

**Report to the 25<sup>th</sup> General Assembly  
FIG Congress in Washington, 19-26 April 2002**

**AD HOC COMMISSION ON  
CONSTRUCTION ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT  
REPORT ON ACTIVITIES 1998 – 2002**

The Ad Hoc Commission for Construction Economics and Management was reorganised after the resignation of its previous Chair following the Singapore working week in 1997. The primary aim was to ensure that the Commission was properly and fully represented at the Brighton Congress in 1998, and to establish a proposed work programme for approval at that meeting. The problems of the lack of continuity with a new Chair without previous experience of FIG quickly became apparent, particularly in the progress of the work within the Working Groups. The recruitment of Speakers to the Brighton Congress also posed a major problem at that time. After a great deal of effort from the then Secretary General, Roy Swanston, and Peter Goodacre of the College of Estate Management, Reading University, an excellent programme of technical sessions was established.

Prior to the Brighton Congress links were established with the International Cost Engineering Council, an organisation representing national associations of Quantity Surveyors and Cost Engineers world wide, through four regional groupings, Europe, Africa, the Americas and Asia Pacific. Roger Batten, the immediate past president of ICEC agreed to assist with the Ad Hoc Commission, and became the Vice Chair at the Brighton Congress. The Chair of the Ad Hoc Commission represented FIG at the European ICEC Group meeting in Rotterdam in 1998.

Despite the quality of the papers and presentations arranged for the Brighton Congress, attendance at the technical sessions was disappointing, and it proved difficult to obtain enthusiastic members of the national associations to join the Working Groups. Relationships with the ICEC were developed and a Memorandum of Understanding was prepared during the year.

Another excellent programme of technical sessions was produced for the Sun City Working Week in 1999. The association with ICEC proved extremely valuable in identifying potential presenters for that Working Week, and the ICEC decided to hold its African Regional annual meeting during the week, thus promoting FIG within its membership. The African associations were extremely well represented in Sun City, and the presenters in the technical sessions were well received by a large audience. During the week the memorandum of understanding between FIG and ICEC was formally executed, and signed by Peter Dale for FIG and Roger Batten for ICEC.

A very successful week for the Commission was enhanced when the African National Associations representing Quantity Surveyors and Cost Engineers formed and formalised the African Association of Quantity Surveyors during the FIG Working Week. The possibility of cross-commission working groups was also discussed in some detail during the week, with particular interest being shown in working closely with the other Commissions in the areas of low cost or affordable housing, sustainable development, and standards. These continue to be

key issues within FIG, and it is considered that the Commission for Construction Economics and Management Commission is an essential contributor to all discussions on these issues if meaningful contributions are to be made by FIG in the future. Thanks are due to the organisers of the Working Week and to all contributors, particularly Nick Duursema, Murtala Oladapo, Chris Richards, Basie Verster and Gaye Le Roux.

The Commission was also pleased to welcome the election of the Institution of Civil Engineers as a second member association from the United Kingdom during the General Assembly in Sun City. The relaxation of the rules on membership for second member associations should benefit the work of the Ad Hoc Commission, and the admission of the ICES, with its strong Quantity Surveying membership is particularly welcome.

Following the success of the Sun City week, the Groups working on the issues relating to affordable housing and procurement have made some progress. The commission has also made a valuable contribution to the special task force on standards. This contribution demonstrated the value of the association with ICEC as, through the Ad Hoc Commission; the task force was able to be informed of the work already undertaken by their members and to incorporate it into the report. Thanks are due to Frank Postula for his efforts and his contribution to the task force led by Iain Greenaway.

The Working Week in Prague was not successful for the Ad Hoc Commission. The lack of a local association for the discipline, visa difficulties, and the strong emphasis on Land Surveying, Cadastre and Mapping, could be the major reasons for the failure of the Commission to attract adequate support for its technical sessions in that conference. Despite the lack of support, a number of good technical papers were presented. Thanks are again due to all the presenters, and apologies due for the lack of attendees.

Following the Prague Working Week, a decision was taken that the Commission would not be able to organise any meaningful technical sessions at the subsequent Working Week in Korea.

The lack of any active participation in that meeting, and the time elapsed between the successful Sun City programme made it difficult for the Commission to maintain any momentum within its Working Groups. The review by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, by far the largest national association of Quantity Surveyors, of their international policy has undoubtedly had an adverse effect on the work of the Ad Hoc Commission over the past two years. This has now been completed and the election of Phil Shearer as incoming Chair of the Commission will assist with communications with the RICS membership in future. Phil is currently President of the newly formed Construction Faculty of the Institution, and it is hoped that his energy and close relationship with the RICS will enable him to draw on the vast resource of the membership to reinvigorate the revised working groups in the future.

For the future, the Commission has proposed a rationalisation of the Working Groups into four:

- Human Settlements, Economics and Environmental Sustainability
- Data Base for Quantity Surveying Education and Cost management Professionals World wide
- Standards, research and development in Cost Management, Quantity Surveying and Cost Engineering

- Construction Procurement

It is hoped that the progress made over the past years in these areas can be easily brought in to the new rationalised Groups. The Working Groups have also been structured to complement other cross commission groups working on similar topics, particularly Commissions 1, 2, 8 and 9. It is also intended to reflect the prime interests of most speakers at Working Weeks and Congress over the past few years, and to form the basis for technical sessions and discussion groups at future Working Weeks and Congress.

In summary, the Commission has had some successes over the past few years notably the development of the relationship with the ICEC, the Sun City Working Week and the formation of the African Association of Quantity Surveyors. The quality of papers presented in Technical Sessions has generally been extremely high, my thanks again to all contributors. Murtala Oladapo represented the Commission at the recent Nairobi Habitat meeting and the importance of its possible contribution was reflected in the summaries of that meeting. The attendance at the Prague workshops, the failure of the Commission to attend the Korea Working Week, and the lack of progress in some of the Working Groups have been the major disappointments

Thanks are due to Roger Batten, the Vice Chair for the period for all his efforts and enthusiasm.

It is hoped that the establishment of the Commission as a permanent Commission at the Washington Congress will assist the incoming Chair to raise support for the rationalised Working Groups in the future.

John A. Collinge

Chair of the Ad Hoc Commission for Construction Economics and Management, 1998-2002

Email: jcollinge@mdagroup.com