

Provisional Record of Minutes - Awaiting Scrutiny and Corrections

**Global Affairs Committee Mid-Year Meeting 2007**

Exxonmobil, Houston, **Friday, March 30th - Workshop**

Attendees:

Dave Pitcher, Chairman  
Mike Burianyak, Vice Chairman

Bill Barkhouse  
Arthur Cheng  
Roy Clark  
Dick Edwards  
Alfred Liaw  
Luigi Pizzaferrri  
Simon Spitz – by conference call  
Kurt Strack  
Anna Shaughnessy

Pamela Terekhova, Staff/GAC Liaison

Dave Pitcher opened the meeting at 8:30am and explained that the meeting would consist of brainstorming for recommendations for improving membership and SEG sections.

Ralph Bridle as the vice chairman of the SEG Membership Committee (and as a GAC member) had forwarded to the GAC a proposal for change in the membership bylaws and constitution of the SEG. It had also been announced that the sponsors for both Global Membership and Student Membership had decided not to renew and that the money used for Global Membership has completely run out.

Facts: There are currently 2,090 global members (758 of these have dues in need of funding for 2007). 81% of global members are in the following countries: India, Egypt, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Romania. There are global members in 50 countries. Since the beginning of the program in 2001-2002, 3,162 new applications have been received and sponsored by Apache at \$5.00 per person.

From Ralph Bridle's membership proposal:

Section 2. The Membership of this Society shall consist of Honorary Members, Life Members, Active Members, Emeritus Members, Associate Members, Subscription Members, Student Members, and Corporate Members. and Global Members.

The membership committee has proposed to delete the category of Global Members. Pam Terekhova presented to the attendees several documents showing statistics of current Global Members including their countries of residence and employers.

Kurt Strack/Bill Barkhouse/Alfred Liaw/Arthur Cheng made statements in favor of keeping the category of Global Membership

- (1) the Global Membership category is used as a tool for outreach to potential members in countries where SEG wishes to establish new relationships
- (2) the SEG is giving the wrong signal to its membership if they remove Global Membership. What would happen to the 2,090 current members?
- (3) the Global Membership category is the only way some members in remote countries can “pay” for their membership since they have no way of sending the funds to the SEG office without incurring bank wire transfer fees.
- (4) Why “fix” something that is working well to attract new members to the SEG.
- (5) It is a very inexpensive way to “introduce” the SEG to members in emerging countries.

Ideas to sponsor future dues of global membership were:

- (1) This should be a line item in the Foundation budget. Many SEG members give money to the Foundation and believe this type of need should be addressed by the Foundation.
- (2) The GAC should find a new sponsor for this program. (Kurt Strack agreed to pledge \$1,000 to pay for new applicants’ dues on a first-come-first-served basis for 2007.) It was pointed out that the GAC could not search for potential sponsors without being approved by the Executive Committee.
- (3) Effective immediately, a request should appear on the SEG website to all renewing associate and active members asking that they help support a global membership(s) when they pay for their dues. This would also appear on dues statements currently being mailed out by the membership department. Appropriate thanks and recognition would be given to those members contributing to this fund.

Mike Burianyk spoke against keeping the Global Membership category and in favor of Ralph Bridle and the Membership Committee’s proposal to delete it.

Global Membership has been seen as a “ghetto” membership category. Global members do not receive printed materials and are limited in their ability to network with other members. Most global members do not later apply for associate or active membership and usually drop out after 1-2 years. Would it not be better to create a fund within the Associate membership category for Level I – applicants would apply for \$10 grant and if approved be automatically an Associate member.

Pam stated that in the past a similar funding program had been utilized and read from the Policies and Procedures Manual on International Dues Fellowship:

The International Dues Fellowship program was established in 1992, within the purview of the SEG Foundation, to be administered by the Global Affairs Committee. The program was initiated to provide membership fellowships to geophysicists in countries developing geophysical sciences that have little access to SEG publications, countries with low per capita income, and countries with currency restrictions. The purpose of the program is to make information on scientific activities and recently gained knowledge in exploration geophysics as broadly accessible as possible.

