

**Kennert Torlegård**

Former President, ISPRS (1988-1992)

ENCOURAGING YOUNG SCIENTISTS

ISPRS has played an important role in my life. I received my diploma in 1961 from the Royal Institute of Technology KTH in Stockholm, and professor Bertil Hallert employed me as his assistant. He was very active in ISP, as it was named at that time, and he encouraged his collaborators to publish research papers internationally and to participate in ISPRS working groups. From 1964 to 2000, I participated actively in all ISPRS's congresses and many of its activities. After my PhD in photogrammetry 1967, I worked for seven years in private industry as consultant until I was appointed professor and head of the Department for Photogrammetry at KTH in 1974.

In 1976, Sweden was elected to host ISPRS Technical Commission V, covering close range photogrammetry for four years with myself as commission president. During 1980-84 I chaired a working group on digital elevation models. At the Congress in Rio de Janeiro in 1984 I was elected secretary general from 1984-1988; from 1988-92 I was president of ISPRS, and from 1992-96 I was the first vice president. This level of involvement is not at all unique; it is rather typical for a president of the Society to hold several positions and responsibilities in the Society.

The aims of ISPRS are to stimulate, initiate and coordinate international cooperation for the advancement of photogrammetry, remote sensing, spatial information, and their applications. The Society arranges congresses, symposia, colloquia, seminars and the like where companies and government agencies present products and services, and people present results of research and applications, discuss them and identify new directions for development of the disciplines. Reports and research

papers are published in ISPRS archives and the Society has an official journal. After my tenure as president the Society began to publish ISPRS Highlights with contents of administrative and organisational nature. Much information is nowadays available through the web pages of ISPRS, www.isprs.org.

People working with and through ISPRS come from academic institutes, government agencies and private industry. The activities cover all aspects of photogrammetry, remote sensing, and spatial information in a vast range of applications from surveys and mapping to medicine and archeology. Research and development coordinated by ISPRS is most often organised in projects and executed by individual members of working groups. All expenses in such a project are typically covered by the organisations in which the individual members are employed. This means that each participant has to recognise an interest and advantage in participating in the project on behalf of her/his employer. ISPRS can identify needs and possibilities of R&D but it cannot fund projects. It can initiate, it can connect people, it can provide an international organisational structure for the cooperation between interested parties. Meeting the above conditions, management of projects, working groups and commissions have to be based on decisions made in consensus between the parties. When I was president of ISPRS I was also dean of the engineering faculty in Stockholm.

That meant that I spoke for and was chairman of the faculty, the university senate and the faculty board, which comprised about 300, 40 and 8 members, respectively. These bodies were responsible for the planning of programs for research and research training; in particular

the part that was funded directly from the government to the university. Consensus was considered to be of the utmost importance, which needed good preparation, negotiation and early information before a proposition could be presented for decision.

The decision-making process in the management of ISPRS between congresses was very similar to that of the faculty. ISPRS Council and Technical Commission presidents had joint meetings once a year. Often the editor of the journal and the chairman of the Financial Commission were invited as well. There were 14-16 participants and the meetings lasted 2-3 days. We found it useful to spend the first day outside the board room, giving ample time for everybody to discuss the agenda topics freely before we sat down with all documents and the fixed agenda. The informal discussions paved the way for the smooth running of the formal meeting. When I was president of the Society, it had five awards and during my term a new type of award was introduced, namely Best paper by Young Author. The Japan Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing had donated Sw. Fr 10,000 towards this award.

The Council decided to use this gift to encourage young people to present papers and attend the Congress by giving four ISPRS awards of 2500 Sw.Fr. each. The Swiss Society for Photogrammetry sponsored four additional awards for papers with topics related to Commission V. A total of 59 papers were submitted before the deadline. Council members and Technical Commission presidents received about four papers each for evaluation. From 14 nominated papers I selected four winners of the ISPRS

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Awards. I was assisted by Prof. Dr. Armin Gruen and Prof. Dr. Einari Kilpelä and our evaluation of the papers was made in a log cottage in northern Finland during our traditional skiing week. The Commission V paper jury consisted of Prof. Dr. Armin Gruen, Dr. Clive Fraser and myself. Since then the Society has developed more incentives for students and young scientists, such as the Youth forum and Student Consortium.

Why did I let myself in for ISPRS? A good question. As a PhD student and a young photogrammetrist in the 1960s and 70s I visited congresses and symposia so as to meet colleagues who worked on same or similar problems and applications as I did for discussions and exchange of experience and information.

The way to contact them was to present a paper. It was also very interesting to visit the exhibitions and see new instruments and products from manufacturers and vendors. Later when I became professor there were other reasons for my involvement in ISPRS affairs - I wanted to find colleagues for joint projects in R&D; I used my international relations when supervising my PhD students, i.e. through my contacts I knew who was doing what and where in R&D, or I could find it out. Then the students could make their own contacts.

Why did I commit myself to the management of ISPRS? Again a very good question. At a science meeting in Graz, Society president Dr Fred Doyle asked me whether I would consider becoming Secretary General of ISPRS. He believed that I would be able to do the job, and he also said the he thought it would be good for my career. And so it was. My reward has been a lot of wonderful experiences and many good friends from all over the world. ■