

Minutes of the IAG Executive Committee meeting April 3, 2006, Vienna

Present: Gerhard Beutler (GB), Michael Sideris (MS), Carl Christian Tscherning (CCT), Fernando Sansò (FS), Jozsef Adam (JA), Herman Drewes (HD), Ilias Tzsiavos (IT) (representing Chris Jekeli), Veronique Dehant (VD), Pascal Willis (PW) (representing C.Rizos), Jean-Pierre Barriot (JPB), Harald Schuh (HS), Markus Rothacher (MR), Ruth Nielan (RN), Charles Merry (CM)

Agenda:

1. Adoption of agenda
2. IUGG Perugia
3. Reports of commission presidents and representatives of services
4. GGOS status
5. Altimetry Service Status
6. Interface/MOU between commissions and services
7. Cassinis Committee work
8. Nomination Committee
9. Presentation of responses for all hosting central bureau and nomination of secretary general
10. Best Young Author Award
11. Sponsorship of meetings, workshop, symposia
12. Next meeting, Perugia 2007 or earlier
13. AOB

Ad 1. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Ad 2. IUGG Perugia

CCT presented a progress report for the preparation of IUGG2007 in Perugia:

The second circular is ready and will soon be sent out by mail and announced on the IAG webpage.

Location of the events:

CCT reported on the visit to Perugia in September 2005:

All the sessions will take place at the University, which is located (spread out) in the valley adjacent to the city. The poster sessions is planned to be located in the city up hill in the historical hallways of the town castle.

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Symposia:

The preliminary program for the General Assembly was presented. It is planned that IAG leads the following joint joint symposia:

JGS001, "Ocean Circulation and contribution from new satellite missions"

JGS003, "Earthquake and volcano geodesy"

JGS004, "Oceanography and geodesy in the Polar regions"

In addition to the above mentioned joint symposia, GB is the convener of the Union symposium US003 “Global Earth Observing Systems”.

Each commission is convening one symposium (length 1.5 days). The ICCT should appoint a co-convenor for each of the four symposia. As an order of magnitude, one session (1.5 hours) should be “reserved for” theory aspects. It is not planned, however, that the theory-related topics are assigned to one session. They should be better integrated into the symposia.

In addition to the four commission symposia (named after the commissions as “reference frames”, “gravity field”, “Earth rotation and geodynamics”, “positioning and applications”) there will be a one day symposium on GGOS, convened by Markus Rothacher. The GGOS symposium should, if possible, not overlap with the other G-symposia.

It was suggested that there should be a closure or summary of the IAG-related topics presented at the General Assembly. Unfortunately the programme was fixed in September 2005, and therefore difficult to change.

Inter Commission Committee on Theory:

Peiliang Xu has suggested the Theory should have an exclusive session. It is, however, IAG policy that theory should be considered as a part of the 4 commission symposia. Therefore, the procedure, as outlined above, should be followed.

Convenors and coordinators:

The Commission Presidents are the lead convenors and the ones to establish the program – together with the co-convenors appointed by ICCT.. Should a president not wish to be a convenor, he or she is free to appoint a deputy.

MS accepted to be the principal coordinator of the IAG symposia.

Registration and grants:

In the IAG registration fees are included USD 60 for the proceedings. It became clear at the Scientific Assembly in Cairns that participants do not register as IAG participants to save money.

The IUGG annual allocation is depending on as the number of officially registered IAG participants. It was therefore decided to announce in the IAG Newsletter the importance to register as IAG participants. Partly because of the IUGG support, partly because they will NOT receive IAG proceedings if they should not register as such.

CCT has not yet calculated how much IAG can set aside for grants. Each convenor is asked to draft a priority list of the applicants. CCT will schedule a final list according to those lists. Invited speakers usually are assumed not to receive travel grants. It is IAG policy to spend those to young scientists and colleagues from developing countries.

Social events:

The opening followed by the IAG reception is for the time being planned to be on Tuesday of the first week.

Ad 3. Reports of Commission Presidents and representatives of Services.

