

Bi-annual Report on the Contribution of the Communication and Outreach Branch (COB)

1. Introduction

In the past period (since July 2003, Sapporo, the foundation 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 registration of the new IAG Website address (www.iag-aig.org) has been done.

The Terms of Reference and program 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 four times in the last two 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.

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.

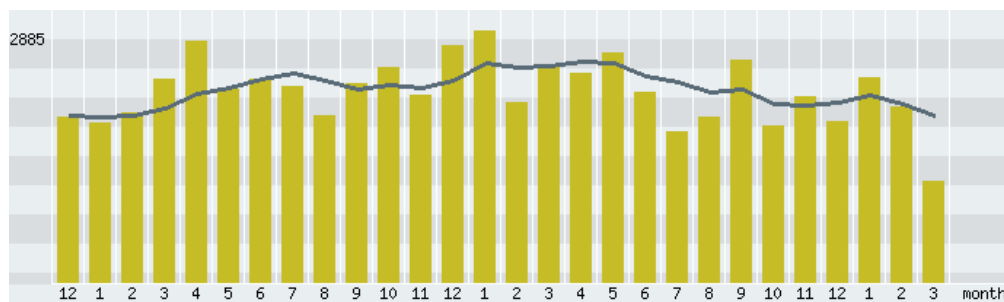
After providing the IT background for creating and maintaining the web content, the editing of the old web content has been started. All the old documents must have been partially re-edited in order to fit into the new structure of the IAG website. Due to this, the migration of the old website to the new one was going a bit slower than previously expected. The Geodesist's Handbook (1999, 2000) have also been migrated to the new website.

The layout of the website has been changed a few times according to the proposals accepted 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 contains only the next five important 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 for the opening page.

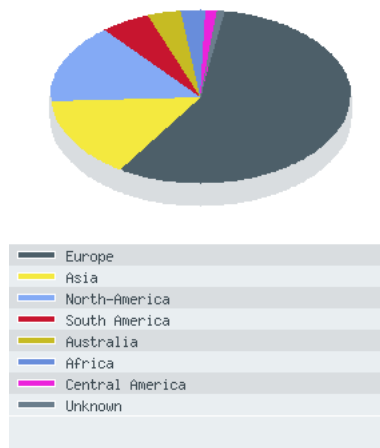
The number of visitors is steady. The weekly number of visitors is about 600. The geographical distribution of the visitors shows that the webpage is mostly visited from Europe (37159), Asia (10100) and North-America (9880) out of the total 66239 visits since May 28 2003. Only 1774 visits came from the African Continent.

Visitors could be registered from 142 countries worldwide. The list can be found at <http://www.webstats4u.com/s?tab=1&link=3&id=2359395&cou=all>.

The IAG website includes the 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.



Monthly number of visits



Geographical Distribution of visitors

3. The IAG Newsletters

Altogether 19 IAG Newsletters have already been published till July 2005 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 content of the electronic Newsletters were compiled and have been sent to Springer for publication for already 9 issues of the Journal of Geodesy (Vol 77/12-79/4-5).

4. Membership development and outreach activities

The Membership Application form (MAF) has been updated and put in the new IAG website. It contains all the information for the credit card payments 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 web integration for future mailing lists management tasks is currently taking place. Unfortunately many duplicate and invalid e-mail addresses had to be removed from the aforementioned database.

The COB designed a 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 be 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", Budapest, Hungary, 31 January- 4 February, 2005.

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

Minutes of the IAG COB Steering Committee Meeting
Sapporo, Japan, 8 July, 2003.

1. Attendance

- József ÁDÁM (President)
- Szabolcs RÓZSA (Secretary, IAG Webmaster)
- Carl-Christian TSCHERNING (Secretary General of IAG)
- Michael G. SIDERIS (IAG Vice-President of IAG)
- Will FEATHERSTONE (Editor-in-chief of JoG)
- Christina SCHNEIDER-PEDERSEN
- Markku POUTANEN
- Gyula TÓTH (IAG Newsletter Editor)
- Ole B. ANDERSEN (Guest, Assistant Secretary General of IAG)

2. Discussed topics

2.1. Organizational structure of the COB

The president of the Steering Committee introduced the members of the committee, accepted by the new Executive Committee of IAG:

