

**Meeting of International Societies and *Indexer*
Representatives (ICRIS) and Guests
Vancouver, B.C., 26 May 2011**

Present: Ruth Pincoe (ICRIS Coordinator; ISC/SCI), Heather Ebbs (ISC/SCI), Hilary Faulkner (SI), Max McMaster (ANZSI), Alan Walker (ANZSI), Pilar Wyman (ASI)

Regrets: ASAIB (conveyed by Madely DePreez), DIN (conveyed by Jochen Fassbinder), NIN (conveyed by Caroline Diepeveen)

1 – Introductions and News

Alan Walker noted that he and Max were at very first international meeting, held at the ASI conference in Seattle in 1998. The first formal meeting was at the SI meeting in Britain the following year; that is when the first multi-lateral affiliation agreement was created.

Heather Ebbs, the past president of ISC/SCI, will guest edit the December 2011 issue of *The Indexer* on behalf of ISC/SCI. She has a good line-up of writers, though not a lot of articles are in hand to date.

Pilar Wyman, the president-elect of ASI, is looking forward to the ISC/SCI meeting over the next couple of days as well as the ANZSI meeting in September. ASI is gathering ideas for its San Diego conference in 2012.

Max McMaster will guest edit the June 2012 issue of *The Indexer*. He is also looking forward to welcoming people to the ANZSI conference in September.

Hilary Faulkner, the Director of Member Services for SI, is here representing both SI and *The Indexer*, which she guest edited a few years ago.

Ruth Pincoe's role as ICRIS Coordinator is to try to make all these meetings and connections happen, so she is “thrilled to bits” about the seemingly established standard of an informal meeting of the international representatives just before each society's conference.

2 – Preparation of International Agreement Revisions

[a] Newsletter access to members of sister societies

Heather presented her revision of the International Agreement -- based on discussions at the ICRIS meeting in Providence, Rhode Island, 27 April 2011. The purpose of the revision is to make Clause 7 as simple and generic as possible, with specific details given in Schedule D. The revised wording was reviewed by Pilar for clarity and suitability.

The main changes in clause 7 are to use the generic phrase “online member newsletter” to identify the document as different from every possible newsletter (or other publication) of a Society. The term “newsletter” seems too rigid and could cause problems in interpretation; the modifier “online member” adds flexibility (reflecting the variety of such publications) but is simple and clear. The verb “may” is used to indicate that the governing bodies are not required to make the newsletters available. Schedule D names the publications that are subject to this arrangement and those that are not. The advantage of using a Schedule is that any future changes in specific publications (even if just in name) can be easily made without affecting the agreement per se. (Pilar noted that *Key Words* is a bulletin, not a member newsletter, indicating that this wording works.)

7 The online member newsletter of each Society and Associate group or network will be made available to governing bodies of all the other sister Societies and Associate groups or networks, and these bodies may make the newsletters available to their members.

Schedule D

Online newsletters that are free to members will be made accessible to the governing bodies of each Society or Associate group or network through the international liaisons. The governing bodies may then make the newsletters accessible to members of their Society or Associate group or network through members-only areas of their websites. This reciprocal arrangement applies to the *ANZSI Newsletter*, the *ASAIB Newsletter*, the *DNI Newsletter*, ISC/SCI's *Bulletin* and SI's *Sidelights*. This reciprocal arrangement does not apply to *The Indexer* and *Key Words* (ASI).

Action: Ruth will circulate the suggested wording to the international representatives of all societies and associate groups or networks.

[b] Name for body of international representatives

The question of a name for the body of International Representatives was discussed at the international meeting held at the SI conference in York in September 2009:

“John Simkin (on behalf of ANZSI) suggested that an acronym for the group of international representatives who meet at the International Triennial Meetings and take part in online discussions on the Indsocintreps list was needed. A few suggestions were tossed about, ICIRIS (International Committee of International Representatives of Indexing Societies) finding the most favour.”

We discussed this again, and several other alternatives were mentioned. We ultimately decided that the second “International” could be removed. We agreed that the name **International Committee of Representatives of Indexing Societies (ICRIS)** was an accurate identification and that we should begin to use it.

[c] Frequency of official international meetings

Ruth noted a concern has been raised regarding the fact that because official international meetings occur at three-year intervals, the timelines for official acceptance and implementation of internationally agreed upon items are extremely long. With the increasingly good representation and attendance at informal meetings of international representatives, a more frequent meeting schedule might be possible. One option would be for the host Society to rotate on a yearly basis. With such a schedule, the frequency of official ICRIS meetings could vary from 10 up to 18 months, depending on location.

Alan noted that triennial schedule dates back to the first international agreement, when international representatives and other Society members did not often travel to meetings of other Societies. This situation has changed significantly.

Further, the informal meetings of international representatives are not always solely focused on the International Agreement. Other issues of international interest are discussed. Also, with more frequent formal international meetings, the agendas could be split between discussing and approving things that representatives had raised and discussed with their national executives, and discussing new issues.

Max suggested that a scheduled rotation for several years could be devised to rotate amongst all the societies. This was generally agreed. Pilar pointed out that the specific location within a country could affect attendance, and the societies may have different rationales for conference locations (for example, ASI considers

fairness in locating conferences not just East, Central, West but also North and South; ISC/SCI generally alternates between East/Central and West). It was agreed that any schedule devised should be flexible so as to allow modifications (such as “swapping” of host societies or other accommodations). International interest in attending the meetings of the host societies presents a “win-win” situation for all.