Commissions:

Herman Drewes for Commission 1, Ilias Tzsiavos for Commission 2, Veronique Dehant for Commission 3, Pascal Willis for Commission 4: Please see reports on <http://www.gfy.ku.dk/~iag/ec06.htm>

Services:

BGI presented by JPB:

There is a lot of pressure on BGI due to funding problems and due to the decision of the French government to reduce the BGI staff, which is a paradox, because the interest in BGI work is not reduced – on the contrary.

IERS and IGFS presented by MR:

IERS: The IERS is performing very well. The project to combine the technique-specific results on the observation level is "on track".

IGFS: The service has arranged a conference in Istanbul, Turkey this August on which there will be presented a lot of topics concerning GGOS. MR said that as many geodesists as possible should attend the symposium.

IVS and ILRS presented by HS:

The ILRS received a lot of attention recently, partly because of many new missions equipped with laser reflectors (all GALILEO satellites shall be equipped with laser reflectors), partly because of the proven capability of ILRS to validate GNSS orbits, partly because new SLR sites were created in the Asian region. Another topic of interest is the construction of next generation laser systems. The IVS has invested much into the planning of the next generation VLBI systems. The document "VLBI 2010" will serve as a guideline for the development of the IVS and of the next generation of VLBI telescopes.

IGS, DORIS, PSMSL, AFREF and FAGS presented by RN:

IGS has just appointed a new board. The IGS will prepare a new strategy paper for the service in 2006/07 for the period 2007-2012.

AFREF: NASA is withdrawing some funding they have promised to the project. ICSU is still very interested in the project. The next major event is the AFREF technical workshop in Cape Town (July 9-13, 2006).

FAGS: ICSU has a plan on how committees/services formerly represented in FAGS should be structured. RN is recommending that those who are involved in committees and services read and comment on the ICSU plan.

Project on Developing Countries presented by CM:

Promoting IAG:

CM and Luiz Fortes have made a major effort in collecting e-mail addresses from Africa and South America. They have had considerable success concerning Central America. All the addresses have been passed on to the COB.

It is important that more people from developing countries become involved in the IAG work. CM encouraged the commission presidents to keep this in mind when they meet qualified people and to encourage them to become involved in IAG:

Conferences:

SIRGAS has planned a conference in Panama this July.

Also this July a conference in South Africa has been arranged. It is most important that many people attend.

Ad 4. GGOS status

MR presented the status on GGOS – please see <http://www.gfy.ku.dk/~iag/ec06.htm> .

MR distributed the Terms of Reference for GGOS. The size of the proposed GGOS Steering Committee (around 30) was discussed extensively.

One concern was that the group is too big to do useful work. MR argued that it is a key element that all the essential groups (apart from the commissions the services, the representatives in GEO and IGOS) are represented in the steering committee. It is easier to encourage people to be active at an early point than later on. Also, the role of the science will receive more visibility thanks to the 8 members in the panel.

The main concern was that the GGOS Terms of Reference are not in agreement with the IAG Bylaws.

GB suggested that ICCT has an official representative in the Science Panel. MR will contact ICCT and ask for a representative.

The EC voted on the following issue:

The EC accepted the Terms of Reference until IUGG2007 in Perugia, where the document can be discussed within the NC. GB informs the Cassinis Committee that IAG does not completely follow the By-laws in this matter. The outcome of the vote was:

For: 9

Against: 1

Abstentions: 2

Ad 5. Altimetry Service status

A report was presented by HD.

HD had hoped that it would be possible to present the Terms of Reference to the EC at this meeting for approval but the IAS steering Committee had not been able to agree on such a document. It was possible for the IAS SC to agree on the first part of the structure plan, but not on the part involving the Governing Board and Advisory Board. MS argued that the IAS should now be set up as soon as possible with a much leaner structure. There should initially be no governing board and no requests for funding. The service should work under the auspices of IAG and IAPSO.

It was unanimously decided to follow this advice and to begin with the simple structure plan.

