

International Federation of Medical and Biological Engineers

Minutes of the Administrative Council Meeting Grand Hotel Union, Ljubljana, Slovenia 24 & 25 June 2007

Present:	Officers		
	Prof M Kikuchi	President	(MK)
	Prof H Voigt	Vice President	(HV)
	Prof R Magjarevic	Secretary General	(RM)
	Prof S M Krishnan	Treasurer	(SMK)
	Elected Members		
	Prof S J Calil		
	Prof J G C Hong		
	Prof A Jobbágy		
	Prof S I Kim		
	Dr H Terio		
	Prof. K Tsuijoka		
	Prof J Wojcicki		
	In Attendance		

Prof A E C Infantosi
Prof D Jaron (Monday 25 June)
Dr M Siebes (Chair, Women in MBE Committee)
Prof J A E Spaan (Editor-in-Chief MBEC)
Mr I Wolstencroft

1. President's Welcome

Prof Kikuchi welcomed everyone to the meeting, he outlined the timetable for the two days, and apologised on behalf of himself and another officer who had lost luggage on the journey to Ljubljana and were therefore perhaps less prepared than usual. The President thanked the organisers of Medicon 2007 for arranging and providing a meeting room.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Copies of the Agenda were circulated and no additional items were identified.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Meetings in Seoul September 2006

The Secretary General reported that the Minutes of the General Assembly held in Seoul had been drafted and had been forwarded to the Immediate Past President for comment and he was waiting their return before sending them to delegates and publishing in the protected area of the Federation's web site.

Similarly the Minutes of the first Administrative Council meeting in Seoul had a few days ago been forwarded to the Immediate Past President and the Secretary General is awaiting Prof Nagel's comments.

The Minutes of the second Administrative Council meeting have been completed and circulated.

The Secretary General confirmed that all actions and administrative matters arising from all three sets of Minutes have been completed.

The Vice President informed Council that following the strengthening of administrative support, in future the procedure for the approval of minutes will be as follows:

- i) First draft to be prepared by Ian Wolstencroft
- ii) Draft reviewed by the President and by the Secretary General
- iii) Draft circulated for comment to all members of Administrative Council.
- iv) Draft circulated to all Committee Chairs, Editor-in-Chief and Deputy Editor present at the AC meeting

This process is intended to allow all at the meeting to have sight of the minutes, and have a chance to influence them before approval.

4. President's Report

The President, Prof Makoto Kikuchi, emphasised that the Administrative Council meetings provide a good opportunity to inform the elected members of major issues, as it is difficult to keep all members up to date on the detail of various activities on a day-to-day basis.

Prof Kikuchi reported that Prof Nagel, the Immediate Past President, had not attended the Officers' meeting earlier in the day and would not be attending the Administrative Council meeting.

5. Vice President's Report

Prof Voigt informed Council that as Chair of the Awards Committee he is currently putting together a new membership. He reported that the President had agreed to serve on the Committee. Prof Voigt also explained that he would be contacting previous award winners to seek volunteers for the committee.

It was **agreed** that it would be better to consider nominations for awards on an ongoing basis rather than only in the year of the World Congress. Prof Voigt asked for recommendations from Council members for consideration by the committee to be submitted to him before the next Administrative Council meeting. **Action All**

6 Secretary General's Report

The Secretary General referred to his previously circulated report and highlighted the following topics.

6.1 Web Site

Prof. Magjarevic updated Council on progress to date, and asked members to let him know of any further changes required. He commented on the creation of the Administrative Council protected area, and stated that other protected areas can also be provided if required. He also reported that he is still awaiting information to include on the web site, particularly such details as members of committees and working groups.

Prof. Magjarevic suggested that in future the officers have authority to approve documents for publication on the web site, including the right to require changes or reject documents. In addition he felt no detailed financial documents should be included on the public web site. This was **agreed**.

6.2 Publications

The Secretary General reported that access tokens for the electronic version of MBEC had been distributed by IPEM to the members of 8 societies who had supplied contact details.

Examples of the IFMBE Proceedings Series were available for Council to inspect, work is still ongoing on the electronic versions and the first of these planned to go live will be the World Congress and Medicon 2007.

The first issue in the new IFMBE book series has now been published by Springer and will be available at the Medicon meeting.

6.3 Conference Software

Prof. Magjarevic reported that IFMBE had acquired proprietary software for receipt and handling of abstracts etc called "EasyChair". This is a generic piece of software and will be made available to organisers of IFMBE conferences free of charge, however, other software may be used, if preferred, but no financing of the extra costs will be available from IFMBE.

6.4 International Liaison

The Secretary General reported that there are currently 58 affiliates to IFMBE, 53 national societies and 5 trans-national societies. He reported progress on two new applications, one from Indonesia which is being reviewed and their full Bylaws are awaited, and one from Mongolia who, after consideration, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee recommend should be offered "observer status" until necessary changes and additions to their Statutes are made in order to comply with IFMBE requests for membership. After discussion on the meaning of "observer status" Prof. Magjarevic proposed and Prof. Voigt seconded that the Mongolian Society be offered "observer status" within IFMBE, this was **agreed**.