▪ József ÁDÁM	Hungary	President
▪ Christina SCHNEIDER-PEDERSEN	Denmark	
▪ Markku POUTANEN	Finland	
▪ Szabolcs Rózsa	Hungary	Secretary, IAG webmaster
▪ Michael G. SIDERIS	Canada	IAG Vice-President
▪ Gyula TÓTH	Hungary	IAG Newsletter Editor

Ex-officio:

▪ Carl-Christian TSCHERNING	Denmark	IAG Secretary General
▪ Will FEATHERSTONE	Australia	Editor-in-chief of the JoG

2.2. Membership development

The current Membership Application Form (MAF) should be improved according to the proposal of Prof. Sideris and Ms. Schneider-Pedersen. The MAF should include additional credit card information (security code) and the form fields should be resized to provide enough room for the card number, etc. Moreover the fields should be activated to enable the applications to fill in the form electronically.

2.3. The IAG website

The structure of the official IAG website has been discussed and some modifications have been decided. The event calendar on the website should be more concise. Due to the low number of events, the daily calendar is not required. On the other hand direct links to the IAG Services, Commissions and to the IUGG website should be included on the first page of the website.

The layout of the website should be modified, in order to follow the various screen size and resolution of the viewers.

The Committee discussed the possibility of letting each unit (Service, Commission, etc.) to add articles directly to the webpage, and decided not to provide this option due to security and management reasons.

The migration of the files from the old website to the new one has been discussed, too. Due to security reasons O. B. Andersen offered to archive the old website to CD and send the CD via regular mail to the COB.

In order to express the fact that the IAG Services and Commissions belong to the IAG, the websites of the units should follow some rules concerning the graphical layout of their own websites. These rules should be specified by the COB.

2.4. Clarification of the information flow between the Central Bureau and the COB

The Committee discussed the information flow on new members between the Central Bureau and the COB. Although the applications are submitted to the Central Bureau, and accepted by the EC, the contact information database will be created and maintained by the COB. This database is going to have an interface on the website,

where each member can update their own contact information, and they will be able to specify which information should be viewable by other users. Therefore the Central Bureau should notify the COB about the new members, in order to be able to create required account (login name and password) for the members. The details of this procedure will be discussed later.

2.5. Edition of the IAG Newsletters

The Committee discussed the layout of the IAG Newsletter. O.B. Andersen proposed to design a special header of the IAG Newsletter. In this way, the readers of the Journal of Geodesy could easier distinguish between the scientific articles and the Newsletter.

The Newsletter should be published monthly. The articles should be published on the website, and in the e-mail version of the Newsletter, the link to the website should also be present in the e-mail version. In this way the mailbox of the members will not be overloaded.

The Committee decided that the president of the SC is responsible for the contents of the Newsletter.

2.6. Outreach Activities

The members discussed the possibility of an Outreach Lecture series at the EGS/EUG Meeting in Nice, 2004. The aim of these lectures would be to promote the activities in the science of geodesy to other geoscientists. However additional negotiations with the organizers and possible lecturers are required to be able to decide the question.

On the other hand, the design procedure of the IAG brochures should be started, too. First of all, a brochure promoting the Association should be created.

Budapest, 12.08.2003

Compiled by Szabolcs Rózsa

Minutes of the IAG COB Steering Committee Meeting
Nice, France, 29 April, 2004

1. Attendance

- József ADÁM (President)
- Szabolcs RÓZSA (Secretary, IAG Webmaster)
- Carl-Christian TSCHERNING (Secretary General of IAG)
- Michael G. SIDERIS (Vice President of IAG)
- Markku POUTANEN
- Christina SCHNEIDER-PEDERSEN
- Gerhard BEUTLER (Guest, President of IAG)

2. Discussed topics

2.1 IAG Website

Prof. Sideris proposed to change the layout of the opening page of the website in order to provide some information on the purpose of IAG. The Steering Committee (SC) agreed on that the opening page should also contain the latest articles added to the website because most of the visitors come back to read new information.

Prof. Sideris also proposed to add a link to the newly founded service of the IAG called Reference Model Service (hosted by the GFZ Potsdam). Moreover the links to the IAG services should be emphasized on the webpage. A possible solution would be to add the links to the menu system.

It was also proposed to add the links section to the menu system as permanent menu item.

The SC discussed the possibility of developing a joint membership database between the Central Bureau (CB) and the Communication and Outreach Branch (COB). The proposed solution was to create an interface between the MySQL server, which powers the website and the FileMaker Pro, which is used by the CB. It is not recommended to create a common database, because both of the systems has different capabilities. Moreover financial information should be kept confidential, therefore they should not be stored in the MySQL database.

