

**International Triennial Meeting of the Indexing Societies  
Minutes  
Thursday 15 June 2006 at 4:00 PM,  
Marriott Downtown Eaton Centre  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada**

Abbreviations for the Indexing Societies and Networks used in this document:

ASI	American Society of Indexers
ASAIB	Association of Southern African Indexers and Bibliographers
ANZI	Australia and New Zealand Society of Indexers
CSI	China Society of Indexers
DNI	Deutsches Netzwerk der Indexer
IASC/SCAD	Indexing and Abstracting Society of Canada / Société canadienne pour l'analyse de documents
NNI	Nederlands Indexers Network
SI	Society of Indexers (UK)

Appendices circulated with these minutes

- Appendix A: 2006 Revision of the International Agreement
- Appendix B: Update on the International Good Practice Website
- Appendix C: Recommended Practice (SI)

Present for the entire meeting: Maria Coughlin and Seth Maislin (ASI); Lynn Farkas (ANZI); Wei Haisheng (CSI); Elizabeth Macfie (recorder) and Ruth Pincoe (chair) (IASC/SCAD); Jill Halliday (SI)

Representatives from the two networks given Associate status joined the meeting following the discussion of the International Agreement: Jochen Fassbender (DNI); Caroline Diepeveen (NNI).

### **1 Call to Order**

Ruth Pincoe opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to Toronto and to Canada, and extending warm greetings from IASC/SCAD.

### **2 Call for New Business**

Ruth Pincoe added business arising from minutes of 2003 to the agenda.

### **3 Regrets for Absence**

The international representative from South Africa was unable to attend this conference.

### **4 Minutes from the 2003 Triennial International Meeting in Sydney, Australia**

The minutes of the 2003 international meeting, held in Sydney, were circulated before the meeting. Lynn Farkas (who was present at that meeting) stated that these minutes were complete and correct as circulated.

### **5 Business arising from the 2003 minutes**

Item 6b: This text has not yet been deleted from the International Agreement. It will be deleted along with the additional revisions made during the present meeting.

### **6 International Agreement Review**

The following revisions, additions, and deletions to the International Agreement were accepted. The text of 2006 revision of the International Agreement is attached to and circulated with these minutes (see Appendix A). All Societies and Associate groups or networks will send ratification of this draft by end of November 2006. Please note that the clause numbers referred to below reflect the new clause numbers in the final 2006 revision of the Agreement.

ACTION: Ruth Pincoe, All

- a **Status of the German (DNI) and Dutch (NNI) networks:** A new clause was added to cover the Associate status to be given to groups and networks that have not created formal Societies (clause 3): *A category of "Associate" status will enable networks and groups that have not formed formal Societies to receive The Indexer at the preferential rate enjoyed by the indexing Societies. Other reciprocal arrangements will not apply, unless negotiated individually with particular Societies.* To cover other portions of the Agreement that affect Associate groups and networks, the wording "each Society" is revised to read "Society and Associate group or network" (clauses 4, 5, 8 and 11).
- e The clause covering conference registrations for international representatives (clause 6) was revised to read: *Each Society shall offer a free conference registration to an authorized representative from each of the other Societies. The host of the Triennial International Meeting will also offer a discounted place to an authorized representative from each of the Associate groups or networks.*
- b. **Newsletter exchange:** The clause covering newsletter exchange (clause 6) was revised to read include both print and electronic publications: *Each Society and Associate group or network will make its newsletter accessible to the governing body of all the other Societies and Associates at no charge. In the case of hard-copy newsletters, copies will be mailed. Electronic online newsletters will be made accessible to the international delegates of all the other Societies and Associate groups or networks; international delegates may make the newsletter accessible to relevant members of the governing body of their Society or Associate group or network.* All Societies and Associate networks should therefore make arrangements to add DNI and NNI to the newsletter exchange process.

ACTION: All

- c **The Indexer Editorial Board:** The clause covering representation on the Indexer Editorial Board (clause 10) was revised to read: *Each participating Society and Associate group or network shall have the right to nominate one of its members to the Editorial Board of The Indexer.*
- d **Price of The Indexer:** The clause covering the price of *The Indexer* (clause 12) was revised to read: *The price of The Indexer for members of the Societies and Associate groups or networks shall be fixed by the [British] Society of Indexers, and shall be at a lower rate than the subscription rate. The Societies and Associate groups or networks shall be notified of price changes by the beginning of June of the year before they take effect.* The change from "the beginning of July" to "the beginning of June" – requested by ANZI because their fiscal year begins on July 1 – is subject to the agreement of the SI board who will discuss the point and make a final decision.

