as they develop. The work on disaster management is a good example – it has not proved possible to get the various affected Commissions to provide suitable input to the work in an expeditious manner due to their other priorities. This is a serious issue if FIG is to be able to respond effectively to issues, including those raised by key stakeholder groups such as UN agencies. To address this shortcoming, the Task Force proposes that more use be made of Task Forces, reporting directly to the Council, on key issues. Task Forces would normally have a 1-2 year life, to address the issue in question.

3.5 Commission Workload

To allow Task Forces to be resourced effectively, they should be realistic in the extent of activity which they can undertake. Commissions should continue to be centres of expertise – a professional ‘home’ for individuals involved with FIG. They should continue to provide

solid input to each Congress but they should not be overburdened with organizing papers for **every** working week and regional conference. As well as having a regional diversity of conferences we need to ensure that there is a diversity of commission involvement and that we not expect all conferences to include papers from every commission. We need to focus on the needs of the region where the conference is being held.

3.6 External Agencies

Council needs to address the issue of whether commissions should be charged with representing FIG on UN and other agency matters or if Council or a specifically appointed individual would be better to exercise those functions. In fact, there may be two distinct types of liaison – one where the expertise resides all within one Commission (UN-OOSA would be an example, where the lead liaison point can naturally be provided by Commission 5 or an individual recommended by Commission 5); and one where cross-Commission interaction is required – UN-HABITAT is an example. In the latter cases, a Council member, or a Task Force, may be better placed to provide the liaison point.

3.7 Commission Work Plans

The extent of Commission Working Groups also needs to be examined in light of the greater importance placed on Task Forces. As a general rule, the Task Force believes that Commissions should not have more than 3 Working Groups at any one time. Indeed, smaller Commissions may sensibly have fewer, to allow them to contribute to the inter-commission activities.

3.8 Number of FIG Commissions

In light of the above points, the Task Force has had considerable discussion on the need for a reduction in the number of commissions. There are two options for the number of commissions – either maintain the status quo or reduce the number to 5 or 6 commissions. It would be a fairly simple exercise to pair up most of the present commissions reducing the number to approximately half. This may assist in the more effective coordination of the work of the Commissions, to ensure that their terms of reference are doable within their term of office. As there does not appear to be any consensus from the questionnaire or within ACCO or Council, we are not making a recommendation on the number of commissions at this time, but we believe this issue needs to be addressed at a future date, perhaps in a broader examination of FIG goals and objectives.

3.9 Term of Office

With regard to the term of office for commission chairs there is strong argument for reducing the term of office of commission chairs to two years with the option of standing for a second two year term. Commission vice-chairs could also serve for a two year term with an option of renewal for a second two year term. The position of chair-elect would disappear, leaving the General Assembly to elect both chairs and vice-chairs every second year. A two year term would give chairs the mandate to complete some or all of their terms of reference within the two years (rather than leaving everything to year four) and would also give them the option of standing for a further two years if they were in a position to devote another two years and

they wished to seek the opportunity. It would also give the General Assembly the opportunity to elect a new chair if it was felt that there was a better candidate after two years. It would also give the opportunity for more individuals to get involved in FIG. Again there does not appear to be any consensus on the issue of reduced terms for commission chairs, and in fact at the ACCO and Council level there is outright opposition to a reduction, hence the Task Force is not making a recommendation for a change except to propose that the position of vice-chair elect be eliminated, and that only chairs be elected on a quadrennial basis.