The MySQL database should contain the personal details of the members (address, fax, tel, e-mail, affiliation, etc.). The members should be able to change their own contact information, thus they're going to be responsible for keeping their contact information always up to date.

The papers presented at the General Assembly in Sapporo 2003 should be added to the website. However first of all the Secretary General of IAG contacts Springer Verlag in order to get their approval for publishing the unreviewed papers on the web. In case of a rejection by Springer Verlag the papers could be published temporarily on the web until they are published in hard copies by Springer. The SC agreed on that the access to the publications on the web would be an important service to the members.

2.2 Newsletter

The Steering Committee discussed the way of acquiring material for the IAG newsletter. It has been proposed to contact the Commission Presidents and ask them to publish regularly in the newsletter. This could be managed on a rotational basis. Moreover a short summary of PhD Theses, Technical reports, Projects could also be included in the IAG newsletter.

Announcements on new books could also be included in the newsletter. However acquiring information on new books might be difficult. Prof. Tscherning proposed to use the webpage of Physics Today, which has a list of new publications. Moreover the websites of the big publication companies can also be visited regularly to get this information.

The scientific paper of the month could be also introduced in the newsletter. These papers should also be selected by the Commission Presidents. Moreover the results of Executive Committee (EC) and SC meetings could be also published.

An important topic could be the list of promotions, retirements etc.

2.3 Membership Development

The membership application form should be updated, a checkmark should be added for a permission to handle the data of the members.

The website should include a login for the members and electronic publications should be available only for the members. Moreover an expertise database could also be created. The members should also be able to specify a few keywords of their interests in the contact information field.

The Geodesists' Database should be available only for the members of IAG. No manual update is going to be made by either the COB or the CB after the membership database is available.

2.4 Outreach Activities

The possibility of giving a discount on the membership fee for members of other scientific organizations has been discussed. It was proposed that the Secretary General tries to get some information how it has been solved between other associations.

2.5 Brochure

The IAG brochure for the geoscientists has been introduced to the Steering Committee. It has been discussed to create another brochure for the wider community (decision makers, politicians etc.). To start this project Markku Poutanen has been asked to create a draft on a more general brochure. Prof. Sideris proposed that some additional funding could be received from various agencies like NGIA (NIMA).

2.6 Varia

Rules for IAG Schools

It has been discussed that according to the By-Laws the IAG Schools are accepted by the EC, therefore the COB should only assist in advertising these schools.

History of Geodesy

An important task of the COB is to document the history of IAG. The SC discussed the possibility of creating a working group for documenting the history of IAG. It has been decided not to create a working group or other entity for this purpose. However some more information should be added to the website on this topic. The material could be acquired from Past presidents' Reports, Geodesists' Handbooks and the Bulletin Geodesique.

Nice, 29.04.2004

Compiled by Szabolcs Rózsa

Minutes of the IAG COB Steering Committee Meeting
Budapest, Hungary, 1 February, 2005.

3. Attendance

- József ADÁM (President)
- Szabolcs RÓZSA (Secretary, IAG Webmaster)
- Carl-Christian TSCHERNING (Secretary General of IAG)
- Michael G. SIDERIS (Vice President of IAG)
- Christina SCHNEIDER-PEDERSEN
- Gyula TÓTH (IAG Newsletter Editor)
- Gerhard BEUTLER (Guest, President of IAG)
- Fernando SANSÓ (Guest, Immediate Past President of IAG)

4. Discussed topics

2.1. IAG Website

Sz. Rózsa has made a report on the current status of the IAG website. The latest developments, such as the restricted members' area and the contact database have been introduced to the IAG COB Steering Committee (SC).

Prof. Sideris proposed that the IAG Services should be present on the top page of the website with their active links.

The SC discussed how the restricted members' area should be filled with information. The members' area should provide additional value for the IAG members only. Therefore the aim of COB should be to put electronic publications, existing electronic information, proceedings etc. to the members' area. As this information is available only for the IAG members, it could provide value for them. The possibility of putting electronic papers available for the IAG members only, could be promoted in the IAG newsletter as well as in a circular e-mail. Digital datasets could also be published here. The unreviewed version of the Sapporo papers could also be put to the private section of the IAG website. It has been also discussed whether the lecture notes of the IGeS Geoid Schools could be put on the private section of the IAG website. In order to clarify the copyright issues, COB will contact the lecturers to get their permission.

