

**FIG (INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SURVEYORS)  
LIAISON REPORT TO ISO TC211 PLENARY,  
ADELAIDE, OCTOBER 2001**

Introduction

FIG has continued to follow the progress of TC211 with much interest. We have taken a particular interest in the progress of work items 19122 (Qualification and Certification of Personnel) and 19104 (Terminology), as well as the ongoing need for ensuring that users are very aware of the work and outputs of TC211. We are also aiming to take up Julie Binder-Maitra's suggestion that FIG contributes to WI 19127 (Geodetic Codes and Parameters) and are currently seeking a lead expert within FIG for this liaison.

Marketing

FIG remains concerned at the low level of knowledge amongst its 250,000 members of the work of TC211. Larry Hothem presented a paper on this topic at the FIG Working Week in Seoul in May 2001, and an article will appear in the FIG Bulletin this autumn. FIG remains willing to assist in the necessary activity of raising awareness of TC211's vital work, and submitted comments on this topic to the Advisory Group meeting in Nashua in June 2001. An extract from the FIG submission is as follows:

*'Given the wide range of potential users of the standards, a sector-specific approach needs to be followed for each grouping. The taxonomy in the current draft of ISO 19102 might be a useful way of segmenting users. Some of the categories listed are probably already well catered for (for instance, software developers, where OGC is coordinating activity). Professional liaison bodies to TC211 would be the appropriate channel to use to reach professional users; a number of channels are open for data providers, including groupings such as EuroGeographics (formerly CERCO) and GSDI (which has just gained liaison status to TC211). The plan for each sector needs to include the channel(s) to be used, the key messages and the possible means of communication.*

*Vital components, we believe, in explanation are going to be:*

- *Real examples of what standardisation can achieve which cannot be done as effectively without it. The demonstrations at the Standards in Action workshop in Lisbon showed how much is being done but there is a strong sense now that the whole needs to be made greater than the sum of the parts. Some platform (probably web-based) that brings together a range of demonstrators covering all of the main aspects of the TC211 standards, and has content from all continents, would seem to be an appropriate next step.*
- *Explanatory booklets and other material. The TC211 standards, understandably, are somewhat dry. Informative material will be needed if users are to understand quite what they mean, and quite what the user implications are. Again, a sector specific approach might be needed, but a common core of material will be useful for all publications. This will require effort in finding authors, reviewers and so on. Such an approach will also step around the cost of standards and the copyright aspects. The liaison bodies to TC211 could play a leading role here.*

- *A programme of seminars and papers at conferences explaining the TC211 standards, their benefits and their implications. At present, there seems to be a rather ad hoc, reactive approach, with papers being left to individuals, without a common core of material to call on, and without a plan of what the key events are for each sector. The coordinating effort should not be large, and the creation of a common core could probably be achieved by culling from papers already given.*

*TC211 needs to take an active approach in all of the above. As mentioned, much of it will not take effort beyond some coordination. The major activity requiring effort will be the creation of explanatory material. Organisations like FIG are very willing to help, but need some clear guidance from TC211 about where they can be most effective, to ensure that energies are not unfocussed or efforts duplicated.*

*If the work is to have as much reach as it can, all liaisons are going to be important, and all P-members of TC211 are going to need to take part. That is probably going to require a regular report from every P-member (certainly to every TC211 plenary) of what activities it has undertaken and with what effect.'*

FIG is very concerned to note that no papers referring to the TC211 technical standards were submitted amongst the nearly 500 abstracts received for the FIG Congress in Washington in April 2002. This demonstrates a disturbing lack of interest. FIG has therefore requested that TC211 provide material for one or more sessions for Washington, but reiterates that the final programme for the Congress will be compiled in mid-November 2001.

FIG also notes with interest that the only TC211 paper so far released from the Nashua meeting is on adjusting the organisational structure of TC211; no paper has yet appeared on the equally vital area of marketing.

FIG supports the general approach advocated in the paper (N1149) on organisational structure, although it is unclear where WG5 fits within the new structure (or whether it will be disbanded). FIG agrees that there is a need to rationalise and structure a number of the Ad Hoc groups that were being created, which were sometimes leading to individuals being asked to take several different roles within TC211.

