

**Report for the 23rd General Assembly
FIG Working Week in Prague, 22-26 May 2000**

**REPORT OF THE OUTGOING UK BUREAU (1996-1999)
FOR THE PERIOD FROM THE 22ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
UNTIL THE HANDOVER TO THE US BUREAU, NOVEMBER 1999**

Introduction

The UK Bureau focused throughout its period of office on the surveyor's response to social, technological and environmental change and took a particular interest in countries in economic transition and in those with a low GNP. The Bureau also recognised that markets for surveyors' services are constantly changing and therefore the emphasis was placed on strengthening professional institutions and promoting professional development and encouraging surveyors to acquire the new skills and techniques that will properly equip them to meet the needs of society and the environment.

The highlights of the UK Bureau term of office included:

- the establishment of an FIG office
- giving FIG a modern constitution;
- co-operation with United Nations agencies, culminating in published programmes of FIG/UN/World Bank co-operation for the period 2000-2003 and jointly project activity with international organisations involved in management of land, property and construction;
- expanding the membership base and improving services to all categories of the membership; and
- improving FIG's financial structure.

The last six-month period between the General Assembly in Sun City and the handover meeting in November 1999 was an important time for the Bureau to conclude its activities. At the same time it was a starting period for the new administration model after the establishment of the permanent office. This turned to be a good decision already after some months' experience. The term of office of the UK Bureau was culminated with the FIG/UN Seminar in Bathurst and Conference in Melbourne in October where the UN/FIG Bathurst Declaration on Land Administration for Sustainable development was launched. In connection to the Melbourne Conference the FIG/UN round table took place strengthening the close links between FIG, several UN agencies and the World Bank.

The full report of the UK Bureau is published in the FIG Annual Review 1999 and is also available on the FIG home page.

The Future Governance and Management of FIG

The establishment of the permanent office and the review of FIG's constitution both suggested that FIG should consider making more fundamental changes to its management and operational structures if it was to function as a truly international organisation. The UK Bureau therefore established a task force to examine possible options. The final report and recommendations will be considered by the new US Bureau and brought to the General Assembly in Prague.

FIG/UN co-operation

The FIG/UNCHS(Habitat) memorandum was evaluated and extended for 1999 during a visit to UNCHS by FIG representatives in May 1999. Amongst other initiatives, the extension formalised UNCHS's commitment to the global seminar on land tenure and cadastral infrastructures to support sustainable development held in Bathurst, Australia, in October 1999. The extension also included an agreement to prepare a new memorandum for 2000-2003.

The UN/FIG Workshop in Bathurst resulted in "The UN/FIG Bathurst Declaration on Land Tenure and Cadastral Infrastructures for Sustainable Development" (FIG publication no. 22). This was formally presented to an immediately following three-day conference in Melbourne sponsored by the UN, the New South Wales and Victoria governments and the University of Melbourne's Department of Geomatics. The conference focused on the legal, technical and institutional infrastructures that will be needed to support man/land relationships for the next millennium in the context of Agenda 21 and the Global Plan of Action.

Immediately following the conference, the senior officials from the seven UN agencies and the World Bank who had attended both that event and the Bathurst workshop took part in a round table with the President and other representatives of FIG. The discussions and outcomes of the round table are reported in "Co-operation between FIG and UN agencies, 2000 - 2003" (FIG publication no. 21).

The US Bureau will present both the Bathurst Declaration and the FIG/UN Round table report to the General Assembly for its approval.

Issues included in the FIG/UN co-operation are FIG's participation to the UNCHS global campaigns on secure tenure and urban governance and to preparations of the Special Session of the UN General Assembly on implementation of the Habitat Agenda (Istanbul+5) to be held in June 2001.

Co-operation with other international organisations

At the General Assembly in Sun City FIG decided that it should resign from its membership of the International Union of Surveys and Mapping (IUSM). However, following FIG's formal resignation, IUSM itself was disbanded in August 1999. Options for maintaining links with the other surveying organisations will be reviewed by the new Bureau.

Work within the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to liberalise trade in services led the UK Bureau to commission a review of surveying occupations and activities and the way these are currently defined within the two main UN international classifications. Suggestions for improvements to both classifications, when they are next up-dated, have been discussed with the responsible officers in the UN Statistical Department and the ILO. The latest contacts were taken in autumn 1999 when Secretary General Roy Swanston and Stig Enemark, chair of the FIG task force on mutual recognition visited WTO and ILO.

Throughout the period of the UK administration FIG has been involved in the work of the International Standards Organisation (ISO) as this relates to geomatics and geographical information. An FIG task force on standards is managing FIG input to ISO and to prioritise all necessary FIG involvement in other standards activity.

Membership

Significant changes were made to the membership structure during the UK Bureau term of office. The first one opens membership of FIG to any association, be it representative of one or all of the disciplines of surveying, whose members possess relevant academic and professional qualifications and provide professional services in accordance with ethical standards. This allows a secondary membership from countries that are already FIG members. The other big change is the category of academic membership that was created in recognition of the contribution which teaching and research institutions make to the development of the profession. About 20 university departments joined FIG in the five months since this category of membership was preliminary introduced.

Membership support

The UK Bureau commissioned three FIG publications in 1999. These include the Bathurst Declaration (no. 21) and report from the FIG/UN Round table (no. 22) and "Quality Assurance in Surveying Education" (no. 19) produced by FIG Commission 2.

The President and other members of the UK Bureau have managed to visit almost all member associations during the four years - either en route to and from FIG meetings or in conjunction with their own business travel.

In 1999 the Bureau held two meetings with FIG's sponsor members, the first one in Sun City and the other one during the Intergeo '99 in Hanover.

Other Communications

The quarterly FIG Bulletin was published three times during 1999. Due to the handover the fourth issue was postponed to 2000. The Bulletin is using a format which encourages member associations to abstract information to their individual members via their own journals. The Bulletin is produced as a published document and since the beginning of 1999 it has also been placed on FIG's home page.

It is electronic media that have facilitated the most important development in FIG communications, particularly since the establishment of the FIG office. An FIG home page with new design has been established: news flashes, press releases, the quarterly FIG Bulletin, meetings information and all administrative documents are now placed on the home page as well as being delivered by post. Linkages have also been set up between the FIG home page and those of the commissions, the members and allied professional bodies.

The latest service on Internet is the FIG Surveying Education Database that was prepared during the UK Bureau and launched in the new format by the US Bureau in spring 2000.

Acknowledgements

The UK Bureau cannot conclude its report without acknowledging the debt which FIG owes to so many organisations and individuals. On-going thanks are due to DdL for its support of the FIG office. The RICS underpinned the work of the UK Bureau before and throughout its period of office; ran a highly successful FIG congress; and supported both the establishment of the FIG office and FIG's work with other international organisations. Nearly all member associations and many governments assisted delegates to participate in FIG business and sponsored FIG meetings. Commission officers, task force chairs, directors of permanent institutions, national and commission delegates, and a host of other

individuals gave unstintingly of their time; and their contributions to the work of FIG was often at their own expense.

FIG could not function without the dedicated support of so many people throughout the world. This dedication, coupled with the continuity of administration that will be provided by the FIG office, will stand the Federation in good stead as it moves into the next century.

The FIG Bureau 1996-1999

21 March 2000