The SC decided to ask conference organizers to keep the right of electronic publications.

2.2. IAG Newsletter

The SC discussed the information flow between the IAG entities and the IAG COB. It is still a problem to get enough material to the IAG Newsletter. Therefore IAG COB should encourage the leaders of other IAG entities to provide information for the IAG Newsletter. Moreover some major agencies could be contacted with the newsletter (ESA, NASA, USGS, Geodetic Survey of Canada, etc.), moreover the Presidents and Secretary Generals of the IUGG Associations.

Obituaries are made usually by the IAG National Correspondents.

2.3. IAG Brochures

The SC decided that the present IAG Brochure should remain up to the IUGG General Assembly in Perugia. However another IAG Brochure for the wider public is needed, and should be prepared. It should focus on the project and applications, should not be more than 16 pages, and should be written on a highschool level. It should give an overview of the historical development. Some material could be found on the NASA, NIMA homepages. The Brochure should also review the IAG Services.

The brochure should be available for download and printing.

2.4. Membership Development

The SC has discussed the form of the new Membership Application Form (MAF). It has been decided that the MAF should include a cell, where students can enter the expected end of their PhD studies. It has also been decided that a Membership Renewal Form also should be available for download.

The COB should also contact the National Correspondents, and advertise the benefits of becoming a member.

Other community building actions could also be carried out by the IAG COB. This could include such as automatic Birthday Congratulations using the IAG contact database, etc. Moreover the Merchandising (pens, T-shirts, tie, cups, etc.) could also be planned and started in the next future.

2.5. Outreach Activities

The Outreach Activities should focus on the EGU Meeting in Vienna and on the IAG Scientific Assembly in Cairns. On both of the events, the IAG Brochure should be distributed, moreover the merchandising could also be started on the Scientific Assembly.

Links should also be put on the webpage, which point to information resources for geodesy related presentations. The topic of IAG Booth in Cairns has also been discussed. According to the decision of the SC, the IAG Booth would be linked with the Office of the IAG Bureau.

Compiled by Szabolcs Rózsa

Minutes of the IAG COB Steering Committee Meeting
Cairns, Australia, 23 August, 2005.

5. Attendance

- József ÁDÁM (President)
- Szabolcs RÓZSA (Secretary, IAG Webmaster)
- Carl-Christian TSCHERNING (Secretary General of IAG)
- Gyula TÓTH (IAG Newsletter Editor)
- Markku POUTANEN
- Ole B. ANDERSEN (Guest, Assistant Secretary General of IAG)

6. Discussed topics

2.1. IAG Website

Sz. Rózsa gave a short report on the current status of the website. The Steering Committee (SC) discussed how the restricted members' area of the website could be filled with information. The SC agreed that the reviewed Sapporo Proceedings could be uploaded to the this area as well as the lecture notes of the Geoid School held in Budapest 2005.

Moreover listing of new PhD Theses and a list of useful internet sites could also be added to the IAG website.

2.2. IAG Newsletter

The SC discussed some questions regarding the Newsletters. C.C. Tscherning proposed that a short summary of some interesting PhD theses could also be included in the newsletter.

2.3. IAG Brochures

The IAG COB SC decided that the present IAG Brochure should remain up to the IUGG General Assembly in Perugia. However it seems that the brochure will run out before the GA, therefore a slightly updated version should be prepared. The lately created IAG services should be introduced to the list of services (IGFS, Geopotential Models Service).

M. Poutanen introduced a first version of the new IAG brochure for the wider public. The SC agreed on that the brochure should be no longer than 16 pages, and should contain an introduction of the IAG Services in a 'layman' language. The brochure should be also available in PDF format on the web. J.Ádám proposed that an introduction written by I. I. Mueller for the IAG Scientific Assembly in Budapest, 2001 could also be used in the brochure.

2.4. Travaux

The SC agreed that until end of September 2005 all of the IAG entities should send their report to O. B. Andersen. Afterwards the Travaux will be posted to the IAG website.

2.5. Membership Development

Sz. Rózsa proposed that the upcoming conferences and IAG Symposia should give a certain reduction on the registration fee for IAG members. The SC agreed on a 10% reduction and C.C. Tscherning agreed to contact the LOC of upcoming conferences (IGFS 1st Meeting, etc.) as well as to promote the need for such a reduction in the EC meeting.

Compiled by Szabolcs Rózsa