#### *Qualification and Certification of Personnel*

FIG is pleased that its offer of organising a round table between TC211 and professional societies has been accepted by the Project Leader of WI 19122. It looks forward to a valuable discussion on this important topic, so that much of the continuing 'heat' can be taken out of the situation and all parties can reach greater agreement on respective roles in this vital area. FIG's view remains that the opening up of international mobility of service providers is vital, but that an international standard is not the way to do it. FIG looks forward to reviewing the draft technical report shortly.

#### *FIG Statement on the Cadastre*

FIG has followed up the discussion on the Lisbon plenary agenda as to the FIG Statement on the Cadastre. FIG has much sympathy with the ISO TMB's view that cadastre is something that has traditionally been dealt with in large part by national legislation. It remains convinced, however, that a properly functioning cadastre is such a vital element of a sustainable economy that we should all continue to explore how standards can assist in

this area. FIG's proposal on the next steps in this area was transmitted to the TC211 Chair in the summer of 2001 and is reproduced below:

*'At the TC211 plenary in Lisbon, it was agreed that I would consult within FIG on where we might go next with the FIG Statement on the Cadastre. I have done this at the Working Week in Seoul and at the Commission 7 (Cadastre and Land Management) Annual Meeting earlier in June. All parties agree that the way the document ended up coming through the formal ISO processes did not progress things to best effect. However, FIG has done a great deal of work over the last 10 years in developing clear models for cadastres, building on a good deal of work at national level but taking it on one stage further in international comparisons. Given that a sound cadastre is a prerequisite for economic development, a cadastre can be seen as one of the most important articulations of geographic information. To FIG, therefore, there seems benefit in considering further how FIG's work on the cadastre and TC211's work on GI standards can be built on.*

*Our proposal is that FIG's Commission 7, during the 2002-06 period of office (commencing at the FIG Congress in Washington DC in April 2002) develops a model of the basic (minimum) contents and basic design of a cadastre. The level of specificity of this cannot be determined until the work commences. Such an activity could be used as a testbed for the TC211 standards, confirming that they work (or advising how they should be revised) so as best to support cadastral activities. This work could also support developing (and other) countries as they review their cadastral definitions and legislation, providing a best practice document from one of the leading international organisations in this area, along with the ISO standards to support it. It might even be that this model should become a profile to TC211 standards, although again such specific thinking is premature until the work commences. UNECE WPLA, another key organisation in the cadastral world, is also interested in collaborating with Commission 7 in this area.*

*It seems to me that this proposal would allow us to collaborate together very effectively, building on the more 'conceptual' involvement of FIG in TC211 activities to date. (In passing, another area FIG is considering developing a best practice model is that of NSDI, where we would be working closely with GSDI, as well as TC211 and others). FIG's Commission Officers will be meeting in October to create final draft workplans for 2002-06. I would therefore welcome your thoughts on this proposal before that. I hope that we can find a way to develop something along these lines, in close cooperation between FIG and ISO TC211, as a model for further collaboration.'*

### Terminology

FIG has continued to explore how the terminology in the FIG Multi-Lingual Dictionary (MLD) may be of use within a standards arena. A useful meeting to progress this subject was held between FIG, our German member association and Martin Ford (Project Leader, ISO 19104) in September. Follow-up actions to that meeting are underway, and may spread to include FIG's professional sister societies.

FIG is therefore keen that ISO 19104 is framed quite broadly, allowing the inclusion of non-ISO 191xx terms within the Terminology Repository proposed.

*Final words*

FIG's Task Force on Standardisation has continued its work. A working draft of FIG's Guide on Standardisation can be found on FIG's web site ([www.fig.net](http://www.fig.net)) and will be of use and information to all those involved in standardisation activities. The Task Force is likely to be wound up next year, and discussions within FIG are continuing as to how to maintain a focus on this important area throughout FIG's activities.

FIG remains committed to supporting the work of TC211. It believes that it can provide a useful resource and channel for spreading more information on the work of TC211 and the impact of the ISO 191xx standards. It hopes that TC211 will provide the material and guidance needed for FIG to contribute more in this area.

Iain Greenway

Chair, FIG Task Force on Standardisation and Lead Liaison with ISO TC211