

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES

SCM MINUTES, MARCH 2013

ICA Secretariat, Paris, France

Present: Deborah Jenkins (SLMT, Chair of SCM), Esther Cruces Blanco (SAR), Emilie Leumas (SAFT), William Maher (SUV), Milovan Misic (SIO), Marie-Louise Queinnec (SAN), Kenth Sjöblom (SPO), David Sutton (SLA), Fred Van Kan (SPA), and Geir Walderhaug (SAE).

1. Apologies: Paola Caroli (SAN), Günther Schefbeck (SPP), Bruce Smith (SBL).
2. Approval of the Agenda. After Chair Jenkins noted that a report regarding the recent Programme Commission (PCOM) meeting should be added to the agenda after the Executive Board Agenda Review, the SCM agenda was approved as amended.
3. Minutes of the Meeting of 19 August 2012. Jenkins indicated that Secretary Maher had previously distributed the minutes of the Brisbane Section Chairs Meeting first in draft form and then after amending them in response to email suggestions. Jenkins called for any further changes, and there being none, the minutes were adopted as circulated. Maher noted that our Toledo, Spain SCM had adopted the process of approving the minutes within 2 weeks of the date when they are circulated by email to the SCM members. This process has been adopted so that the SCM's work can be promptly posted to the ICA website. This process allows for SCM members to consider the minutes when the meeting is still fresh in their minds, but it also allowed for the adoption of the prior meeting's minutes to be recognized at the next in-person SCM. The consensus was to continue working this way.
4. Matters Arising from Brisbane Meeting Report. Item number by item number, Jenkins called for comment on items referenced in the Brisbane minutes. Sutton noted that the Working Group on Intellectual Property was continuing to work, and he expects that this is a topic that will need further observation by ICA. Thus, it may be that the Working Group would become one of the Groups of Experts. Meanwhile, the Secretariat has indicated that it will support Tim Padfield to represent ICA at the next (July) meeting of WIPO's Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights. Jenkins, from her observations from sitting on PCOM, noted that it was looking for a way to formalize Groups of Experts both by giving them an opportunity to request funds and by requiring them to submit formal reports. Sutton said that he welcomed the chance for the Working Group on Intellectual Property to have its funding status made more transparent in this way.

Regarding item 4.3 of the August meeting (the change of the name of the Section on Church Archives (SKR) to the Section on Faith Traditions (SAFT), Leumas noted that her group is still working on how the new name should be translated into French where the word for "faith" has a much stronger meaning than it does in English. Cruces Blanco noted that there was a similar problem with representing the new name in Spanish, and that had she been at the Brisbane meeting she would have expressed reservations as to the Spanish version. Jenkins noted that on issues such as this, ICA's practice has been to adopt the English version of a text or title and allow the work to begin while working out the difficulties of translation from language to language. Leumas stressed that the Section wanted to complete work on a number of other projects, and they could not focus solely on the matter of the name presently. After discussion, Jenkins agreed to take the question to Margaret Turner, ICA's translation specialist, to secure advice.

Regarding item 4.4 (International Statistics Project), Jenkins reported that the Secretariat had not received any response from the Digital Archives Consultancy, so there has been no progress on the project.

A modest discussion occurred relating to the issues involved in the August item 4.6 (proposal for a Section on Women's Rights) after Jenkins reported that she had not yet received a proposal from interested parties. Cruces Blanco indicated that as with those who spoke at the August meeting, she was not comfortable with the idea of a section being created around this type of an interest area, even though she supports archival work relating to women's rights issues. Further comments from Jenkins, Walderhaug, and Cruces Blanco focused on the extent to which sections should be organized around international sets of repositories focused on a particular record type or institution type rather than around any topic or set of topics that could be found among a broad array of archival institutions. Sutton commented that the issue was whether the need for a unit on any particular topical area could be addressed by it being adopted by one of the existing sections, and if that is not possible, then the best first step would be to have the topical area become the subject of a working group rather than a section. In the absence of any new proposal on the matter, the sense of the meeting was to not treat this as an action item.