ACTION: SI (Jill Halliday)

Once these revisions were made, the representatives of DNI (Jochen Fassbender) and NNI (Caroline Diepeveen) were invited to join the meeting and welcomed as Associate networks.

NOTE: At their annual general meeting, held on 17 June 2006, the members of IASC/SCAD changed the name of their association to Indexing Society of Canada/Société canadienne

d'indexation (ISC/SCI). The final draft of the 2006 revision of the International Agreement reflects this change. All Societies and Associate networks are requested to update references on websites and in publications to reflect this change.

ACTION: All

## **7 Reciprocal Advertising**

The reciprocal advertising seems to be functioning well. Societies and Associate groups or networks should note that advertisements must fit within the format of the individual newsletter. For example, ANZI can reproduce inserts on a page of the newsletter, but they cannot accommodate separate insert sheets.

## **8 Newsletters in electronic format.**

Within the next year ANZI will have a members-only page on their website, on which they will post the three most recent issues of their newsletter. Older issues will be available to everyone on the public portion of the ANZI website.

*Sidelights* is available only in hard copy but SI is currently consulting with members on the feasibility of switching to an electronic version. Other issues regarding newsletters were addressed during the discussion on revisions to the International Agreement above.

## **9 Update on the International Good Practice Website**

Janet Shuter's report on the International Good Practice Website has been circulated to meeting participants, and is attached to these minutes (Appendix B). ASI is currently building up a "Body of Knowledge" document covering the requirements for good indexing and the skills and attributes of an indexer; a draft is being prepared for ASI member approval and the document will eventually be posted on the public portion of the ASI website. Collaboration with the International Good Practice Website project is possible and encouraged. Jill Halliday will consult with Janet Shuter concerning progress on the International Good Practice Website and the next steps needed to move this project along.

ACTION: SI (Jill Halliday)

## **10 Education Programs and Training Courses**

At present, the availability of training and of accreditation varies widely among the Societies and Associate groups or networks.

SI offers other Societies the option of setting up their own accreditation systems based on the SI course. Jill Halliday announced that the fourth section of the Training Course, covering business elements, will be dropped.

ASI will launch an Americanized version of the SI Training Course on 1 July 2006. ASI offers its Training Course only to members of ASI members. A question has arisen regarding access to training. One possibility would be to add a clause to the International Agreement regarding admission to training programs (similar to the clause regarding the exchange of newsletters). This issue could be discussed further at the 2009 Triennial International Meeting. Meanwhile, the Societies and Associate networks should keep each other informed about what they are doing with regard to training and accreditation so that we can share experiences and resources. We are also reminded that offering training courses can be a good way to build membership, as happened in New Zealand.

IASC/SCAD does not accord preferred status to any of the existing training courses available from Britain and the United States, but does encourage members to consider the SI Training Course. IASC/SCAD has no plans at this point to set up any form of accreditation for several reasons. One serious issue preventing IASC/SCAD from using the SI course as a formal requirement is the fact that it is only available in English. Since IASC/SCAD is a

bilingual organization, any training course and/or accreditation program adopted on an official basis would have to be available in both English- and French-language versions; translation and the creation of a francophone version is prohibitively expensive and time consuming. IASC/SCAD would like their members to have access to the SI Training Course.

DNI is interested in the principle of training because they are keen to represent a membership that is well trained. NNI and DNI could be interested in making training available to their members, but the course material would need to be translated and adapted for cultural aspects and practices. Small networks see value in offering short courses, such as one- or two-day seminars. There was general agreement that we could explore possibilities of sharing the basic structure of short courses among the Societies and Associate networks so that trainers don't have to start from scratch.

Maria Coughlin (ASI) pointed out a potential threat regarding wide access of the Training Course, in that a single individual could take the course, then use the materials as a basis for training large numbers of people in the offshore supply industry.

Wei Haisheng (CSI) pointed out a potential benefit of cooperation between training courses of the Societies and the universities in China, but the course materials would need to be translated. He hoped there would be further opportunities to discuss cooperation during conference. The meeting participants commended the China for their forward-looking approach in the provision of indexing training at the university level; universities in the UK and in Australia and New Zealand seem to have no interest.

## **11 Outsourcing in the publishing industry:**

Outsourcing is a global issue that can best be handled through cooperation. For example, we could monitor the situation and share information with the other Societies and Associate networks, who could then handle it in their own way. ASI is interested in finding out more about current developments in this area and would like to share information among all Societies and Associate networks on how the industry is changing globally. A lot of work from the UK is going to India; typesetters in India offer indexing services as well, and sometimes outsource the work to UK and American indexers at low rates. Publishers are accepting the low quality of indexing that indexers in India are doing.

