
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES

Section Chairs Meeting (SCM)

20 November 2013, 15:05 – 18:05

Archives de l'État en Belgique, Brussels, Belgium

Minutes

Present: Deborah Jenkins (SLMT, Chair of SCM), Esther Cruces Blanco (SAR), Emilie Leumas (SAFT), William Maher (SUV, Secretary of SCM), Milovan Misic (SIO), Paola Caroli (SAN), Kenth Sjöblom (SPO), Alex Ritchie (SBL) David Sutton (SLA), Fred Van Kan (SPA), and Geir Walderhaug (SAE). Observer: Gatis Karlsons (SUV)

1. Apologies: Günther Schefbeck (SPP). Chair Jenkins expressed regret that she had not received a response from the Secretariat about her invitations to have President Martin Berendse and Secretary General David Leitch visit with the SCM as was the usual practice.

2. Approval of the Agenda. Jenkins requested allowance to add an item on the Programme Commission's plan after item 7 of the previously distributed agenda. With that change the agenda was approved.

3. Minutes of the Meeting of 13 March 2013 (Paris). Jenkins indicated that following a policy adopted at the Toledo 2011SCM, Secretary Maher had previously distributed the minutes of the Paris Section Chairs' Meeting first in draft form and then amended them in response to email suggestions. Jenkins called for any further changes, and there being none, the minutes were adopted as circulated.

4. Matters Arising from March Paris SCM Minutes. Sutton noted that had been no change in the structural status of the Working Group on Intellectual Property, but it was still hoped that the WGIP would become one of the Groups of Experts. Cruces Blanco inquired of the status of the proposal for a section on the archives of women's rights, and Jenkins indicated that earlier discussions had suggested that rather than a section it should be an Expert Group. However, the ICA has yet to establish a protocol for the creation of Expert Groups, and this would have to be discussed and developed by PCOM. Regarding item 7 from the Paris SCM (Internal Regulations), Maher expressed concern that apparently no formal process had been developed for the ICA's AGM/General Assembly to approve Internal Regulations, especially the one specifying the weighting of votes by the various categories of voting members, and he requested that it be treated under the present meeting's Agenda Item 7. Sutton suggested that a troika of Maher, Cruces Blanco, and Walderhaug be delegated to examine what Internal Regulations were in place and which ones need to be created before ICA takes particular actions. In a related

matter, Leumas noted that since her recent work in preparing bylaws for SAFT had involved examining the bylaws of several of the sections, she could contribute her notes from that process to inform the needed work on an Internal Regulation regarding guidelines for what Section bylaws should contain.

5. Section Budgets and the Repartition Key. At Jenkins' request, Sutton summarized what is generally known of the ICA budget plan for 2014. He noted that no narrative had yet been provided, only a table of numbers and not in the same format as prior years. It appeared to keep the Secretariat's 2014 funding at par with 2013. The Programme funding was divided into three broad categories: PCOM work, Branches, and Sections. 2012 data showed that there was underspending in all three of these categories. For 2014, the overall funding for Programme appears with a 20,000 € reduction without any clarity as to what amount would be taken from the Sections and what from the Branches.

In response to Jenkins' request as to whether the SCM wanted to take a position on the budget plan. Maher recommended that the proposed 75 per cent expenditure cap be evened out to apply to all budget categories including the Secretariat. Walderhaug agreed by noting that the sections had underspent their allocations in the past, suggesting that cuts for 2014 may not be truly necessary. Sutton asked Maher and Walderhaug to make the point to the Executive Board that sections need to have a certain base level of funding to operate and plan programmes. He also reminded the SCM that in Brisbane, we had asked for a detailed breakout of the Secretariat's budget, but none had been provided. Leumas noted that we have been asked to help grow the ICA membership but with decreased core operational funding for the sections, we were lacking support for our work. Cruces Blanco noted that budgets needed clear figures, and what had been present was far from clear. An important basis for what should be the SCM's position on the budget is that although sections are the only group of specialists within ICA, they could not do much of anything to connect the profession unless they had a minimal level of support, and she seconded the call for having more detail about the Secretariat budget. Jenkins summarized the consensus of the group as indicating agreement that the allocation of funds to sections and branches should be distinct line items in the budget.

