

Communication and Outreach Branch

<http://www.iag-aig.org>

President: **József Ádám** (Hungary)

Secretary: **Szabolcs Rózsa** (Hungary)

Development

The Communication and Outreach Branch (COB) was created in the frame of the new Statutes and By-Laws by the IAG Council at its special meeting in Budapest, 7 September 2001. A *Call for Participation* was issued by the IAG Central Bureau (CB) to fill this position. Two offers were received to host the COB from the Finnish Geodetic Institute and from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS)/Budapest University of Technology and Economics (BUTE). The offer of the HAS/BUTE was elected by the Executive Committee (EC) at its meeting in Nice, 11 April, 2003. EC established a planning committee headed by Michael G.Sideris, IAG Vice-President for establishing the COB. IAG Council in Sapporo has confirmed this election. Thus the COB started its activities in July 2003, after the 23rd IUGG/IAG General Assembly (Sapporo, Japan, 30 June-11 July, 2003).

Terms of Reference

According to the new by-laws (§ 1.5) of the IAG, the Communication and Outreach Branch provides the Association with communication, educational/public information and outreach links to the membership, to other scientific Associations and to the world as a whole.

The responsibilities of the COB include the following tasks:

- 1) promotion of IAG (at meetings and conferences);
- 2) membership development;
- 3) maintenance of the IAG Website;
- 4) publications (newsletters);
- 5) creation of a resource base for educators, developing countries and our global community;
- 6) promotion of IAG activities: Schools, meetings, publications;
- 7) promote contact and interaction with sister organizations and the general public;
- 8) promote contact to national survey organizations, Universities, private companies and international organizations, and
- 9) maintaining the Bibliographic Service.

Program of Activities

According to the new modernised structure of the IAG, the individual membership has been introduced in addition to the traditional National Members. However the

individual membership requires a more commercial, member oriented operation of the Association. The main purpose of the COB is to promote communication and interaction among all of its members and to facilitate the work of IAG in general. Therefore the COB will be a permanent IAG office for publication, publicity and visibility of the Association.

The planned activities of the COB will be split into two main groups:

- a) communicational activities, and
- b) membership developments and promotional activities

which enable the growth of the IAG itself.

One of the major tasks of the COB is to create the channels of the communication within the Association. Our intention is to make a simple, structured way of communication using various Information technologies (IT). The *communication of the IAG* will be done using the following channels:

- the official IAG website,
- mailing lists for the various topics,
- publication of the IAG Newsletters and Geodesist's Handbook.

The official *IAG website* will act on one hand as the most important interface to the outside community, and on the other hand it will be the first pillar of the communicational infrastructure of the Association. Therefore the content of the new website is defined to support both roles. The IAG website is re-designed and functional at <http://www.iag-aig.org> on a new purchased Compaq ML350G3 server in Budapest (see address). 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 new website contains updated information on IAG meetings, Commissions, Services, publications, officers and more. The site will be frequently updated. For more information on the website see the article „IAG on the Internet” in this issue.

All relevant documents and informations of the old website will be migrated to the new web. Due to the totally new structure of the website, all of the documents has to be partly re- edited. In the future the IAG website, and IT infrastructure behind it, could not only enhance the communication among the members of the Association, but could improve some activities and services. It will act as an agent for organising conferences.

The websites of the IAG components (Commissions, Services) should follow some rules concerning the

graphical layout of their own websites. These rules will be specified by the COB.

The new server operating in the IAG COB, will handle *mailing lists*, which will be the major source of information for the members. The members will get all of the announcements and Newsletters via e-mail. Our intention is to operate many mailing lists. Issues for creating/maintaining user database/lists for advertising, circular e-mails, surveys, etc are as follows:

- users can register themselves by giving contact information and topics of interest (e.g. GPS, Gravity Field, Reference Frames, etc.) for notification;
- registration should be entirely web-based using confirmation e-mails;
- users can access/update/delete their personal contact information with username and password;
- privacy statement is necessary for keeping personal data confident;
- several statistics for geographical user distribution can be shown in simple charts on the IAG website;
- benefits should be clearly stated to be on the user list.

The *IAG Newsletter* will be published monthly. It will have an unique logo which is *a)* unmistakable and unambiguous, *b)* easy to read and perceive even when printed in black/white, and *c)* simply designed and reproduces to any size. It will be available in different formats for distribution: *(i)* plain text for e-mail, *(ii)* HTML for e-mail and website, and *(iii)* PDF for downloading from website. Visitors will have following options regarding the distribution of the IAG Newsletter:

- view the Newsletter online or download it directly;
- browse/view/download past issues in the Newsletter archive;
- sign-up for e-mail notification of availability of current issue of the Newsletter with short summary of content;
- each user can freely modify his account or remove himself from the Newsletter distribution list.

The *membership developments and promotional activities* are further our most important tasks. The COB will focus not only on increasing the number of members in the IAG, but also on providing science information service to the members. The COB has already started collecting individual members. For the *membership developments* a Membership Application Form (MAF) was designed and it is put in the new IAG website. The user can click into the Form and fill his/her data electronically in Adobe Reader. There is a separate room in the MAF for members who wish to make a contribution to the IAG Fund, too. In the frontpage of our new website there is an indication to download the Membership Application Form.

The major channels of *promotional activities* will be the IAG website, and the mailing lists. All of the

promotional leaflets will be sent out as e-mail too. Some brochures and leaflets will be printed, which

- introduce the IAG to the global community,
- emphasize the mission statement of IAG, and
- describe the advantages of being an IAG member.

Our intention is that these brochures should be available at every conference organized and/or sponsored by IAG. Therefore the COB should also represent IAG at all major meeting (including not only IUGG General Assemblies, IAG Scientific Assemblies, AGU and EGS meetings, but also at IAG-sponsored meetings) with a booth with different IAG materials (brochures, CDs, ties etc). Moreover, a short video spot will be made to promote IAG, which could be available for downloading from the web. Using various materials, a multimedia CD-ROM will be created to introduce IAG to the global community, to private companies, and international organisations.

Steering Committee

The COB has a Steering Committee (SC) with the following members:

József Ádám, President (Hungary)
Szabolcs Rózsa, Secretary (Hungary)
Gyula Tóth (Hungary)
Michael G. Sideris (Canada)
Christina Schneider-Pedersen (Denmark)
Markku Poutanen (Finland)

Ex officio:

Carl-Christian Tscherning (Denmark)
Will Featherstone (Australia)

Address

The COB operates an office (with the webserver, computer and multimedia tools) of which address is a follows:

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