Ruth Pincoe suggested taking wider international view of our profession: if indexing is happening in other countries, it should be good indexing and the people doing it should be paid well (and perhaps also, less work would be sent offshore). Jill Halliday suggested that the indexing societies profit from their expertise by offering training to those "overseas" countries. If we can publicize good standards (ISO) to the industry, there might be less outsourcing. While Societies want to protect members, some of their members also accept work from other countries. When Societies and Associate networks are setting recommended rates, it would be best to raise rates throughout the Society's or Associates geographic area so that publishers don't "outsource" to the lower-paid areas.

Lynn Farkas suggested that because this outsourcing is happening, our international group could take a role representing professional indexers everywhere. For example, we could contact publishers to encourage them to pay for good-quality indexes. There may be more we can do as a group.

Seth Maislin recommended that we proceed with International Good Practice Website to publicize the always-current basics of professional indexing. The site could be kept current by having it in wiki format, and all Societies and Associate networks could contribute. The International group needs to keep in closer communication.

## **12 Code of Ethics**

This item was tabled because we are now focusing on the Good Practice Website. Jill Halliday circulated an ethics-related list (see Appendix C, “Recommended Practice”) that is presently on the SI website. ASI is developing a “Best Practices” document which will be posted on their website site. Jochen Fassbender requested permission for other Societies and Associate networks to translate these lists. The group gave permission and invited comments on the list.

### **13 International Liaison Post**

For some years Jill Halliday has filled the role of “informal international chivvier,” and proposed the creation of a formal International Liaison, officially responsible for calling meetings, circulating minutes, and maintaining records (minutes and other relevant documentation) of the international meetings. Ruth Pincoe was proposed to take this new role, and she accepted. She commented that she is excited about the enriching international network that exists in indexing. On behalf of group, Maria Coughlin offered sincere gratitude to Jill Halliday for having brought together the international network years ago, and extended thanks to Ruth Pincoe for taking over.

There was general agreement on the value of setting up a listserv for the international representatives with an archive, so that people can research topics that have been discussed in the past. Minutes of the International Meetings are not currently preserved in a formal way. Ruth Pincoe will investigate ways to improve contact and preserve our documentation.

As a first step, over the next few months, Ruth Pincoe will set up a listserv for the international representatives group. Ruth requested details of the names of international representatives and the email and postal mail contact addresses for each Society and Associate group or network. One of the Societies might be able to host the listserv within its ISP, or we could start with a YahooGroups list. Ruth Pincoe and Seth Maislin will work on this research and will report to the international representatives over the coming months. Comments are welcome from other Societies and Associate networks. The listserv must be accessible to all Societies and Associate networks.

ACTION: Ruth Pincoe, Seth Maislin

### **11 Contact Information and Communication**

It has often been difficult to circulate messages to all Societies efficiently because international representatives of the various Societies change every few years. ASI created the e-mail address [international@ASI](mailto:international@ASI) to avoid problems caused by out-of-date e-mail addresses. Messages sent to this address are automatically forwarded to the ASI’s current international representative.

### **15 Host for the 2009 International Meeting**

We propose that ASAIB host the 2009 Triennial International Meeting. One reason is that it is difficult for ASAIB members to travel the long distances to other countries. Ruth Pincoe will contact ASAIB. ANZI offered to host the meeting if ASAIB declines.

ACTION: Ruth Pincoe

### **17 Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned with warm thanks to all involved.

## Appendix A – 2006 Revision of the International Agreement

### International Agreement of Indexing Societies

Agreement between the Society of Indexers, the American Society of Indexers, the Indexing Society of Canada/Société canadienne d'indexation, the Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers, the Association of Southern African Indexers and Bibliographers, and the China Society of Indexers (1999, amended 2006)

All mention of Societies refers to the Societies listed in Schedule A. All mention of Associate groups or networks refers to those listed in Schedule B.

