



International Federation of Surveyors
Fédération Internationale des Géomètres
Internationale Vereinigung der Vermessungsingenieure

The FIG Profile - and the benefits of being a member

Prof. Stig Enemark, Vice-President of FIG (2005-208).

What is actually the role of FIG? Why is it important to be a member? What are the benefits? What is in for me? Such questions are posed from time to time by surveying organisations and their individual members. The answers are in fact quite simple and will unfold when reading through this article. FIG is the premier international organisation representing the interests of the surveyors world wide. It is an organisation of the national member associations and covers the whole range professional fields within the global surveying community. It provides an international forum for discussion and development aiming to promote professional practice and standards.

National associations provide a forum for surveyors that protects and promote their interests at national level. These interests are, however, increasingly influenced by some international trends within the surveying disciplines and more generally within surveying education and practice. Therefore, professional surveyors should surely be looking at the wider perspective and not just “what is in it for us?” Instead, the question should be “what can we do to help progress the standing of the profession in the world as a whole and, in particular, of the association to which we belong?”

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

The benefits of membership of FIG include issues such as international recognition of the national profession and enhancement of the profile of the international surveying profession; access to the international surveying community for exchange of experiences and new developments; access to surveyors and surveying companies throughout the world who already have established connections with influential international bodies; and opportunities through the commission working groups to take part in the development of many aspects of surveying practice and the various disciplines, including ethics, standards, education, and a whole range of professional issues.

There are many ways to further the profession and thereby broaden one's own perception of the profession. The following sections summarise the many ways that an individual can become involved in, and get great satisfaction from, FIG. But the way to really benefit from FIG is to get involved: “The taste of the pudding is the eating”.

WHAT ARE THE AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF FIG?

The aim of FIG is to be premier international non-governmental organisation that represents the interests of surveyors and users of surveying services in all countries in the world. FIG was founded 1878 in Paris. At present more than 100 countries are represented in FIG. The objectives of FIG as defined in the statutes are:

1. to provide an international forum for the exchange of information about surveying and for the development of fellowship between surveyors
2. to collaborate with the United Nations and other international and regional agencies in the formulation and implementation of policies affecting the use, development and management of land and marine resources
3. to promote the disciplines of surveying, particularly in developing countries and countries in economic transition
4. to promote the role of the surveyor in the management of natural and man-made environments
5. to promote the development of national associations of surveyors and to promote professional standards and codes of ethics and the exchange of surveying personnel
6. to promote high standards of education and training for surveyors and to facilitate continuing professional development (CPD)
7. to encourage the development and proper use of appropriate technology
8. to encourage research in all disciplines of surveying and to disseminate the results.

The mission statement of FIG is to ensure that the disciplines of surveying and all who practice them meet the needs of the markets and communities that they serve.

WHO ARE THE MEMBERS OF FIG?

More than 100 countries are represented in FIG by

- member associations – national associations representing one or more of the disciplines of surveying;
- affiliates – groups of surveyors or surveying organisations undertaking professional activities but not fulfilling the criteria for member associations;
- corporate members – organisations, institutions or agencies which provide commercial services related to the profession of surveyor;
- academic members – organisations, institutions or agencies which promote education or research in one or more of the disciplines of surveying.

An individual may be appointed as a correspondent in a country where no association or group of surveyors exists that is eligible to join FIG as a member association or affiliate.

HOW DOES FIG OPERATE?

FIG's technical work is led by ten commissions. Each member association appoints a delegate to each of the commissions. Detailed information on the work of the commissions, their work plans, working groups, seminars, newsletters and publications can be found at <http://www.fig.net/comm/comindex.htm>. The terms of reference are as follows:

▪ Commission 1 – Professional Practice

Chair: Mr. Klaus Rürup (Germany)

Chair Elect: Mr. Yaacoub Saade (Lebanon)

Ethical principles and codes of professional conduct; guidelines relating to the provision of services; standards of business practice and total quality management; changes affecting the operation of surveying practices, their management and their professional structures; international legislation affecting the profession including the liberalisation of trade in services; the role of surveyors in the public service.

