

## Editorial

---

The year 2002 has seen the completion of all seven mid-term Symposia, which Technical Commissions are required to hold. The Symposia were presented as either combined with another event, as was the case for Commissions I (USA), III (Austria), IV (Canada) and VII (India), or as the sole event, as occurred with Commissions II (China), V (Greece) and VI (Brazil). All Symposia were successful and all Technical Commission Presidents deserve congratulations for their major contributions to the scientific work of ISPRS. Three Council Members, including myself attended all Symposia, while other Council members attended Symposia when they could afford the time. Council were very pleased with the conduct of the Symposia, and I am sure that they have led to good preparations for the Congress in Istanbul in July 2004. Reports of all Symposia have been, or will be published in ISPRS Highlights.

As announced in the June 2002 edition of ISPRS Highlights, Council decided that it should review the terms of reference of the Technical Commissions. As well as inviting submissions from Members and individuals with an interest in the future of ISPRS, open discussion sessions was held at the Symposia on the definition of the Commissions. These discussion sessions resulted in a very diverse set of views being presented, ranging from, there is an urgent need for significant changes to the terms of reference of the Commissions, to no change is required. Therefore, Council must necessarily take a conservative approach in formulating changes. A proposal has been developed by Council, based on modifications to the current structure of the Commissions. This year, the new draft set of terms of reference will be sent to all Members for consideration. As well, they have been placed on the ISPRS Home Page for public viewing and comment. All persons with an interest in the future operations of ISPRS are urged to review the proposed new terms of reference. Council believes that it is necessary to finalize the new terms of reference in 2003, to enable Members to bid for the newly defined Technical Commissions at the 2004 Congress. Otherwise the implementation of the changes would have to be deferred until 2008.

In addition to receiving comments on the Technical Commission terms of reference, participants at the open discussions raised a number of other suggestions for modification to the operations of ISPRS, in particular, that that there should be fewer ISPRS Symposia, and that the General Assembly should meet every two years. Council is reviewing these comments to determine how the operations of ISPRS can be improved.

The year 2003 is an important one for the preparations for the Congress. The Second Announcement document will be distributed early this year. Other documentation for the Commercial and Scientific Exhibits has already been circulated. Presenters of papers at the technical sessions must submit their papers by 20 September 2003. This commences the process for the selection of papers for the technical sessions and poster sessions. The Congress Director Professor Orhan Altan is taking great care in the preparation of the Congress and excellent technical and social programs are guaranteed. The year 2003 will also be a big year for ISPRS events, with many Working Groups planning workshops in the second half of the year. Details of these events can be found in the Calendar of Events in this edition.

This edition includes the ISPRS Annual Report, which reviews the progress of ISPRS over the past year. ISPRS has had some considerable successes, culminating in the achievement of full membership of the International Council for Science (ICSU). The membership will create some addition work for Council in the form of reporting and requests for comment on various aspects of science, but it will enable ISPRS to develop its collaboration with scientists of similar interests, particularly in the areas of environmental monitoring and assessment.

John Trinder  
President

