

TO: Geo-Institute Board of Governors

FROM: International Activities Task Force

DATE: 12 June 1999

SUBJECT: Report

In his letter of 24 Sept 98, then G-I President Krizek asked us “to formulate and recommend to the BoG the framework and scope for the organization and activities” of the International Activities Council (IAC). Specifically, we were asked to develop and recommend to the BoG:

- (1) The mission or charge statement of the IAC;
- (2) The organizational structure of IAC, if any;
- (3) The IAC membership (numbers, background, etc).

We were also asked to (4) suggest activities that might be appropriate for the IAC, including Conferences, continuing education courses, and liaison activities with other international georganizations (ISRM, IAEG, as well as ISSMGE). Finally, we could recommend (5) “any other matters deemed worthy of consideration.”

Members of the IAC Task Force are Governor Charles Fairhurst, Harvey Wahls (also USNS-ISSMGE Secretary), Jim Mitchell, Tuncer Edil, Carol Bowers, G-I Staff, and Governor Bob Holtz, Chair.

#### Preamble:

The Task Force feels strongly that international activities should be an integral and important part of the Geo-Institute. Our membership needs to be kept informed of and be ready to benefit fully from international technical developments and innovations, both by bringing these developments into U.S. practice and by extending U.S. practice abroad. The International Activities Council, once it is officially constituted, should be treated the same as any of the other G-I councils in terms of its budget and staff support. Dues associated with G-I membership in any international organization should be paid from the overall budget of the G-I, similarly to the way we now pay dues to the Geo-Council and American Geological Institute.

#### 1. Draft Mission Statement

The mission of the International Activities Council (IAC) is to develop, promote, and coordinate all Geo-Institute activities that have an international aspect or component. Included are international technology transfer activities (conferences, seminars, short courses), outreach activities, and international committees and task forces on technical and professional topics. The Council will maintain and improve relations with the major international geo-associations and societies (ISSMGE, ISRM, IAEG, IGS, etc), and it should develop appropriate cooperative relationships with national and regional geotechnical societies and other international professional and technical organizations.

## 2. and 3. Organization and Composition

As with other G-I Councils, all members of the IAC will be appointed by the BoG. They must be members in good standing of the G-I. IAC members also should have demonstrated interest in international activities and/or overseas experience.

We recommend that the IAC be composed of one G-I Governor and five other appointed members with staggered terms. In addition, at least initially, the USNS-ISSMGE Secretary will be an *ex officio* (voting or nonvoting?) member of the IAC. However, as formal relationships develop with other international geo-organizations and to keep the IAC a reasonable size, it may be appropriate for IAC members to act as liaisons with specific international geo-organizations. The IAC Chair is elected by a majority of the voting membership of the IAC with approval by the BoG.

As activities of the IAC develop, as with other Councils, it may be appropriate to establish committees and task forces to function directly under that IAC. It is anticipated that most of these committees/task forces will be joint activities that include representatives of other national and/or international geo-organizations or societies.

## 4. Suggested activities that could be developed by the IAC.

a. Conferences, seminars, workshops, etc.

### 1) ISSMGE activities

- Young Geotechnical Engineers Conference (See Wahls' letter in minutes of Boston BoG)
- PanAm Conference in the US. (See Wahls' e-mail of 2 Nov 98 to BoG)
- 15th International Conference on SM&FE, Istanbul, 2001
  - Review of abstracts/papers
  - Other US participation and activities

### 2) ISRM activities

- 9th International Congress on Rock Mechanics, Paris, August 25-28, 1999
- 25th International Tunneling Association Annual Meeting (in conjunction with World Tunnel Congress), Oslo, 1999
- EUROCK 2000 (ISRM Regional Symposium), Aachen, March 27-30, 2000
- 4th North American Rock Mechanics Symposium, Seattle, July 31-Aug 1, 2000

-- International Rapid Excavation and Tunneling Conference (RETC--This was a joint ASCE-AIME initiative years ago).