In regard to the Repartition Key, Jenkins noted that since the 2014 budget situation is uncertain and since there would likely be a 75 percent cap on expenditures, it would be even more difficult than previously to restructure the repartition key. Furthermore, since the March SCM meeting in Paris, she had received no proposals from Section chairs for a way to revise the schedule. Thus she recommended no change for now and requested comments on her proposal. Leumas noted that SKR/SAFT had grown by 22 members since the adoption of the key at the Seoul 2010 SCM as shown in the table of "Historical Allocations" on page one of the today's agenda document on this topic. Others noted that their sections had also grown since the table had been created in 2010, and thus it was noted that perhaps a new table should be prepared showing the relative size in percentages of sections both in the original 2010 table and in the most recent membership statistics. Discussion then ensued as to whether there was any point in having a future SCM discussion of the table unless there was a proposal for revising the relative allocations. Leumas stated that if we did not prepare a table showing historical percentages, we would never have an

idea of what the basis of allocations had been and thus we would be unable to tell when a change would be needed. Van Kan suggested we keep the table as it is, but if a section were organizing a meeting, it could submit a request from other sections for financial support. Jenkins seconded Van Kan's idea and recommended that the repartition table not be revisited until October 2014. Without a vote, this was the consensus of the SCM.

6. Matters from the March/Blois Executive Board Meeting. Walderhaug noted his concern that we did not have a way of dealing with the fact that at Blois a number of things had been promised but had not been delivered. Jenkins indicated that we were lacking a financial report, a budget, a business plan, and an action list. Sutton suggested these things could be raised at the Brussels Executive Board meeting under agenda items 12 and 16. In response to a comment from Walderhaug that a translation plan had been discussed but not yet delivered, Jenkins noted that the Secretariat is close to concluding an agreement with a provider of English to French translations and the issue is now in the hands of PCOM.

Meanwhile, Sutton expressed concern that nothing had yet been prepared to articulate the "offer" that ICA provides to prospective members, i.e., a statement of what are the benefits of membership. This had been called for in the Brisbane minutes, Agenda item 14, section 6 (subheading category D) which indicated that "an action plan will be devised in 2013 based on an attractive package of member benefits." Leumas indicated disappointment that her offer to host an ICA event at August's Society of American Archivists meeting in New Orleans had not been considered and that the opportunity to reach SAA members had been lost.

7. Internal Regulations. The consensus of the SCM was that matter of Internal Regulations had been addressed earlier in the meeting under Agenda item 4 provided that the issue of the as yet unapproved regulation on weighting of votes be raised at the Brussels Executive Board meeting.

8. Programme Commission Agenda. Van Kan and Jenkins are both on PCOM and noted that a late addition to tomorrow's PCOM agenda was "Matter of involvement of Branches and Sections." It is uncertain exactly what is intended, but it is believed that PCOM Chair Henri Zuber would like to see more involvement of the Sections in PCOM's work than simply membership by the SCM Chair and the SPA Chair.

At 17:20, before discussion of PCOM could proceed, President Berendse and Secretary General Leitch appeared.

9. Visit by President and Secretary General. Berendse indicated that while he had a few words to say, he wanted to know what issues concerned the Section Chairs. Leitch noted three items of good news: A French translation team is in place, with an agreement to be formalized after the Brussels meeting; following the Basel SBL conference, it has emerged that the University of Liverpool Press is very interested in publishing proceedings for ICA meetings, an opportunity that should be considered by Sections planning conferences; and the 2013 ICA Brussels Conference is on track to be quite successful with over 450 registrants.

Jenkins invited SCM members to pose any general questions to the President. Sutton asked about the principles behind the 2014 one-page budget proposal. Berendse said that he expected tomorrow's Executive Board to have an open discussion. While the financial framework showed a reduced budget, within that framework there could be discussion of broad principles of how we support branches and sections. He and Leitch noted that one question was whether it might be better to have a larger allocation to programme funds and few fixed specific allocations. Noting that the draft budget showed a line between one allocation for the Programme and another for the Secretariat, Jenkins asked whether that dividing line was up for discussion. Berendse said the entire budget was up for discussion. Leitch emphasized that the budget also involved the income side and that he did not anticipate much of a change in fees for membership categories "A," "B," or "C."