▪ Commission 2 – Professional Education

Chair: Professor Pedro Caverio (Spain)

Chair Elect: Professor Bela Markus (Hungary)

Education and teaching methods; continuing professional development and training; the interaction between education, research and practice; encouragement of the exchange of students and personnel between countries.

▪ Commission 3 – Spatial Information Management

Chair: Mr. Gerhard Muggenhuber (Austria)

Chair Elect: Dr. Chryssy Potsiou (Greece)

Management of land, property and hydrographic information and the related processes, procedures and resources; spatial data infrastructure – data models, standards, availability and legal aspects, management of spatial knowledge; the impacts on organisational structures, business models, professional practice and administration; management of spatial information supporting sustainable development.

▪ Commission 4 – Hydrography

Chair: Mr. Adam Greenland (United Kingdom)

Chair Elect: Mr. Adam Leyzack (Canada)

The marine environment; hydrographic surveying; data processing and management; nautical charts and bathymetric maps – analogue, digital and electronic.

▪ Commission 5 – Positioning and Measurement

Chair: Mr. Matthew B. Higgins (Australia)

Chair Elect: Professor Rudolf Staiger (Germany)

The science of measurement; the acquisition of accurate, precise and reliable survey data related to the position, size and shape of natural and artificial features of the earth and its environment.

▪ **Commission 6 – Engineering Surveys**

Chair: Mr. Svend Kold Johansen (Denmark)

Chair Elect: Professor Alojz Kopacik (Slovakia)

Acquisition, processing and management of topographic and related information throughout the life cycle of a project; setting out methods in engineering projects; validation and quality control for civil construction and manufacturing; deformation monitoring, analysis and interpretation; prediction of deformation in engineering projects, mines and areas of geological hazard.

▪ **Commission 7 – Cadastre and Land Management**

Chair: Professor Paul van der Molen (The Netherlands)

Chair Elect: Mr. András Osskó (Hungary)

Land management and administration; cadastral reform and multi-purpose cadastres; parcel-based land information systems and computerisation of cadastral records; cadastral surveying and mapping; land titling, land tenure, land law and land registration; urban and rural land consolidation; national and international boundaries; land and marine resource management.

▪ **Commission 8 – Spatial Planning and Development**

Chair: Dr. Diane Dumashie (United Kingdom)

Chair Elect: Mr. Simon Adcock (Australia)

Regional and local structure planning; urban and rural land use planning; planning policies and environmental improvement; urban development and implementation; public-private partnerships; informal settlements and urbanisation in developing countries; environmental impact assessment.

▪ **Commission 9 – Valuation and the Management of Real Estate**

Chair: Mr. Stephen Yip (Hong Kong SAR, China)

Chair Elect: Professor Kauko Viitanen (Finland)

Valuation – the estimating of value of real estate by valuers and appraisers for various purposes including market value, property taxation, eminent domain, claims of damage or impact on value by some cause or event, and acquisitions for public use or public policy; investment market value and investment planning; development finance, land use feasibility planning; management of property, as a single asset or by management companies; management of property systems to ensure efficient use of public and private resources; management of public sector property.

▪ **Commission 10 – Construction Economics and Management**

Chair: Mr. Philip Shearer (United Kingdom)

Chair Elect: Mr. Andrew Morley (United Kingdom)

Construction technology and information technology; construction economics and measurement; construction management and environmental management; construction law and contract administration.

COMMISSION ACTIVITY

The commissions prepare and conduct the programme for FIG's international congresses, held every four years, and annual working weeks, held in the intervening years. The last congress was held in Washington, DC (USA) in 2002 and the next congress will be in Munich (Germany) from October 8-13, 2006 (www.fig2006.de).

Congresses attract several thousand participants from all over the world and are the most important events in the FIG calendar. The technical programme, which marks the culmination of each commission's four-year programme of work, is complemented by a major international exhibition.

Working weeks combine meetings of FIG's administrative bodies with technical conferences organised by the commissions and the host member associations and as such provide the opportunity for commissions to implement and develop their work programmes and for FIG to network at a more regional level. The next working weeks will be in Hong Kong SAR, China (12-17 May, 2007) and Stockholm, Sweden (14–19 June, 2008).