Under the established guidelines, individuals must qualify for either Active or Associate SEG Membership AND be a member of an "Associated Society." The term, "Associated Society," in 1992 was the same as "Allied Society" today, although SEG Sections/Associated Societies were probably included, since it was felt that local society involvement would enhance SEG's determination to strengthen international ties by more direct connections with local and regional societies worldwide, bringing SEG services to a larger audience.

The duration of an International Dues Grant is three years, and is restricted to a maximum of two grants, per organizational unit, in any one location within a particular country, until applications from other eligible countries have been considered. Geographic eligibility is determined by per capita GDP and national currency restrictions as determined by the World Bank.

Pam explained (as far as she could discover) that this program was funded chiefly by the Rutt Bridges Family Foundation and had run out of funds several years ago. The drawback was that the individual had to be a member of another section or associated society of the SEG so was not an outreach to new countries that had no SEG members or sections.

The question was asked what benefits Global Members find useful in their limited membership. Pam said a poll had been sent out to Global Members in 2002-2003 only 25-30 members had responded saying that the information was helpful but they wanted to have more of an opportunity to network.

It was recommended that the SEG office prepare another short poll for global members and send out for their feedback as soon as possible. (part of larger recommendation to follow)

A motion was made by Bill and seconded by Kurt to recommend to the Membership Committee that the GAC does not support their proposal to remove the category of global membership. All members voted for the motion except one who voted against the motion.

A motion was made by Kurt and seconded by Alfred to recommend to the Membership Committee/Executive Committee the following: (1) a new sponsor for the category of global membership should be found as soon as possible in the short term; (2) the SEG Foundation should consider funding this membership category in the long term; and (3) the membership committee/staff should continue their efforts to encourage global and associate members to transfer to active. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Bill Barkhouse and seconded by Mike Burianyk that it be recommended to the membership committee that membership include an option that in the membership renewal correspondence/form (on the SEG website) an associate or active member could chose to sponsor a global membership (new and renewal). The motion was passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Bill and seconded by Arthur to recommend to the Executive Committee to merge the SSAL (Student Section Committee) with the GAC. All voted in favor of the motion except for one who abstained. This recommendation should go directly to Fred Aminzadeh to bring forth to the executive committee.

(This motion was based upon a previous discussion in which it was pointed out that the GAC was more active than the SSAL in initiating new student sections and re-energizing existing student sections through their communications of regional coordinators and country representatives.)

In reviewing the other parts of the membership proposal sent to the GAC by Ralph Bridle (see below\*\*), it was discussed that there was not enough information or explanation on “Subscription Membership” nor was there enough information on the process of references for the concept of an Associate member becoming an Active member after eight years.

It was thus moved by Mike Burianyk and seconded by Arthur Cheng that the GAC offers no recommendation on the proposal concerning subscription membership or the process of an Associate member automatically becoming an Active member after a period of eight years. The concept of an Associate member being able to upgrade to an Active member was recognized by the committee as positive, but the GAC requests the membership committee to clarify the process.

This motion was passed by all in attendance except for one who abstained.

\*\* Section 10. To be eligible for election in the Global Membership, an applicant must be actively interested in geophysics and a citizen and resident of an SEG-designated Global Country.  
To be eligible for Subscription Membership, an applicant must be actively interested in geophysics.

Section 12. Associate Members, Subscription Members, and Student Members shall be entitled to attend the meetings of the Society, to receive its journals, and to purchase its publications on the same terms as Active Members. They shall have none of the other privileges of membership and in publishing their affiliation with the Society shall clearly indicate their grade of membership.

Section 13. Global Members shall be entitled to attend the meetings of the Society, to purchase its publications on the same terms as Active Members, and to have electronic access to SEG's services, products, and journals. Global Membership shall not include printed copies of SEG journals. Global Members shall have no other privileges of membership and in publishing their affiliation with the Society shall clearly indicate their grade of membership.

Section 8. An Associate, Subscription, Global, or Student Member may seek transfer to Active Membership by supplying additional information to show eligibility for election to Active Membership. The Committee on Membership may of its own initiative secure the necessary additional information and submit it to the Executive Committee. The transfer shall be handled in the same manner as election to Active Membership. An Associate or Global Member who desires a transfer to Active Membership must follow the same procedure as one who applies for Active Membership as a new member. An Associate Member will be eligible for automatic up-grade to Active Membership after eight years of professional experience. A Student Member shall automatically be transferred to Associate Membership on the first day of the calendar year following the termination of eligibility for Student Membership.

