

## ISPRS JOURNAL - REVIEW AND PREVIEW

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### ABSTRACT

The development of the Official Journal of ISPRS - the **ISPRS Journal of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing** - since the change to the current format in 1985 is described, with a summary of the geographical distribution of subscribers and contributors. The further developments which are planned for next year are outlined and an invitation is extended to individual members of ISPRS to participate in the development of the Journal of the Society.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In September 1985, the first issue of "Photogrammetria" in its current style was published, under the direction of the recently appointed Editor-in-Chief, Professor Jurgen Hothmer. This was the culmination of work started at the Hamburg Congress in 1980, when a publications policy committee was established to address the difficulties experienced by the Journal in the preceding years. The Committee reported at the Commission VI Symposium in Mainz in 1982 and Professor Hothmer took over as Editor after the Rio Congress in 1984, setting about the task of revitalizing the Official Journal of ISPRS.

It takes time to build anything worthwhile, and there were set-backs, but gradually over the last eight years the Journal has developed into a much more useful and attractive publication. To reflect more accurately the content of the Journal, and the activities of ISPRS, the name of the Journal was changed to the "ISPRS Journal of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing" in September 1989. The News Section, Review Section and Reports Section all developed well under their respective Section Editors and these have strived to publicise the work and interests of ISPRS.

The Journal has followed the Editorial Policy laid out by Hothmer in his paper published in 1985 (Hothmer, 1985). He put in place the structure and lines of communication which allowed this policy to be implemented. The Society owes a great debt of gratitude to Jurgen Hothmer for his tireless efforts on behalf of the Society and its Journal. His untimely and unexpected death last year came just as the results of his eight years of effort were bearing fruit.

### 2. REVIEW - A LOOK BACK

In the period 1985-1991 (Volumes 40-46), the Journal published 174 scientific/technical papers, from 285 different authors making a total of 334 contributions. Some of these papers were written by figures very well known in photogrammetric and remote sensing circles (leading scientists in their fields, Society Officials, etc.); other papers have been from younger authors, perhaps

publishing for the first time. This mix of established figures and new-comers is a healthy one for a society journal as it reflects the composition of the Society.

The geographical distribution of authors has been as follows:

Europe	67%
North America	19
Asia	6
Oceania	3
Africa	3
South America	2

This table obviously indicates a strong bias towards Europe. This has not come about through any Journal policy, but is a reflection of the healthy interest in photogrammetry and remote sensing in most European countries, the fact that nearly all European countries are members of ISPRS and the perceived advantages of publishing work in an international journal.

There have been papers from authors working in 33 different countries. Although ISPRS has about 80 national societies as members, and therefore less than half have contributed to the Journal in the last seven years, contributions from 33 countries is still impressive and is an appropriate distribution for a journal claiming to be the organ for an international society.

Germany, USA, France and Canada head the lists of contributors and contributions, with another group containing Australia, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden and UK some way behind. This distribution is not totally explained by photogrammetric and remote sensing activity world-wide; a commitment to the ISPRS Journal and a willingness to publish in an international, rather than a national journal, must also be factors.

During the same period, ISPRS Journal has carried over 100 reports on conferences and meetings, written by 83 different reporters. The policy of having reports written by authors from countries other than the one in which the meeting takes place has required considerable extra effort on the part of our long serving Reports Section

Editor, Professor John Trinder, but this does increase the chances of the reports being unbiased and therefore more useful for the reader. USA, Germany and UK have provided about 45% of the reporters during this period.

The Review Section has not been so successful over this period, with only 16 reviews published. There have been several changes in the Review Section Editor due to illness and change of employment but with a new Review Section Editor in post it is hoped that this section will flourish in the near future.

The News Section has carried nearly 600 separate items during this period.

Turning now to our subscribers, it must be stressed that this is primarily a matter for the Publisher. ISPRS, through the Journal Editorial Team with advice from Council, control the content of the Journal; Elsevier Science Publishers, the owner of the title, take care of all business matters relating to the Journal, including publicity and subscriptions. From the latest figures available, the geographical distribution of the Journal subscribers is as follows:

Europe	42%
North America	32
Asia	14
Oceania	7
Africa	3
South America	2

By far the largest subscriber base is in the United States (26%), with Australia, Canada, Germany, Netherlands and United Kingdom each with approximately 6%. As a large percentage of subscriptions are taken by libraries and private and government mapping organisations, these figures are not surprising.

What is surprising, and also disappointing, is the number of ISPRS member countries where there are no subscribers to what is the Official Journal of the Society - a matter which needs attention. It is also surprising that in spite of the many improvements in the Journal over recent years the total number of subscribers has remained stable.

It is interesting to note that there is correlation between the continental distribution of subscribers and contributors in that the order is the same in both tables. However, on a national basis, the correlation is not so strong and there are some interesting anomalies. In the case of Canada, France, Germany, Sweden and Switzerland, the percentage figure for contributions exceeds by some margin the percentage figure for subscribers (Figure 2). On the other hand, in Australia, India, Italy, Netherlands, United Kingdom and (especially) the United States, the percentage figures for subscribers exceeds those for contributions (Figure 1).