To increase regional activities FIG has started to organise **regional conferences** on annual basis. After three successful conferences – Nairobi, Kenya (October 2001), Marrakech, Morocco (December 2003), and Jakarta, Indonesia (October 2004) – two further regional conferences are proposed for Havana, (September 26-29, 2005) and Accra, Ghana (March 8-11, 2006).

In addition to their involvement with FIG congresses and working weeks, commissions and their working groups organise or co-sponsor a wide range of seminars and workshops, usually in collaboration with member associations or other international professional bodies. Member associations, affiliates, corporate members and academic members are all entitled to appoint delegates to the commissions; and commission chairs often co-opt additional experts to assist with particular aspects of their work programmes.

HOW IS FIG ADMINISTERED?

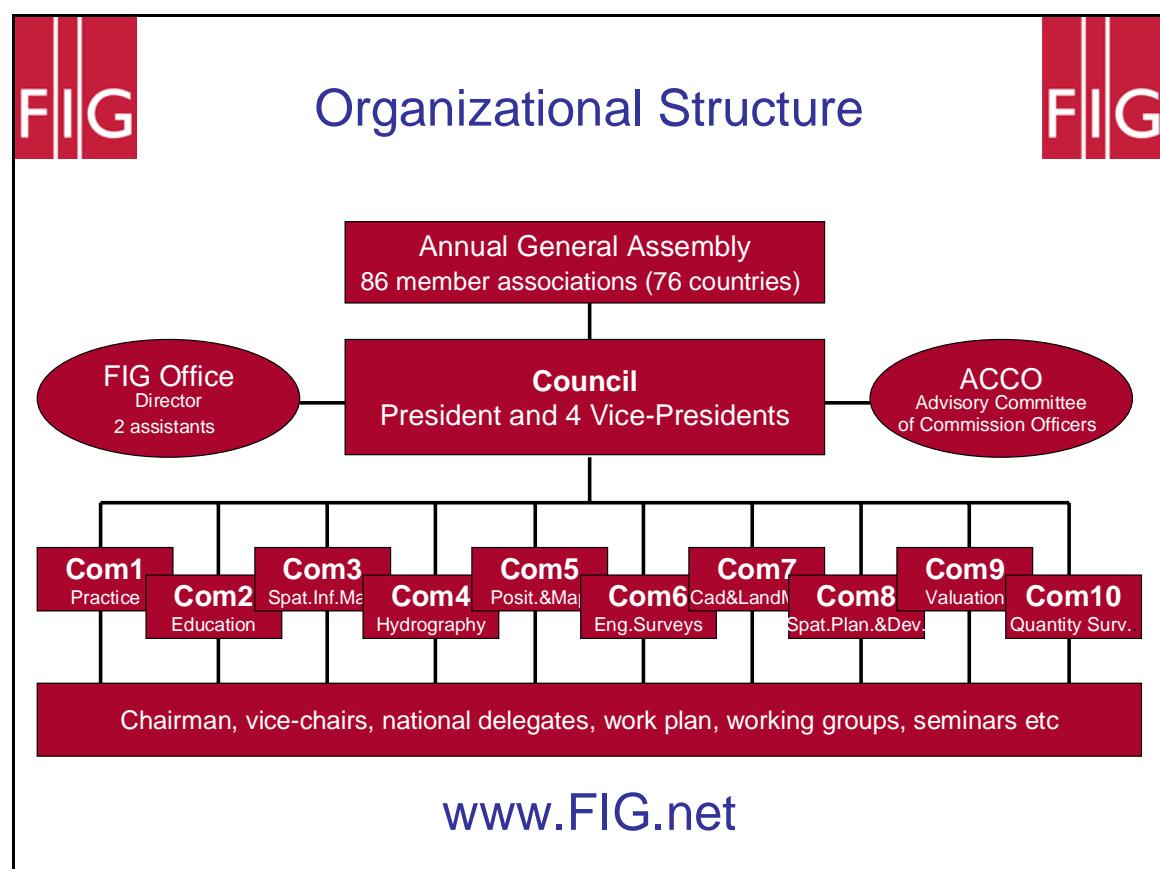
By its **General Assembly** – delegates of the member associations and, as non-voting members, the Council, commission chairs and representatives of affiliates, corporate members and academic members – which meets annually during the FIG working week or the FIG congress. The General Assembly debates and approves policies. Policies are implemented by the Council which meets several times a year.