Section 7. To be eligible for election to Associate Membership, an applicant must be actively interested in geophysics.

To be eligible for election to Associate Membership, an applicant must be actively engaged in practicing or teaching geophysics or a related scientific field. An Associate Member of eight years professional experience will be offered automatic up-grade to Active Membership.

Simon Spitz, Task Force Leader of GAC Projects/SEG Sections and Associated Societies, was telephoned by Kurt Strack. Simon and his committee, made up of Chuck Diggins, Marian Morris, Pandelee Neculae, Jaime Robertson, Vladan Simin, Sudarshan Singh, Brian Spies, and Aldo Vesnaver, have been in the process of reviewing and discussing the constitution and bylaws and policies and procedures on SEG Sections and Council.

Pam made available to the GAC several information documents for their review during the discussion: council attendance, two summaries on information about SEG sections, sections reporting statistics and membership, and section presidents' membership status.

The following points were made:

The current constitution and bylaws for SEG governing through the Section representatives and district representatives at the Council meeting is archaic and not working well. SEG members especially in countries outside of US/Canada are not being represented.

In reviewing the Council attendance over the last ten years, it is evident that section presidents from outside the US are not able to attend the meetings and are thus not able to vote or give any comments to the discussion.

The Council attendance problem could be solved in two ways: allow council representatives to vote on-line and/or SEG provide financial travel assistance to fund SEG section presidents to attend the annual meeting.

There are no longer enough benefits to encourage the creation of new SEG sections globally and other organizations and associations do not see any benefit in becoming officially associated with the SEG.

Sections are not visible within the SEG and not given enough promotion. The TLE should devote coverage of one section in each issue.

There is not enough communication and support from the SEG headquarters to aid section officers and programs. Nor is there enough feedback from sections to the SEG reporting on their activities and concerns and needs.

Each section has developed independently (as per the design of the system) and each one has local needs and concerns depending upon their geography, interests, financial backing and culture and must be viewed individually. (Examples: strong societies such as CSEG, ASEG, JSEG, and newer and/or smaller, less organized sections such the Hungarian Section, SEG-Russia.)

It has been discovered by SEG country representatives and US regional coordinators that some sections listed as active on the SEG books have not had official communication with the SEG headquarters in many years and should be dissolved or re-organized. (Malaysia, Uzbekistan)

In order to create a new section or make a section strong, a section must have a local champion and leader and a lot of human contact with SEG headquarters.

The establishment of international offices and regional lecturers are opportunities to enhance the development of stronger and more active sections.

There is no mechanism for section officers to meet with SEG headquarters staff and SEG executive committee members to network and discuss needs of sections except the international meetings which only a privy few associated societies or sections get to participate in each year.

The following ideas/recommendations were made to Simon Spitz and his task force:

- (1) The task force should create a letter/poll to be sent to all SEG sections and associated societies presidents/representatives well before the annual meeting asking about their needs and expectations. The information would be tallied and reported back to the section representatives at the joint GAC/Section meeting on Sunday morning before Council along with any recommendations the task force/GAC would like to make to the incoming executive committee.
- (2) GAC/Section Meeting would consist of a workshop developing recommendations to improve the relationship between the SEG and section leaders.
- (3) The task force should consider putting together a Project of Merits through funding of the Foundation utilizing students or young geophysicists to act as interns for the SEG. After receiving training at the SEG headquarters, they would visit the sections within their geography of experience to (1) develop relationships with the section (2) find out section procedures, strengths, weaknesses, interests and needs (3) provide information about SEG programs that would benefit the sections, and (4) prepare a report on their findings.
- (4) Offer recommendations for constitution, bylaws and procedural changes to improve the SEG governance and section structure to the GAC membership for consensus for review by the executive committee.

Dave Pitcher congratulated Simon (and his committee) on an excellent first step at tackling a major concern of the GAC.

It was suggested that the issue of intersociety relations and cooperation which was brought up by Yoram Shoham during Thursday's meeting as a important new agenda item, be tabled for discussion at the GAC Business Meeting during the San Antonio annual meeting. Dave will talk with Yoram about leading this discussion.

Dave Pitcher adjourned the meeting at 11:45am and thanked everyone for their attendance and participation.