5.1 Review of the Executive Board Agenda. Sutton called attention to EB item 2013.1.13 (the Approval of a Business Plan) saying it was important that action not be delayed on this item. He particularly emphasized that it was important that the Blois EB meeting call for implementation by January 2014 of a program for a partnership with national associations to have ICA Category D membership at the Associate level incorporated into a supplemental dues payment that members provide to their national association. He noted that one limitation in the current proposal is the lack of clarity in exactly what is the "offer" that ICA would be making for such co-membership, that is, what benefits would ICA provide. Maher noted that a general idea of the nature of the "offer" could be discerned by the several tables present in the Business Plan document, but that further work was needed to expand on the shorthand reflected in of the tables to explain what each of the cells means.

Also related to EB 2013.1.13, Jenkins noted that there has been the suggestion that the Sections be the spearhead of a membership recruitment drive and give specific targets. The consensus of the meeting was that the Sections could be part of a recruitment partnership but only after the following are in place: 1) administrative support for conducting a campaign; 2) assistance on preparing translations of the texts of solicitation letters and other documents; 3) simplification of the means of payment of dues, especially from non-Euro countries; and 4) clarification for category C members of exactly what dues would be required of a potential member [it is very difficult to recruit a member if you cannot tell the institution what the cost will be]. In addition, it is important that the ICA have a "welcome pack" that can be used as a giveaway to show potential members what they will receive as a member. Sutton noted that the Business Plan mentioned two additional activities which could help in membership recruitment creation of an international job bank and establishing a database for stolen or missing archives.

5.2 Programme Commission Overview. As Chair of the SCM, Jenkins sits on the Programme Commission (PCOM) and she reported on the many new perspectives and directions under discussion in the commission which make clear that PCOM is to become a stronger engine within ICA. Previously it has focused on discrete projects and a few programs (e.g., young professionals), but now it is to become a deciding force on the overall professional direction of ICA including the programme of the annual conferences, oversight of the Groups of Experts,

and distribution of funds to projects. As reflected in the proposed Business Plan, PCOM will oversee ICA's strategic movement under three broad areas or strands: a) digital record keeping; b) good governance/open government; and c) preservation. Van Kan noted that up to now PCOM let "many flowers bloom" and that he welcomed this focus on these areas. Sutton agreed and emphasized the importance that members and sections should cast their ideas and proposals within the terms of one or more of the broad themes.

Jenkins reported that PCOM has determined that one-half of the budget it receives will be allocated to projects and the other one-half will be set aside for the work of Groups of Experts. However, for all expenditures, because of current revenue concerns, only an anticipated 75 % of this year's budgeted funds will be available. Within these fiscal constraints, she expects that there will be a great variation in the size of PCOM-funded projects. As before, all projects must have both a plan and an end product. In response to question from Walderhaug, Jenkins noted that PCOM wants to have all projects it considers for funding to be brought via one of the existing Groups of Experts. Walderhaug stated that he was somewhat uncomfortable with the idea that all projects needed to be routed through a Group of Experts. Jenkins and Van Kan commented that it may be that a project could come directly from a member or a group, and that in such cases the PCOM might refer the proposal to the relevant Group of Experts.

Another focus of the recent PCOM meeting was the planning of annual conferences. In 2013, the Brussels Annual meeting will be the first self-financing conference, and plans are moving along quickly for development of its programmatic content. The theme and arrangements for the 2014 conference in Gerona are well advanced with a particular focus on the use of archives in the creative industries. For 2015, ICA remains committed to holding its annual conference in Africa. Although a specific host has not yet been identified, it is hoped that a decision can be reached at the Brussels Executive Board meeting.

Jenkins noted that PCOM has also discussed the translation policy, and Walderhaug added that the report on translation policy and practice was in the works but has not yet been prepared. An underlying question is the matter of translation of documents for the Annual General Meetings and Executive Board meetings. It is expected that a recommendation call for a contract for professional translation for the AGMs and EBs with an option to support the Sections tapping into the same agency as needed. There was a strong consensus among the Section Chairs that this service is greatly needed, and would be especially important for translation of standards documents.

6. Repartition Table. In introducing this topic, Jenkins noted that in Brisbane, it had been agreed that the repartition table adopted at the Seoul SCM will continue in place, thus the topic is on the current meeting's agenda solely as a discussion item. If there is an appetite for considering a change, perhaps a committee should be appointed. Sutton suggested that alternatively, if any chair wished to make a suggestion, he/she should submit a request to the SCM Chair who would then bring the issue of a revision of the repartition to the Brussels SCM. Maher questioned whether we will have actionable statistics on membership of the several sections to be able to make any decisions that would have an effect on the respective fund allocations. Jenkins indicated that she would share what information she receives about section membership, but she also noted that the allocation table was not based solely on membership size. Walderhaug agreed that the prior allocation was based on factors other than the number of members of each section. Among other factors, Leumas note that there was an inherent difference from section to section as to how much employing institutions were

able to cover the travel expenses of the section officers to attend the SCM and EB meetings. The discussion of the allocation table concluded with a consensus that Jenkins should write to the Chairs during the summer to request ideas on how the partition might be adjusted in the future.