Each **Council** is provided on a four-year rotational basis by one of the FIG member associations which nominates the President of FIG, three of the four Vice-Presidents and the Congress Director. The fourth Vice President is elected by the General Assembly. At the moment the structure is in a transition period so that after the end of the office of the current Council all Council members will be elected by the General Assembly and represent different countries. Additional two Vice Presidents were elected in May 2004.

The new governing structure will be in full operation in 2007. In addition commission chairs appoint their representative to the Council.

The work of the General Assembly and the Council is assisted by an **Advisory Committee of Commission Officers** (ACCO); ad hoc task forces appointed from time to time to review existing work plans and develop new strategies; and three permanent institutions: the **Office International de Cadastre et du Régime Foncier** (OICRF), the **FIG Multi-Lingual Dictionary Board** and the **International Institution for the History of Surveying and Measurement**. The **FIG Foundation** is an independent body under the Federation giving grants and scholarships to support education and capacity building especially in developing countries.

The day-to-day management of FIG is undertaken by the permanent office headed by the FIG Director Markku Villikka (Finland). The **FIG Office** is located at Lindevangs Allé 4, 2000 Frederiksberg, Copenhagen, Denmark. E-mail: FIG@FIG.net. Web: www.FIG.net



HOW DOES FIG COMMUNICATE?

- Through the **FIG home page** (<http://www.FIG.net>) which includes e.g.
 - the work plan of the Council and the commissions
 - contact details of Council members, member associations, affiliates, corporate members, academic members, commission officers and commission delegates
 - forthcoming events
 - FIG publications and conference reports.
- The **FIG annual review** – an overview of major activities and achievements and the main medium of external communication.
- The **FIG e-Newsletter** – a monthly newsletter and the main medium of internal communication (also available on the FIG home page).
- The **FIG publications series** – formal policy statements and ethical, educational and technical guidelines (also available on the FIG home page).
- **Proceedings** of FIG congresses and of selected technical seminars sponsored or co-sponsored by FIG's commissions and member associations (also available on the FIG home page).
- **Commission newsletters** – for the dissemination of information specifically concerned with the work of individual commissions (also available on individual commission home pages).

HOW IS FIG FINANCED?

Operating costs are largely financed by members' annual membership fees. Rates of membership fees payable by member associations are approved annually by the General Assembly. The Council sets rates of membership fees payable by affiliates, corporate members and academic members. **Other activities**, including congresses, technical seminars and administrative meetings, are mostly self-financing. In the case of meetings income is raised from registration fees which may be supplemented by income from an accompanying technical exhibition, by subventions from the host government or association, or by grants from aid agencies.

WITH WHOM DOES FIG CO-OPERATE INTERNATIONALLY?

- With **UN agencies**, notably the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UNHABITAT), the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UN OOSA). Joint workshops and other collaborative projects help to identify and develop practical solutions to problems associated with the ownership and management of land.
- With international professional organisations in surveying disciplines like the International Association of Geodesy (IAG), the International Cartographic Association (ICA), the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS) and the International Society for Mine Surveying (ISM).

- With international professional organisations whose activities complement those of surveyors. These include the International Real Estate Federation (FIABCI), the International Council for Building Research Studies and Documentation (CIB), the International Cost Engineering Council (ICEC) and the International Federation of Housing and Planning (IFHP).

FIG is an international scientific associate of the International Council for Science (ICSU). FIG is also a founding member of the Habitat Professionals Forum and a member of the Joint Board of Spatial Information Societies.

WHERE WILL FIG BE HEADING IN THE FUTURE?

The future aims of FIG are threefold. Firstly, FIG will continue to develop its role as a truly international NGO representing the surveying profession and the surveying interests world wide. This includes a close cooperation and communication with the member associations, and a strong focus on the work of the commissions. Secondly, FIG will further strengthen the relations with the international UN agencies including the World Bank. The aim will be to facilitate capacity development and good governance in the area of land administration and especially in developing countries. Thirdly, FIG will simply aim to enhance the global standing of the profession both through education and practice, increase the political relations both at national and international level, help eradicating poverty, promote democratisation, and facilitate economic, social and environmental sustainability.