

The F.I.G. Report



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More information on the XXII F.I.G. Congress can be found at www.fig2006.de.

Go to www.intergeo.de/englisch/page/main to learn more about 2006 Intergeo

With the new ACSM organizational structure, instituted in 2003, three of the four current ACSM member organizations (AAGS, GLIS, and NSPS) have formed the ACSM F.I.G. Forum to represent their interests in the International Federation of Surveyors (F.I.G.) The fourth ACSM member organization, CaGIS, is the ACSM representative to the International Cartographic Association (ICA).

The F.I.G. Report will appear in each issue of the *ACSM Bulletin*. The objective is to provide information and news about F.I.G. and surveying around the world. The first report will provide background information on the who-and-what F.I.G. is. The acronym F.I.G. is derived from *Fédération Internationale des Géomètres*, French for International Federation of Surveyors.

The F.I.G. of today is composed of over 125 member organizations from over 110 countries on six continents representing over 250,000 surveying professionals worldwide.

F.I.G. establishment

The *Fédération Internationale des Géomètres* was founded on July 18, 1878, in Paris by delegates of seven national professional organizations (Belgium, Germany, France, Great Britain, Italy, Switzerland and Spain). Between the founding year and the turn of the century, activities were limited and between the two world wars (1914-1918 and 1939-1945), all efforts of F.I.G. came to a standstill.

The first F.I.G. Congress was held July 18-20, 1878, in Paris, France; the most recent, the XXII F.I.G. Congress, was held in 2002 in Washington, DC. Munich, Germany will host the XXIII F.I.G. Congress, October 8-13, 2006, in conjunction with the annual Intergeo Surveying and Mapping Geospatial Conference, sponsored by the German Association of Surveying, the Association for Geodesy, Geoinformation and Land Management (DVW e.V.), and the *Gesellschaft für Geodäsie, Geoinformation und Landmanagement*. Over 16,000 geospatial professionals and 515 exhibitors from 24 countries participated in the 2005 Intergeo held in Düsseldorf.

ACSM participation

In 1954, ACSM received an invitation from F.I.G., the French Embassy, and the National Research Council to send a representative to the VIII F.I.G. Congress in Paris, France that August. Marshall S. Wright, ACSM past president, was appointed ACSM representative. In 1959, ACSM sent past president Lester Higbee and vice president George Bestor as representatives and observers to the IX F.I.G. Congress held in Delft, The Netherlands.

During the 1959 ACSM business meeting held on March 10, 1959, a motion was passed recommending membership in F.I.G. The awareness of the need to participate internationally in the field of surveying and mapping, and Bestor's report from his attendance at the IX F.I.G. Congress led to a board-approved budget allocation of \$500 to cover the initiation fee and 1959 dues to F.I.G. Bestor appointed five delegates to the F.I.G. Permanent Committee meeting to be held that September in Krakow, Poland. An interesting notation was made that federation rules called for pronouncing the acronym as F.-I.-G. (not "fig") and that periods should be used between letters.

ACSM hosted the XIV F.I.G. Congress, in conjunction with the ACSM-ASP Fall Conference held September 7-16 at the Washington Hilton Hotel in Washington, DC. William

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A. “Rad” Radlinski, F.I.G. President 1973-1975 and U.S. Geological Survey Associate Director, presided over the F.I.G. Congress and F.I.G. General Assembly meeting. In his presidential address Radlinski stressed that one of the prime requisites in planning for better use of land is information on existing land use and changes in land use over time. He appealed to the profession to make major contributions in the resolution of data storage and dissemination, to bring order out of the existing chaotic proliferation and diversification of data, and to develop effective reference systems. In conclusion he said, “We have much to do if F.I.G. is to play its proper role in providing vitally needed information about our earthly habitat.” It should be noted here that his statements are accurate even today, some 30 plus years later.

Permanent Committee (PC) meetings were held in the intervening years between the F.I.G. Congresses. ACSM has participated as a member in all PC meetings and Congresses since 1959. In 1993, ACSM hosted the 60th F.I.G. PC Meeting, in conjunction with the ACSM-ASPRS Annual Conference held during Mardi Gras, in February, in New Orleans, Louisiana.

In 2002, ACSM once again hosted the F.I.G. Congress. The XXII F.I.G. Congress was held in conjunction with the ACSM-ASPRS Annual Conference, April 19-26, at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, D.C. Robert Foster, ACSM past president and F.I.G. president 1999-2002, presided over the Congress and General Assembly. Over 5,000 surveying and mapping professionals attended, with over 210 exhibitors also participating. It was the largest F.I.G. Congress ever held.