### 3. PREVIEW - A LOOK FORWARD

The Journal is about to enter a new phase in its development. ISPRS Council has recently

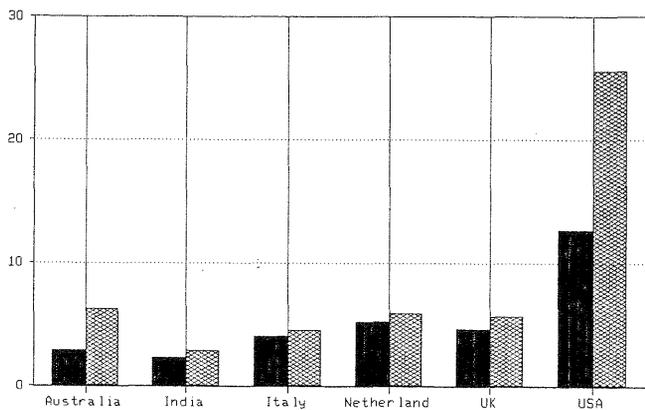


Figure 1. Percentage Subscribers greater than percentage Contributions

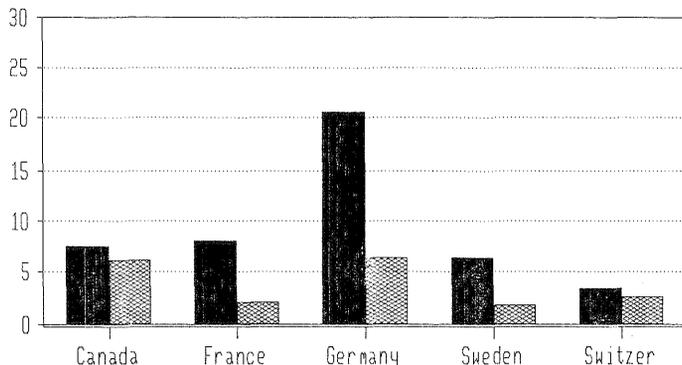
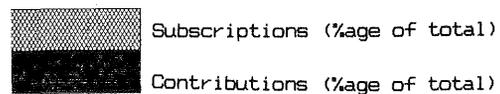


Figure 2. Percentage Contributors greater than percentage Subscribers

concluded the negotiation of a new contract with Elsevier Science Publishers and from the first issue in Volume 48, starting in 1993, there will be several changes.

### 3.1 Format

In line with current trends in Journal publishing, ISPRS Journal will be published in A4 format, with double columns for scientific/technical papers, reports and reviews and triple columns for other material. Papers will normally be submitted on paper and on floppy disk.

### 3.2 Expanded News Section

The News Section will be expanded considerably, to include more detailed information on ISPRS activities. News from Council, Commission Presidents and Working Group Chairmen, announcements of ISPRS publications, information on ISPRS involvement with Sister Societies and important press releases from Sustaining Members will now be included, in addition to the regular announcement of meetings and the Calendar of Events. In this new form, the News Section of the Journal will serve as a Newsletter for the Society. As it will be published six times a year, with a lead time of no more than eight weeks, the information should be timely. It is hoped that this service to members will encourage involvement in ISPRS affairs and will lead to a wider knowledge and appreciation of the work carried out by ISPRS and its Commissions between Congresses.

### 3.3 Scientific/technical papers

The Editors will actively seek papers which reflect the current research and applications being developed by ISPRS Commissions. This policy will not preclude other contributions, which will always be encouraged and welcomed, but is designed to allow the official Journal of ISPRS to display more comprehensively to the outside world the high quality work which members of the Society carry out, under the auspices of the Society and its Commissions.

### 3.4 Subscription Rates

The level of subscription for the Journal is set by the publisher, not by the Society. However, the subscription rate in recent years has been quite competitive when compared to other similar scientific journals. A personal subscription rate, for individual members of national societies belonging to ISPRS, will be continued at an even greater discount, which will benefit those individuals wishing to acquire a personal copy of the Journal, especially in countries where foreign currency is difficult to obtain.

It is hoped that these four actions, taken jointly by the Publishers, Council and the Editorial Team, will benefit the subscriber, the Society and the wider photogrammetric and remote sensing community.

## 4. A PARTNERSHIP

For some years now, the main subscriber base for the ISPRS Journal has lain in academic and scientific libraries. The copies in such libraries are available to a great many readers, are looked after by library staff and individual copies are usually bound, giving them a long life. It is to be hoped that in these days of library cuts these

subscriptions will continue and expand and individual library users can apply pressure to ensure this.

The number of personal subscribers has always been low, for a variety of reasons, not all of them valid. With the changes proposed for 1993, there is no better time to consider starting a personal subscription to the Official Journal of the Society.

In addition to the technical papers, the Review, Report and News Sections will keep you abreast of the activities of the Society in a way which has not been possible until now.

There should be a partnership between the Official Journal of the Society, its member societies and the individuals who make up that membership. The Publishers, the Council and the Editorial Team have attempted to put in place the conditions to foster such a partnership. We now invite you to play your part in helping the Journal develop and encourage you to benefit from the services which the Journal can provide for you.

### References

Hothmer, J., 1985. Editorial Policy of the Official Journal of ISPRS. *Photogrammetria*, 40(1985):3-7.