While we realized that no action could be taken on this proposal until the 2012 Triennial, but we agreed that we should start to explore a possible schedule in preparation for drafting a revision to the International Agreement.

Action: All international representatives/liaisons will send to Max McMaster the rationales for where and when their conferences are held.

Action: Max McMaster will draft a possible schedule of host societies for international meetings over the next few years.

3 – New Concerns

[a] Index Appreciation Day

On 18 November 2011, ASI will inaugurate Index Appreciation Day. The purposes are to raise appreciation of indexes and, in turn, to increase the value of indexers’ work. One of the ways they will celebrate is by promoting indexing in every city or town in the United States called Index. The intention is to reach out to our greater communities and to increase awareness of our societies and appreciation of indexers. Other societies are encouraged to consider similar initiatives.

Action: All international representatives will search for locations named “Index” in their respective countries.

[b] Membership rate and benefit comparison

Max presented a membership rate and benefit comparison of the sister Societies (translated into Australian dollars as of 29 March 2011) that he had prepared for internal ANZSI purposes. This report will be circulated with the minutes.

4 – *The Indexer*

Approaches have been made for outsourcing to two different journal publishers. One was not interested; the other made a draft proposal, but it was felt that the key problems of marketing and distribution were not addressed. Further, there would have been a loss of flexibility in production. Therefore, alternative ways of dealing with these problems are needed. A short brainstorming session produced several suggestions that might be helpful:

- Given that the mailing database is in Excel, some problems (for example, database maintenance, querying) might be resolved by converting the Excel list to database software such as Access. This might require fairly limited consultancy and conversion time and expense.
- The international community is willing to help if there is expertise that SI wants to specifically request.
- Increasing the number of subscribers is something that all Societies should be willing and able to help with. The onus should not be just on SI.
- Subscriptions are particularly valuable for part-time and new indexers – a fact that should be considered in marketing strategies for both *The Indexer* and the various Societies.
- Sample copies of *The Indexer* should be available at all Society conferences.

- A professional journal is a key benefit of membership in a professional society.
- *The Indexer* can extend beyond indexers to examine peripheral occupations or societies.
- Theme issues can reach out to these other communities.
- Anthologies of related articles might be gathered and sold separately (for example, an anthology of all the “names” articles).

Adjournment: 5:33 p.m.

Membership Rate Comparison

To ascertain how ANZSI's membership rates compared with our sister societies I decided to look at three important attributes associated with personal membership:

- basic membership rate
- whether the society included a subscription to *The Indexer* within their membership fee structure
- whether an entry in Indexers Available (or equivalently named service) was free with membership or entailed an additional cost.

Membership rates comparison

| Society | Personal membership rate | <i>The Indexer</i> subscription | Indexers Available entry | Totals (A\$) |
|---------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| ASAIB | R120 (A\$17) | available via ASAIB | included | 17 |
| ANZSI | A\$75 | £28 (A\$45) | included | 120 |
| ASI | US\$150 (A\$150) | £28 (A\$45) | US\$125 (A\$125) | 320 |
| ISC/SCI | CAN\$90 (A\$90) | included | CAN\$40 (A\$40) | 130 |
| SI | £100 (A\$160) | included | £20 (A\$32) | 192 |

Each society currently publishes a newsletter which is part of their basic membership. The newsletters vary in physical size (number of pages), frequency, and the use of colour within their pages. Interestingly enough ASAIB produces 2 newsletters per year, ISC/SCI 3 per year, ASI and SI 4 per year, while ANZSI produces 11 per year. There are obvious cost implications, but these costs are “hidden” within each society’s basic membership fee structure so they have not been considered in the overall comparison.

Perusal of the results shows a marked variation between what personal members pay between societies. Excluding ASAIB, where not all the data was available, results show that ANZSI members currently pay the cheapest rates overall.

As *The Indexer* is the journal of the societies and networks subscribing to the International Agreement of Indexing societies, and ANZSI is an integral part of that network, ANZSI members should automatically receive *The Indexer* as part of their subscription, albeit at an increased cost, rather than opting in or out of their subscription as at present. My feeling is that a combined ANZSI membership, including *The Indexer* should be set at \$140, which is only \$10 above the ISC/SCI cost. This figure would cover ANZSI’s administration fees for handling the subscription, allow for price fluctuations between Sterling and A\$, and provide a small profit for ANZSI. This profit to be used to provide better services for members.

As is currently the case I believe all members should be entitled to a free basic entry in Indexers Available. However, with the review of Indexers Available currently being carried out by some members of the NSW Branch, it would be advantageous to have an enhanced Indexers Available entry available to those members who require it for say a figure of \$60/year. In other words there will be a two-tier pricing system for Indexers Available: Basic level, which would be free to all members, and an Enhanced level available for an extra \$60 per annum.

Honorary Life Members would need to pay for their subscription to *The Indexer* as well as for an Enhanced entry in Indexers Available if this was required.

Student members and corporate member rates should have the same differential as at present. *The Indexer* component is basically a fixed cost so student and corporate rates would be their current member rate + *The Indexer* rate.

Recommendations

Members will be able to choose between the two membership packages available:

Either,

ANZSI membership (including subscription to *The Indexer*), and Basic entry in Indexers Available \$140

Or,

ANZSI membership (including subscription to *The Indexer*) and Enhanced entry in Indexers Available \$200

Max McMaster

29 March 2011