- 1 This agreement between the Societies promotes the aims and objectives of the Societies and their members, and supersedes all previous affiliation agreements between the Societies.
- 2 The members of each Society shall enjoy the right to attend meetings and conferences of the other Societies and to purchase publications at the member rate. Members shall not have reciprocal rights to vote or hold office. Services specific to a Society, such as certification and registers of indexers, are not included in the reciprocal rights.
- 3 A category of "Associate" status will enable networks and groups that have not formed formal Societies to receive *The Indexer* at the preferential rate enjoyed by the indexing Societies. Other reciprocal arrangements will not apply, unless negotiated individually with particular Societies.
- 4 Societies and Associate groups or networks shall refrain from actively seeking members in areas covered by other Societies, but each Society may accept membership applications from individuals outside their own area.
- 5 Each Society and Associate group or network agrees to nominate an international delegate to represent its interests on matters of international import, and to act as liaison with the other Societies and Associates
- 6 Each Society shall offer a free conference registration to an authorized representative from each of the other Societies. The host of the Triennial International Meeting will also offer a discounted place to an authorized representative from each of the Associate groups or networks.
- 7 Each Society and Associate group or network will make its newsletter accessible to the governing body of all the other Societies and Associates at no charge. In the case of hard-copy newsletters, copies will be mailed. Electronic online newsletters will be made accessible to the international delegates of all the other Societies and Associates; international delegates may make the newsletter accessible to relevant members of the governing body of their Society or Associate group or network.
- 8 The [British] Society of Indexers shall publish *The Indexer* on behalf of all the Societies and Associates. It shall remain the property of the [British] Society of Indexers.

- 9 The appointment of the editor(s) of *The Indexer* shall remain the responsibility of the [British] Society of Indexers. The management of *The Indexer* shall be the responsibility of the Editorial Board of *The Indexer*.
- 10 Each participating Society and Associate group or network shall have the right to nominate one of its members to the Editorial Board of *The Indexer*.
- 11 The editor(s) of *The Indexer* shall maintain the right to accept or reject contributions from whatever source, at their discretion.
- 11 Each Society and Associate group or network shall make *The Indexer* available to its members according to its own rules and procedures.
- 12 The price of *The Indexer* for members of the Societies and Associate groups or networks shall be fixed by the [British] Society of Indexers, and shall be at a lower rate than the subscription rate. The Societies and Associates shall be notified of price changes by the beginning of June of the year before they take effect.
- 13 This Agreement may be amended at any time by common consent. Review of the agreement will take place every third year, commencing in the year 2000.
- 14 The Triennial International Meeting shall take place at the conference of one of the Societies. At each meeting the host Society for the next meeting shall be nominated.
- 15 Any Society may withdraw from the agreement on giving 12 months notice to the other Societies.
- 16 This agreement shall come into effect on its approval by the respective Societies, according to their constitutional procedures. It does not depend upon approval of the groups or networks holding Associate status.

#### **Schedule A**

American Society of Indexers (ASI)

Association of Southern African Indexers and Bibliographers (ASAIB)

Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers (ANZSI)

China Society of Indexers (CSI)

Indexing Society of Canada / Société canadienne d'indexation (ISC/SCI)

Society of Indexers (referred to above as [British] Society of Indexers) (SI)

#### **Schedule B**

Deutsches Netzwerk der Indexer / German Indexing Network (DNI)

Nederlands Indexers Netwerk / Netherlands Indexing Network (NNI)

June 2006

## Appendix B: Update on the International Good Practice Website

Report from Janet Shuter (SI): After nothing happening for so long, I am going to make the effort to populate the Wiki website (being set up by SI's webmaster) in the following way:

- 1 Insert a hierarchy of topics in indexing on the lines of ISO999, and insert text at each point giving paraphrase of relevant ISO or failing that BS guidelines, which I hope will stimulate people to add their own views.
- 2 I have been locating online articles [mostly US and Australian] on indexing topics and will link to them after consulting authors.
- 3 I have also been locating publishers' guidelines, mostly dreadful and clearly copied uncritically from one another, but some quite good and well expressed. With these and information produced by indexing societies, for example, SI's "Last but not Least" guide for editors, I hope to produce a minimalist alternate to (1) above – what authors and editors and one-off indexers really need to know about indexing, for further development online.

It should be made clear that the wiki website is *not* the IGPW, but a means of developing the IGPW. It is also not intended as a discussion board for beginning or intending indexers.

Linda Sutherland (SI) has found a useful system for Wiki updating which should help in this.

## Appendix C: Recommended Practice (SI)

An indexer should:

- Support the aims and the objectives of the Society of Indexers, in order to ensure continuing high standards of indexing
- Achieve and maintain competence in professional indexing practice with due regard to relevant standards
- Keep up to date with the development of knowledge in his or her chosen subjects
- Compile indexes to a text on a specialist subject only if he or she has adequate knowledge of the specialism and competence to deal with the intellectual level of the text under consideration
- Discuss requirements with clients, advise on details of indexing with which the client may not be familiar and follow the agreed specification
- Handle in a polite and equable manner problems, any queries and complaints which may arise during the compilation of an index
- Adhere to the agreed dates for the delivery of a commissioned index and inform the client immediately of any problems which may affect prompt delivery
- Agree a fair and appropriate fee for a commissioned index, declining an unrealistic fee unless there are extenuating circumstances.