

**Report for the 23rd General Assembly
FIG Working Week in Prague, 22-26 May 2000**

TASK FORCE ON MUTUAL RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS

The Task Force has been working to develop the best possible approach to deal with the rather ambitious goals as stated in the terms of reference. The co-operation with WTO is confirmed and is working well, and the more complex work to develop models for assessment of professional competence is ongoing. Dr. Francis Plimmer, UK, is now acting as a secretary for the task force, and we have produced a few papers aiming to enhance the general knowledge, commitment and understanding in the whole area of mutual recognition. The profile of the task force is coming together, and we are looking forward to discuss the key issues during the sessions at the General Assembly in Prague. The task force has now got its own home page at the FIG web site, where the profile and the key material can be found.

Terms of Reference

Recognising the international market pressures and the regulations towards liberation of trade driven by the WTO, FIG should review the area of mutual recognition of qualifications within the world-wide surveying community and develop a framework for introduction of standards of global professional competence in this area. In pursuing this aim the task force will:

- Undertake regional studies to investigate existing agreements of mutual recognition and reciprocity.
- Develop guidelines for assurance of competence for entering the surveying profession, e.g. educational requirements and requirements for professional practice.
- Develop guidelines for the establishment of agreements of mutual recognition and reciprocity, including standards for quality assurance in surveying education and standards for adaptation criteria with regard to professional practice.
- Develop a concept and a framework for implementation of threshold standards of global professional competence in surveying.

The task force will develop a framework for reviewing the benefits and barriers against introducing standards for global professional competence. This should be seen as only a first step in this direction, to reflect FIG's aim to drive these developments instead of being driven by them.

The output of the Task Force should be a report on global professional competence to be adopted by the General Assembly in Washington 2002. The report will be published in the FIG publication series for the benefit of member associations and in support of the on-going interaction between FIG and other NGOs such as the WTO and UNESCO.

Members of the task force

Stig Enemark, Denmark (chair); Frances Plimmer, UK (secretary); Tom Kennie, UK (Vice-President of FIG); John Parker, Australia; Pedro Caverio, Spain; Davis Coleman, Canada; Heinz Reuther, South Africa; Vaclav Slaboch, Czech Republic; and Teo Chee Hai, Malaysia.

Main Activities

- Co-operation with the WTO headquarters in Geneva. This includes a visit to Geneva in November 1999 in order to catch up with recent developments. Relevant material has been studied regarding production of guidelines for mutual recognition in the service sector. It is agreed that the chair of the task force will maintain direct contact with the WTO officials, and a system for regular exchange of relevant material and key information is implemented.
- Development of the aim and the profile of the task force. This is done through production of papers in order to provide a FIG commitment to the issue of mutual recognition and general understanding of the benefits and barriers this regard. A paper was produced for Commission 3 seminar in Budapest October 1999, and another paper will be presented at the sessions during the working week in Prague, May 2000. In short, the papers attempt to develop a common language for discussing the whole issue of mutual recognition of professional qualifications.
- Discussion of the key issues related to implementation of a mutual recognition concept in the surveying profession. The task force looks into different models for assessment of the educational base as well as models for assessment of professional competence. The role of the national institutions will be highlighted in this regard.
- Development of the best approach to be taken for dealing with these ambitious goals. Models are currently being developed at the European level in co-operation with the CLGE (The Council of European Geodetic Surveyors). These models will be presented and discussed at a comprehensive seminar to be held in Delft, The Netherlands November 2000. The outcome of these discussions should then form the basis the development of a world wide model.
- Establishment of a separate home page presenting the Task Force profile, the current material, and the plan action. This can be found FIG web site: www.ddl.org/figtree/

There is an attraction in developing and extending the principle of mutual recognition of professional qualifications. Mutual recognition allows each country to retain its own kind of professional education and training because it is based, not on the process of achieving professional qualifications, but on the nature and quality of the outcome of that process. In turn, this should lead to an enhancement of the global professional competence of the surveying profession. And the national professional institutions should play a key role in facilitating this process.

Globalisation of services is not a threat. It should be seen as an opportunity and as a demand for FIG to develop new means and tools to meet the challenges of the future.

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