

IAA Commission VI

Minutes of Meeting, Paris, 22 March 2005, 08:00-11:00

Present: Ivan Almar (IA) (Chair), R. Malina (RM) (Vice-Chair), D. Raitt (DR), C. Swan (CS), Peter Jankowitsch (PJ), F. Becker (FB), V. Menschikov (VM), Richard Clar (RC), R. Kline (RK) (for part)
Apologies for Absence: A. Woods (AW)

Agenda:

1. Status of Fukuoka
2. Budapest report
3. Study groups
4. Valencia
5. Change of Leadership

In the absence of the Secretary (AW), IA asked DR to take the minutes.

1. Status of Fukuoka

The status of sessions and papers for Fukuoka was discussed. RM reported that the History group had four sessions with only some four abstracts per session - thus there would be a need to consolidate these sessions. He added it was necessary to have a presentation on the history of the Japanese space programme.

Although not directly related to Fukuoka, RK mentioned that the IAA was cooperating with the IAF on the history project and there would be a joint committee. He queried what Commission VI wanted to do and noted that history was not necessarily a part of space and society - though if Commission VI wanted to be in the IAA/IAF group then it could as history was currently within its scope.

DR noted that there were 20 quality papers received for the spin-off session E5.1 and wondered whether it might be possible to have an extra session since history might not fill all its slots. IA said he would raise the possibility of splitting the spin-off session into two sessions with the SAC. (NB - this was done and the proposal was accepted and has been incorporated into the final programme). DR also reported that some 24 papers had been submitted for the Cultural Dimensions session. RC said he had received 8 papers for his session and required a paper from ESA (DR agreed to be the presenter).

IA stated that there should be a Commission VI meeting in Fukuoka.

2. Budapest report

IA reported on the Impact of Space on Society conference which took place in Budapest from 17-19 March. This was the first standalone IAA conference and was the main Commission VI achievement of the last couple of years. The conference proved its worth and revealed an art and cultural community very much interested in space. There was a good mix of topics. The book which lent its name to the conference and which was the output of a Commission VI study group was distributed at the conference and was extremely well received. IA was thanked by all present for the fine organization of the event.

It was agreed that members would think about what to do with the papers presented at the conference - whether there should be a proceedings and if so should it be on CD since there were so many large files and images - or on a Web site. It was pointed out that the conference organizers have the majority of the presentations on the computer provided.

A discussion then ensued on a follow-up conference at some undetermined future date - most likely in a year when the IAC was far outside Europe. RM noted that both the strength and weakness of the conference was its breadth and there was a need for better, more focused sessions with more introductory papers. DR suggested contacting accepted authors to ensure that they spoke about generalities rather than specifics. IA also commented on the advisability of having a workshop immediately before with many of the same papers presented both there and in the main sessions.

3. Study Groups

The Commission VI study groups are 6.1 Multilingual Dictionaries; 6.2 Education in Space; 6.3 Interstellar Message Construction; 6.4 History; 6.5 Space Arts Database; and 6.6 Impact of Space Activities upon Society. Few representatives were present, but IA reported that the groups were in good shape and distributed a document which reviewed progress and membership of each group.

Some specific comments were that SG 6.4 was completed in Vancouver and SG 6.6 concluded in Budapest. The SG 6.6 home page on the IAA Web site would be updated and DR said he would send the IAA Office the pdf and link for the Impact book. (NB - this has since been done). Of the other groups, IA mentioned that SG 6.1 needed more members to cover more languages. RM remarked that SG 6.5 was intending to add a number of additional artists, though adequate funding for this was a problem.

A proposal was distributed on the formation of a new study group (SG 6.7) for the 50th anniversary of the Space Era in 2007. No-one was at the meeting to defend it, but RM was of the opinion that Commission VI should support it, though it sounded very ambitious.

Regarding other future study groups, CS said that the process for the Impact on Society book had been fascinating and worthwhile and it would be useful to continue this SG in a different form. The idea would be to turn the question around and ask what impact does society have on space activities? What can space offer the public? What are societies expectations from space activities? DR added that schools and universities as well as art and cultural groups could be brought into the process to suggest how they were contributing to space activities and what being involved in space meant to them. It was considered that this could be done via the Web rather than creating a book at the outset - although FB believed it might be useful to consider an IAA White Paper on the topic.. RM thought it was important to continue this process and noted that the IAA needed to endorse the topic. DR said he would provide Pete Swan (who would initiate the SG) some ideas and input on the topic.

4. Valencia

A number of sessions were proposed for the IAC 2006 in Valencia. DR said that since Social Benefits of Space Spin-Off was introduced into the Fukuoka programme for the first time, then the theme should be continued in Valencia. He suggested that in view of the number of papers received, then possibly two sessions should be foreseen. He also proposed a new session relating to the possible new SG on the popularization of space. RC said that he keen to have a session on space tourism and this would be done in conjunction with Commission V. Since no history members were present, then it was not known how many sessions might be proposed by them. However, DR remarked that just because the

bulk of Commission VI sessions might have gone to history in the past, did not mean to say that they should in future.

It should be noted that following the conclusion of the Commission VI meeting, RC, DR and CS joined the Commission V meeting where it was agreed that the latter would jointly support RC's Space Tourism session. DR suggested that since Commission V was only proposing four sessions for Valencia, then perhaps they would have the Space Tourism one as a fifth session, thus freeing a slot in Commission VI in the event that several were taken up by history. No objections were raised by RC or Commission V to this suggestion.

For the sake of completeness, it is also worth reporting that consequently in the IPC days which followed, Commission VI (DR) officially proposed three sessions for Valencia - two dealing with space spin-offs and one dealing with the social expectations of space activities and these have been incorporated into the programme. Commission V also proposed Space Tourism as one of its sessions and this too was accepted.

5. Change of Leadership

IA said this was his last time of chairing Commission VI as he was not going to Fukuoka. He was warmly thanked for all the efforts in running Commission VI. RM was elevated to Chair of Commission VI and DR was made Vice-Chair - his election to full Member being endorsed by the Commission. Since AW would also not be going to Fukuoka and his term of office was up, then he was also thanked in his absence for all his many efforts as Secretary. The position of Secretary remains open.

The meeting closed at 10:30