3) GeoEng 2000 (Sponsored by IAEG, ISRM, ISSMGE, ICGS, ITA, and IAH.), Melbourne, Nov.19-24, 2000

4) Other regional/international specialty conferences co-organized and co-sponsored with other national, regional, or international organizations

b. Continuing education activities

-- short courses and technical seminars

These should be promoted and presented with the cooperation of international organizations, local geotechnical societies, or local universities in the region or country of interest. As an example, several of the short course and workshops developed by G-I TCs can readily be adapted for presentation abroad.

c. Participation in international disaster and aid activities

The IAC could offer to coordinate G-I participation for the U.S. Government, international aid organizations, foreign governments, etc. for technical assistance during and after natural disasters and subsequent relief operations. Response teams of volunteers for specific technical areas (landslides; earthquakes; roads and infrastructure, etc.) could be developed in liaison with existing aid organizations and agencies.

Example: Reconstruction of Central America after the recent hurricane [Reference: Ron Smith and the Geo-Council meeting in December, as well as his discussion with Jerry DiMaggio (FHWA) about possible G-I involvement in short courses in Central America.]

5. Liaison with other international geo-organizations besides the ISSMGE

As a service to G-I members, the IAC should try to develop a dues check-off system similar to the British Geotechnical Society for all international geo-societies. All G-I members would be automatically entitled to membership in one of the international societies with no increase in dues. They could also elect to join any of the other societies for a nominal additional fee.

The dues check-off system may be an initial step towards developing more formal relations between the G-I and ISRM, IAEG, IGS, and others.

We should actively push for the formation of one international "umbrella" geo-society (the International Geotechnical Society?).

## 6. Liaison with other national geotechnical societies

-- JGS (we already have a draft agreement with them--see Wahls memo to BoG of 11 May 98)

-- CGS

The IAC should build upon the successful G-I/CGS "Magazine TF ", and look for other opportunities for cooperation with the CGS. Models for successful US-Canadian cooperation include the North American Geosynthetics Society and the North American Rock Mechanics Symposia.

-- Geotechnical societies of Mexico, Central America, and South America

-- Others

BGS and others in Europe

Taiwan

Australia/NZ

S. Africa

## 7. ISSMGE and USNS Issues (...to be considered by the IAC.)

Currently all relations with ISSMGE are handled by the ISSMGE Secretary who reports directly to the BOG of which he/she is a non-voting member. The ISSMGE Secretary also is charged with preparing an annual budget for use of the USNS Endowment Fund, including expenses for operation of the ISSMGE Secretary's office and participation in ISSMGE activities.

We recommend that the ISSMGE Secretary be deleted from the BOG and made a *ex officio* member of the IAC. The current budgetary responsibilities of the Secretary should be conducted in collaboration with the IAC rather than the BoG. For example, the ISSMGE Secretary can continue to propose funding for the Secretary's office and ISSMGE activities (primarily travel), and the IAC may propose projects to be supported from the USNS Fund (see Marcuson TF Report recommendations).

The IAC should investigate the reasons for the recent significant decline in USNS membership in the ISSMGE. They should develop a program for enhancing USNS membership.

The IAC should

-- advise the BoG on the appointment of USNS Secretary and the North American Vice President

-- appoint the U.S. G-I members to ISSMGE TCs

-- take an active role in the sponsorship of ISSMGE TC's [The USNS already sponsors TC-17:Ground Improvement, Reinforcement and Grouting (Juran), TC-32: Risk Assessment and Management (Van Marcke), and TC-33: Scour of Foundations (Briaud).]

8. ASCE's International Activities (...to be considered by the IAC.)

We are aware of the ASCE International Activities Committee and their report on "Implementation Plan for ASCE Globalization 2000-2005" (draft, January, 1999). As ASCE becomes more active internationally and begins to implement its "globalization" plans, the G-I IAC should develop formal liaison and collaborative activities with the ASCE International Activities Committee.