Ad 6. Interface/MoU between commissions and services

An interface document between commissions and services was drafted by GB in 2003. HS had been asked to revise this original document. The revised document was distributed to the EC prior to the meeting and briefly presented by HS.

Few minor changes were discussed and approved. It was decided that HS should finalize the document with the additions discussed at the meeting and mail it to the Bureau for final approval.

Ad 7. Cassinis Committee work

Klaus-Peter Schwartz was not able to attend the EC meeting. Should there be suggestions to changes to the statutes and by-laws the EC will be informed. CCT suggested that minor changes should be settled by e-mail vote.

Ad 8. Nomination committee

FS informed the EC of the status of the work of the committee.

All the members of IAG have received a letter from the committee with a short summary of the nomination procedure.

Service representatives are not nominated by IAG members but by the service.

The Time table for nomination and election:

- June 2006: Deadline for nomination.
- July 2006: Reminder to members of voting coming up.
- October 2006: The council members receive a list of the nominated to which they can make other proposals.
- January 2007: Final list will be mailed to the council.
- End February 2007: The procedure should be finished.
- End March 2007: A final list of elected will be announced.

Should a person be nominated for two positions within IAG, the nomination committee will approach the person and ask him/her for the preference.

Ad 9. Presentation of responses for all for hosting Central Bureau and nomination of Secretary General

CCT emphasized that it is most important that the Nomination Committee makes sure that those nominated for the position as Secretary General have sufficient support from the hosting institute when it comes to secretarial help.

So far there are two nominations:

Germany has nominated HD

France has nominated PW

Both nominees were present as EC members and asked to give a presentation on their intention to assume the job as SG of IAG. After their presentation the candidates left the room and the EC discussed the presentations. Both nominations were regarded as very satisfactory. When a formal nomination from the hosting institutes is received, the Nominating committee will ask the institutes to confirm the promised level of resources. Deadline for nomination is September 15, 2006.

Ad 10. Best Young Author Award

The editor in chief of JOG , Will Featherstone, has the obligation to nominate candidates. For the year 2006 Will Featherstone has only nominated one candidate.

CCT has informed the EC about the nomination 2 weeks prior to the EC meeting. The situation for 2006 is, that either the EC accepts the nominated or there will not be a Young Author Award in 2006.

The EC voted to accept the candidate.

It was also recommended that in future the editor in chief is requested to nominate at least two candidates. If only one candidate is nominated the award should not be presented.

Ad 11. Sponsorship of meetings, workshops, symposia

The World Climate Research Program has arranged a workshop on Sea-level Rise and Variability, for which IAG was asked to act as a co-sponsor.

CCT argued that the workshop was a closed meeting (on invitation only) and that IAG usually does not sponsor such events.

RN, as a member of the Organizing Committee, informed the EC about the intension of the meeting. Ruth argued that geodesy will receive a lot of visibility thanks to this meeting and that the geodesy lecturers (among them (in addition to RN) Geoff Blewitt, Markus Rothacher) were excellent.

The EC voted on the IAG sponsorship for this meeting: For: 7. Against: 5, Abstention: 2

Ad 12. Next meeting, Perugia 2007 or ealier

CCT proposed to have the next EC meeting at Perugia. Should it be necessary to organize a meeting prior to this event, Monday, April 16, 2007 (attached to the next EGU meeting) was reserved as the meeting date.

Ad 13. AOB

Irene Fischer, who has been very active in defining the satellite global reference system, has just reached the age of 99. CCT suggested that a session or a lecture in Perugia under commission 1 is dedicated to her. Her memoirs have been published and a review is printed in the Newsletter.

JA gave a brief report from the COB:

It is necessary to print new IAG brochures.

The brochure made for the broader public was presented at the meeting. It is planned to be finalized by October 2006. It was argued that IAG should have a new logo, because it is the same as IUGG.

GB closed the meeting by thanking Harald Schuh and his group for their kind hospitality and for setting up the venue for the EC meeting 2006.

Christian Tscherning,
Copenhagen
June 6, 2006