Foster noted the many different names and titles surveyors across the world have and the one common thing that transcends the differences. “Whatever we call ourselves,” Foster said, “it is about the land.” Like Bill Radlinski before him, Foster also called for the standardization of geospatial information by working toward a Global Spatial Data Infrastructure (GSDI). This was to be an effort embraced by surveyors, as they are the core players, users, and makers of spatial data. “Surveying is in the center of the solution of all land questions and concerns,” Foster maintained.

F.I.G. governance

F.I.G. is administered by its General Assembly—delegates of the member associations and, as non-voting members, the Council, commission chairs, representatives of affiliates, and corporate academic members—which meets annually during the F.I.G. working week or the F.I.G. Congress. The General Assembly debates and approves policies. Policies are implemented by the Council which meets at least twice a year (and usually teleconferences in the intervening months).

Each Council is represented, on a four-year rotational basis, by one of the F.I.G. member associations which nominates the president of F.I.G. (currently Holger Magel), three of the four vice-Presidents and the congress director. The fourth vice president is elected by the General Assembly. In addition commission chairs appoint their representative to the Council. Currently, F.I.G. is operating under a transitional governing structure; the new structure will be in full operation in 2007.

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 International Office of Cadastre and Land Records (Office International de Cadastre et du Régime Foncier- OICRF), the F.I.G. Multi-Lingual Dictionary Board, and the International Institution for the History of Surveying and Measurement.

The F.I.G. Report

The F.I.G. Office is responsible for all administrative issues including records, publications, and bulletins, as well as maintenance of the F.I.G. web site (www.fig.net). The current Director of the F.I.G. Office is Markku Villikka. The F.I.G. Office is located at the Surveyors House in Copenhagen, Denmark and is hosted by the DdL (Den danske Landinspektørforening), the Danish member association of F.I.G.

F.I.G. Commissions

F.I.G.'s technical work is led by ten Commissions. The responsibilities and work plans of Commissions are approved by the General Assembly during the F.I.G. Congress. The work of each Commission is led by the chairperson—elected to a four-year term of office by the General Assembly at the Congress. He is assisted by the Commission vice-chairpersons also appointed by the General Assembly. The chair-elect is elected by the General Assembly two years before the Congress. The Commission chair is also assisted by a vice-chair of administration who is in charge of the administration of the Commission. Every Commission has established at least three working groups on special topics. All member associations have the right to nominate a national delegate to each of the ten Commissions. The F.I.G. affiliate and academic members have a right to nominate a correspondent to each commission.

F.I.G. Commissions (ACSM Delegates in parentheses):

Commission 1—Professional Standards & Practice (Don Buhler)

Commission 2—Professional Education (Steve Frank)

Working Group 2.1—Virtual Academy

Working Group 2.2—The Studies of Surveying in Latin America

Working Group 2.3—Mutual Recognition

Working Group 2.4—Knowledge in Spatial Information Management

Working Group 2.5—Capacity Building in Land Management

Commission 5—Positioning and Measurement (Tomas Soler)

Working Group 5.1—Standards, Quality Assurance and Calibration

Working Group 5.2—Reference Frame in Practice

Working Group 5.3—Integrated Positioning, Navigation and Mapping Systems

Sub Group 5.3.3—GNSS Developments and Modernization

Working Group 5.4—Low Cost Surveying Technology and Techniques for Developing Countries

Commission 6—Engineering Surveys (Cecilia Whitaker)

Working Group 6.1—Deformation Measurement and Analysis

Task Force 6.1.1—Measurement and Analysis of Cyclic Deformations and Structural Vibrations

Task Force 6.1.2—Use of Satellite Radar Interferometry in Deformation Measurements

Task Force 6.1.3—Terrestrial Laser Scanning for Deformation Monitoring

Task Force 6.1.4—Crustal Deformation

Working Group 6.2—Engineering Surveys for Industry and Research

Working Group 6.3—Engineering Survey Data Bases and Facility Management

Working Group 6.4—Engineering Surveys for Construction Works and Structural Engineering

Task Force 6.4.1—Fibre Optic Sensors

Commission 7—Cadastre & Land Management (John Hohol)

Working Group 7.1—Creating Land Administration in Formal and Informal Environments

Working Group 7.2—Instruments for Land Distribution

Working Group 7.3—Advances in Modern Land Administration

Commission 8—Spatial Planning & Development (Mike Weir)

Commission 9—Valuation and the Management of Real Estate (Robert Foster)

Commission 10—Construction Economics and Management (Vacant)

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