7. ICA Internal Regulations. In regard to the suggestion that there might be a need for internal regulations covering sections, there was discussion of whether the new Constitution required the writing of new internal regulations for the sections. It was the consensus of the SCM that the best approach would be for the group to examine the issue and then prepare a document stating some broad principles. Jenkins suggested that a small work group, perhaps some archival students, examine the ways in which some other international organizations define and regulate their sections. Walderhaug stated that the best approach would be to start with examining the new constitution to see exactly what it states about sections, then look at what is in the existing bylaws or other governing documents of each of the sections to see if there are any things that clearly need to be changed. Van Kan noted that most of the sections currently had very good regulations; to which Misisic agreed. Sutton recommended that the process should produce a short document, e.g., two or three pages, which discuss the sections as the professional intelligence of the ICA. Maher recommended that the group not focus on technical matters of procedure and rule but instead on the preparation of a “high-level” statement to articulate the mission and purpose of sections within an international archival organization, and he noted that the SCM had begun work on this following the Toledo SCM. Jenkins concluded by noting that it would be a useful project for the chairs, among ourselves to look at each others’ governing documents but that it would be best to avoid starting by planning on doing a detailed reworking of those documents. To develop the general statement documents mentioned by Sutton and Maher, a task group of Cruces Blanco, Maher, and Walderhaug, will work on this over the coming months.

8. Cross Section Projects. Misisic reported that SIO is about to create a project involving the writing of training documents and mobile-based technology for archives and records management in African countries. In addition to being able to collaborate with several international organizations, Misisic anticipates that the work can involve a number of sections and branches in coming up with guidance and procedures. Cruces Blanco noted that SAR is working on a cooperative project with SLMT regarding architectural and engineering records that may exist in municipal archives. Sutton said that SLA’s project on creating specialized archival repository directories may result in a request to PCOM to help the section develop a convention or template of the data base elements for any section or ICA unit wishing to create a specialized topical directory.

9. Archives of Sections. Jenkins noted that there have been some prior discussions as well as continuing questions from some sections about what is the practice for depositing their archives. She noted that the French Archives Nationales are the archives-keeping body for ICA. Although she does not know exactly what is held, she did say that the Archives Nationales did not want to receive transfers in small isolated deposits. Van Kan noted that in 2007, SPA wrote a policy statement as to what should go into a section’s archives. Given that none present were familiar with that document, Van Kan agreed to circulate it to the SCM.

Maher suggested, and Van Kan agreed, that the sections plan on doing their deposit in the odd-numbered years immediately following the quadrennial congresses, with the assumption that the deposit could be in either paper or electronic form.

10. Tour de Table. Maher noted that 2013 would be a year for SUV's pilot project to develop an international database of bio-bibliographies of major archival theorists within separate national traditions. Leumas stated that as the Local Arrangements Chair for the Society of American Archivists' August 2013 meeting in New Orleans, she would be pleased to host any gathering of ICA groups that want to meet during SAA. Queinnec stated that SAN was working on a project on born-digital notarial archives on-line. Sjöblom indicated that SPO had recently held a Section Bureau meeting with its main plans being creation of a directory and recruiting of members. Sutton reported that SLA had launched a blog for the section. Walderhaug reported that SAE is planning an Asian Archival Education Seminar and Workshop for this year in China with potentially 200 participants. Van Kan stated that last summer SPA had adopted a new business and strategic plan and will be meeting in April to determine how best to move forward with it. As noted above, Misic noted that SIO is planning to launch a project including the use of mobile devices to bring a good governance approach to the keeping of archives in Africa.

11. Next Meeting of the SCM. The next meeting will be in connection with the ICA Annual Conference in Brussels. The date and time of Wednesday 20 November in the afternoon has already been announced in an e-mail from Margaret Crockett. [Chair's note: the expected start-time will be 14:00]. Sections themselves are expected to meet in the course of Friday 22 November.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 16:05 so that the Section Chairs could catch the train to Blois for the Executive Board meeting.