3.10 Nomination Review Group

We recommend that the Nomination Review Groups (NRC and CRG) be eliminated in favour of a Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee would be composed of five senior members of FIG (presumably former presidents, vice-presidents and commission chairs but not restricted to the foregoing) and would be elected by the General Assembly upon recommendation of the Council. The Nominating Committee would be charged with the responsibility of coming forward with a slate of candidates (preferably more than one for each position) considering representation by region, gender and specialization such that the FIG organization (council and commissions) would have a diverse global governing body. The process would have a general call for nominations by member associations 6 months prior to the General Assembly with the Nominating Committee submitting their report 4 months prior. The Nominating Committee would submit a list of all candidates nominated by member associations plus whatever nominations the Nominating Committee was able to solicit. The Nominating Committee would not make any recommendations but upon examination of the candidates nominated by member associations would solicit further nominations to ensure that the General Assembly has a choice of candidates with diversity from a geographical, gender and specialization perspective. The slate would then be published and further nominations could be submitted up to 2 months prior to the General Assembly.

3.11 Nominations

To assist the General Assembly in making an informed selection of the best candidates for the positions available, the Task Force recommends that a standard application form be implemented for all positions. This would include sections asking candidates to provide information on their previous international activity and their activity within FIG, thus allowing the General Assembly more easily to differentiate between candidates. Consideration should also be given to allowing candidates for key positions, a longer time to make their address to the General Assembly, again allowing the GA to differentiate between candidates more clearly.

3.12 President Elect

With regard to the position of President Elect the committee has considered this matter very carefully and does not feel that a recommendation for a President Elect is warranted at this time and that such a position could impact negatively on the authority of the serving President. However, for a transition to operate effectively, there is a need for the incoming President to be known in sufficient time before taking up office, to compile a workplan. It may therefore be appropriate to have an Internal Rule requiring General Assemblies at which

elections for President are to be held, to take place before the end of June. This provision would only impact the quadrennial Congress, allowing countries which prefer to bid for a meeting later in the year, to do so for the intervening GAs.

3.13 Proxy and Postal Voting

The Task Force has considered the issue of proxy and/or postal voting and recommends that routine items would be best handled by a postal (or electronic) ballot but that substantive issues such as elections and amendments to statutes, etc. continue to be by personal ballot submitted by an authorized delegate appointed by the member association. We do feel that the appointment of delegates should be formalized by a written document from the member association.

3.14 General Assembly Issues

The Task Force believes that, if the General Assembly is to be able to focus on its key strategic role in the Federation, all other business should be removed from the floor of the GA as much as possible. The use of postal/ electronic balloting will assist; In addition, the formality of a Roll Call should be eliminated and replaced by an arrangement for delegates to 'sign in' as they enter the GA.

3.15 Terms of Office

We recommend that the term of President be limited to one term of four years as set out in Section 5.5 of the Statutes. We also recommend that the term of office for all elected members of Council remain at two consecutive terms. (either two terms as VP or one term as VP and one as president) We do however recommend that we add a clause that would state: "Notwithstanding the foregoing, where a president or vice-president is elected to complete a term of office of two years or less, that term of office shall not be considered as a term of office for the purposes of this section. In a similar manner, a Vice President serving six years before election as President may serve out the four-year term as President"

3.16 Consequential Amendments

There will be a number of transitional and consequential amendments required to the Statutes and Internal Rules. These will be forthcoming after we have a definite position on the principles being studied.

4. Summary of Recommendations

4.1 Recommendations to Council

4.1.1 Overview

The Task Force has determined that the concerns regarding the Commission structure and terms of office are perhaps somewhat overblown. The Commissions are the work horses of FIG and while they may be somewhat overworked they operate quite efficiently given the limited resources provided to them. There is definitely a concern that many qualified

candidates for Commission office do not have the time or fiscal resources at their disposal in order for them to make the contribution that they feel is required. Nevertheless the candidates that do make the commitment do an admirable job given the available resources and the Commissions contribute a lot to the sustainability of FIG. **The Task Force RECOMMENDS that Council review the funding available for Commission activities.**