In response to a question from Jenkins about where Berendse saw PCOM evolving, he said that he saw there being greater integration of project work and more programme work, but he wondered about the underpinnings of technical work. As he was approaching the second half of his second term as President, Berendse observed that up to now he had focused on the structural side of ICA (e.g., evolution of CITRA into the Annual Conference, and the change in constitution) and now it was time to focus on the programme. He wanted to promote a strong connection between the Sections and PCOM while the branches should be framed to the interests of the Forum of National Archives. He expects to continue to work for a balance between innovation in the profession and the bodies needed to run the organization.

In response to a question from Sutton about whether there were plans to get the Business Plan moving again following last spring's Executive Board, Berendse said he was not really sure. He was wondering if there needed to be a "full swing" business plan for ICA, i.e., a top-down matter or whether it should be a bottom-up approach. Leitch said that there seemed to be the beginning of an upswing in members, but we were not really ready to move on a business plan. Marketing support was needed in the Secretariat, and the Secretariat would do its own business plan of what it could and could not do. This will be put to the executive officers in the Spring. He thought it was best to have a professional insider to do the marketing rather than an elected officer. Sutton emphasized the importance of having an articulation of what is the ICA's "offer" to help in recruiting members. Without it, we do not have the ammunition to build members and a business plan. Berendse indicated he was not sure what to say, but that with the opening up of the Annual Conference to more than just CITRA members we should be able to recruit further members. Indeed, the Conference could be more of a carrier for the organization as is the case for some other international organizations. He also noted that more than one category "A" member had wondered why they should be paying dues into the organization if the main goal of the Paris office could be seen as recruitment of more and more individual members.

Jenkins noted that the "offer" for category "C" members presently was quite challenging because difficult economic times mean significant cuts in many institutions' budgets. Unless the "offer" is strengthened, the incentive for continued membership at the "C" level was diminished. There was the real possibility that many such member institutions could withdraw and instead encourage their archivists to join as "D" members. Leitch stated that he did not agree that there

were not attractions for being a member.

Leumas raised the matter of the weighted voting at the AGM. She asked the President how the issue would be handled, when this provision of the constitution had not been ratified by the AGM.

Given the lateness of the hour, Berendse recommended that this discussion continue tomorrow. Following the departure of Berendse and Leitch at 17:57, Jenkins recommended that the discussion of PCOM issues resume at dinner.

10. Tour de table. The current activities of sections were summarized:

- Van Kan noted that SPA had been very active in lobbying on the pending European Union Data Protection directive.
- Maher noted that SUV was about ready to launch the first results of its Archival Biographies project and hoped to secure the participation of other sections in this project.
- Leumas mentioned work on the amendment of the SAFT constitution
- Sutton reported that SLA had eight projects detailed on its website. In the course of 2013, work was concentrated on the Dissident Authors project (reported to the Executive Board in Brussels); the Diasporic Literary Archives project (approved for non-funded ICA support by PCOM in Brussels) and the Directory of Repositories of Literary and Artistic Archives (ongoing, with work completed on Brazil and Australia during the year).
- Caroli described the SAN project involving the development of a framework for the digitization of Notarial Archives
- Jenkins mentioned that SLMT members were peer-reviewing some of the papers for the SUV Paris 2014 conference.
- Sjöblom noted that SPO activities had been fairly passive since the last SCM meeting in Paris. Fina Solà has been the most active Bureau member lately, working on a project concerning archives of Catalan sports clubs. Simultaneously with the AC in Brussels she was attending the congress of CESH (European Committee for Sport History) in Barcelona to present this project and the work of SPO. The Bureau of SPO is likely to have a new member soon, representing FIFA."
- Alex Ritchie reported, on behalf of SBL, that preparations for an international symposium in London were now well advanced. The event was scheduled to take place on April 14-15 2014 and would be hosted by Unilever. The theme of the symposium was the use of social media and other new initiatives to promote awareness and use of business archives.