

Quadrennial Report on the Contribution of the Communication and Outreach Branch (COB)

1. Introduction

In the past period (since the 2003 IUGG in Sapporo, the founding event of the COB), the infrastructure investment indicated in our proposal for the Executive Committee Meeting in Nice (April 2003) has been fully realized. Thus the technological background of the COB at the Department of Geodesy and Surveying of the Budapest University of Technology and Economics (BME) has been fully realized and is supported by the department and the Research Group for Physical Geodesy and Geodynamics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. All administrative work for the registration of the new IAG Website address (www.iag-aig.org) has been done.

The Terms of Reference and program of activities of the COB, and a short report on the IAG website, were published in the Geodesist's Handbook 2004 (pp. 677-678, pp. 576-577, respectively).

The COB's Steering Committee held meetings six times in the last four years:

- a) Sapporo, Japan, 8 July, 2003;
- b) Nice, France, 29 April, 2004;
- c) Budapest, Hungary, 1 February, 2005;
- d) Cairns, Australia, 23 August, 2005;
- e) Vienna, Austria, 2 April, 2006.
- f) Vienna, Austria, 15 April, 2007.

2. Status of the new IAG website

A new Compaq server has been purchased and the backend of the website has been developed. Hence all of the documents can be edited and maintained through a simple web browser. The documents are stored in a MySQL database, which enables fast data retrieval and also searching in documents. The graphical front-end is also ready.

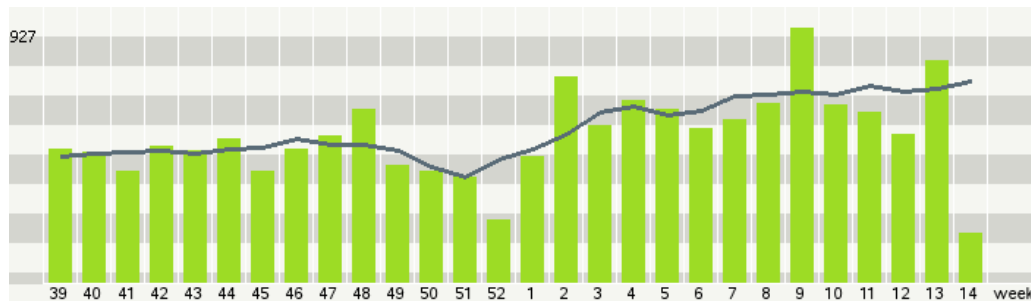
After providing the IT background for creating and maintaining the web content, the editing of the old web content has been started. All the old documents must have been partially re-edited in order to fit into the new structure of the IAG website. Due to this, the migration of the old website to the new one went a bit slower than previously expected. The Geodesist's Handbook 2000 has also been migrated to the new website.

The layout of the website has been changed a few times according to suggestions made at the Steering Committee Meetings. Direct links to services, old sections, commissions, etc. have been added to the front page. The event calendar has been shortened; it now contains only five upcoming events. Additional advertisements have been also added to the front page. The recent Membership Application Form, as well as the IAG Newsletters, can be downloaded from the opening page.

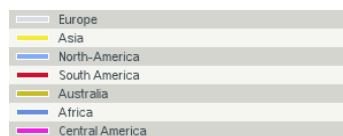
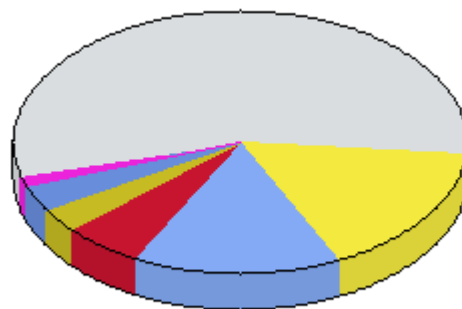
The number of visitors is steady, about 600 per week. The geographical distribution of the visitors shows that the webpage is mostly visited from Europe (52,271), Asia (15,302) and North America (13,914) out of the total 94,918 visits since May 28, 2003. Only 2935 visits came from the African continent.

Visitors are registered from 153 countries worldwide. The list can be found at <http://webstats.motigo.com/s?tab=1&link=3&id=2359395&cou=all>.

The IAG website includes a Members' Section, which can be accessed by IAG Members only. IAG Members have received a password to enter this restricted area. Each IAG Member is entitled to read articles in this area, as well as to query the contact database of the IAG members. The Members may update their own contact details, and specify their fields of interests, too.



Weekly number of visits (since 24 September, 2006)



Geographical Distribution of visitors

3. The IAG Newsletters

Altogether, 39 IAG Newsletters have already been published (up to March 2007) and can be accessed on the IAG new website in HTML, HTML print version and in PDF formats. The web addresses in the text can now be reached also from the PDF file. The IAG Individual Members received it monthly in PDF and text attachments, with a link in the e-mail message to access the actual HTML Newsletter on the IAG website. A new subscriber list of the Newsletter for developing countries was set up in a web-based database, independently from the IAG Individual Members' subscriber list for promoting interest in the activities of IAG. Now the electronic IAG Newsletter is distributed to these e-mail addresses as well. Selected contents of the electronic Newsletters were compiled and were sent to Springer for publication in 25 issues of the Journal of Geodesy (Vol. 77/12-81/4).

4. Membership development and outreach activities

The Membership Application form (MAF) has been updated and placed in the new IAG website. It contains all the information for payments by credit card and it can be filled using Adobe Acrobat Reader.

Initially, about 2600 e-mail addresses were stored in a database. The validation of e-mail addresses as well as the web integration for future mailing lists management is currently taking place. Many duplicate and invalid e-mail addresses had to be removed from the aforementioned database.

The COB designed a short brochure for promoting the IAG to the geoscientific community. The main objective of this brochure is to introduce the activities of IAG to the geoscientific community and to encourage individuals to become a member of the Association. In the first run, 1500 copies have been printed. The brochure was available at the IAG, AGU, EGU Assemblies and at different IAG Symposia.

The Communication and Outreach Branch in cooperation with the Department of Geodesy and Surveying, Budapest University of Technology and Economics, and the Research Group for Physical Geodesy and Geodynamics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences organized the 6th International IGeS School on "The Determination and Use of the Geoid" in Budapest, Hungary, 31 January- 4 February, 2005, which was attended by 49 students from 19 countries.

József Ádám, Szabolcs Rózsa, Gyula Tóth
IAG Communication and Outreach Branch