4.1.2 FIG Goals and Objectives

It is the opinion of the Task Force that FIG Council needs to conduct a broad soul searching exercise to determine what the goals and objectives of FIG are; and to map out a vision for the future. Such a strategic planning exercise will help Council focus on the priorities of the organization and from there determine where limited resources can best be distributed. FIG has evolved in the last ten years with a permanent office, a broader membership base, major annual working weeks plus regional conferences. The basic governance structure has been modified to make FIG more representative of nearly 100 member associations around the world. FIG needs to examine its strengths and weaknesses and consider where its resources need to be applied for the greater benefit of the global surveying community. **The Task Force RECOMMENDS that Council conduct an in depth study into the Strategic Issues affecting FIG.**

4.1.3 Commission Workload

In general the Task Force recommends that FIG Council create more task forces to deal with specific and emergent issues rather than adding these issues to commission work plans. Council should also appoint an individual to represent FIG on UN and other external agency meetings as opposed to delegating the mandate to a commission. Commissions should attempt to limit the number of working groups to 3 or less in order to ensure that they do not become overloaded with duties. **The Task Force RECOMMENDS that Council exercise caution in assigning extra work to Commissions.**

4.1.4 Commissions

While there was some feeling that FIG has too many commissions, the Task Force feels that this does not seem to be a major concern at this time. Likewise with the term of office of Commission chairs is not a major concern. The Task Force is of the opinion that the present system is working fairly well although we do not feel that the concept of commission chairs-elect serves much purpose and should be eliminated. If there were a single office of commission chair elected for a 4 year term, that would eliminate some of the concern with regard to the length of the term of office.

4.1.5 President-Elect

A position of President Elect not be considered at this time.

4.1.6 Proxy and/or mail voting

Proxy and/or mail voting not be considered for policy matters and elections but may be considered for routine matters.

4.1.7 Voting Delegates

The appointment of voting delegates needs to be formalized by a written or electronic communication from the member association to confirm the appointment of the official delegate(s).

4.1.8 Terms of Office

The term of office of the President should remain limited to one term of four years. In the event that a President or Vice-President is elected to a term of two years or less, that term shall not be considered to be a term for the purposes of section 5.5 of the Statutes.

4.2 Recommendations to the General Assembly

4.2.1 Nominating Process

The Nomination Review Group's (NRG and CRG) should be replaced by a Nominating Committee. The Nomination process would include a call for nominations, a subsequent report of the Nominating Committee with a potential for further solicited nominations to create (hopefully) a slate with multiple choices for each office, and a final call for further nominations. A standard Nomination form should be prepared to ensure that all relevant information is available to the General Assembly for each candidate.. **The Task Force RECOMMENDS that the Internal Rules be amended to replace the Nominating Review Groups be replaced with a Nominating Committee.**

4.2.2 Voting Delegates

The appointment of voting delegates needs to be formalized by a written or electronic communication from the member association to confirm the appointment of the official delegate(s). **The Task Force RECOMMENDS that the Internal Rules be amended to provide for the appointment of voting delegates in writing by the member association.**

4.2.3 Commissions

The Task Force RECOMMENDS that the Internal Rules be amended to eliminate the position of Commission Vice-chair.

4.2.4 Mail Voting

The Task Force RECOMMENDS that the Internal Rules be amended to allow mail votes to be authorized by Council for routine matters.

4.2.5 Terms of Office

The term of office of the President should remain limited to one term of four years. In the event that a President or Vice-President is elected to a term of two years or less, that term shall not be considered to be a term for the purposes of section 5.5 of the Statutes. **The Task**

Force RECOMMENDS that the Internal Rules be amended to clarify that a partial term of two years or less not be considered a term for the purposes of section 5.5.

5. Next Steps

The Task Force would like to have an opportunity to address the General Assembly in Munich and to solicit some feedback on our recommendations from member associations.

Based on the results of these discussions the Task Force will put together a final report with specific recommendations including the necessary statutory amendments for approval of Council in December, 2006 and submission to the General Assembly in Hong Kong for ratification in May, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

Ken Allred

Chair, Task Force on FIG Governance Structure

July 2006