Action RM

6.5 Awards

Prof. Magjarevic referred to the arrangements for the Nightingale Award and reported that IPEM were content for the award to be made solely by IFMBE. The Editor of MBEC, Prof. Spaan, informed Council of the process adopted for selecting the 2006 winner, which involved reviewing the 10 most downloaded articles. It was **agreed** that recognition is as important as the monetary value and that the award should be presented at an IFMBE event each year, the award will be acknowledged in MBEC and on the journal web site. The Federation Journal Committee was requested to review the details for making this award and report back to the next Administrative Council meeting.

Action HV

6.6 Conferences

6.6.1 Medicon 2007

The Secretary General reported good collaboration with the organisers of Medicon 2007 and there was general appreciation of the special session on "Patient safety and clinical engineering". The financial arrangements of a maximum of €10,000 support was confirmed.

6.6.2 CLAIB, September 2007

The Treasurer explained that the organisers have requested that the \$10,000 advance from IFMBE be paid direct to the conference hotel. It was **agreed** that to protect IFMBE's position no such payment be made, but the Treasurer be authorised to write a letter of guarantee to the hotel supporting the \$10,000 funding. In answer to a question the Treasurer informed Council that the national society in Venezuela was unable to receive the advance direct from IFMBE.

Action SMK

6.6.3 Nordic, Baltic 2008

It was **agreed** that the Vice President, Secretary General, Treasurer and Dr H. Terio be authorised to meet representatives of the organisers of this conference at Medicon and to prepare for the signing of a contract for this event, as requested by the organisers. It was **agreed** that an advance of €3,000 be authorised.

Action HV, RM, SMK, HT

6.6.4 APCMBE China 2008

The Secretary General reported that no dates had yet been finalised for this event. Following discussion it was **agreed** that the Secretary General should write to the organisers asking for confirmed dates by 1 September 2007, and that if no suitable reply is received then the IFMBE Asian Pacific Conference for 2008 should be incorporated in the conference to be held in Singapore in December 2008.

Action RM

It was also **agreed** that Council members will use their informal contacts to try and resolve the matter.

6.6.5 4th IFMBE European Medical & Biological Engineering Conference, Belgium, 2008

The Secretary General expressed concern that the budget for this event continues to show a deficit. It was **agreed** that the Secretary General should write to the organisers specifically stating that "IFMBE will not underwrite any deficit on this conference".

Action RM

It was also **agreed** that the Treasurer will speak to the Belgian representative to identify possible sources of funds, in addition Prof. Spaan agreed to also use his private contacts to help resolve the situation.

Action SMK, JAES

Reluctantly Council also **agreed** to accept the inclusion of "ESEM" in the name of the conference, but only for 2008.

6.7 Document Procedure

The Secretary General asked the Administrative Council to clearly define the procedure of handling the IFMBE documents. The procedure should define rules of access and distribution of the documents. It should also be clear who can make the decision to make the documents available to wider public.

7 Treasurer's Report

7.1 Bank Accounts

The Treasurer reported on the current position regarding the Federation's bank accounts, and informed Council that as at the end of May the federation had £772,000 in cash holdings.

Dr Shankar informed Council that his objective is for interest on deposits to cover operating expenses, and reminded members that the maximum the Federation will pay for attendance where not supported by their own societies is £650.

7.2 Subscriptions

The Treasurer informed Council that he had received membership fees for 2006 from 36 out of 58 member societies, and also 4 fees for 2007. A number of issues were debated in the light of these figures. Firstly the Vice President agreed to remind Secretaries at their meeting of the need to ensure fees have been paid. Secondly it was proposed by the Treasurer and seconded by Prof. Jobbágy that the minimum fee for national and trans-national societies should be \$62, applicable from the 2008 membership year, this was **agreed**. Thirdly it was **agreed** that non payers be referred to the Membership Committee with a guide that societies become observer members following three years of non payment. It was also **agreed** that the process for expulsion be referred to the Membership Committee for consideration.

7.3 Publication Receipts

The Treasurer reported receipt of journal payments from Springer and informed Council that the balancing payment for 2006 is still to be received.

He also reported that he is still exploring whether it will be possible to get a further reimbursement from the previous publishers in respect of 2005.

7.4 Conferences

Dr Shankar reported that he is still trying to get a refund of the tax paid on income from the Prague conference. The Vice president referred to a contact he has in the Czech Republic and agreed to try and help to recover this money. **Action SMK, HV**

The \$25,000 payment from the 2006 World Congress has yet to be received, together with a further element of surplus amounting to \$3,096.

7.5 Permanent Office

The Treasurer reported progress on transferring duties to Ian Wolstencroft at York.

7.6 IAMBE Academy

Statistics relating to the academy were reported.

7.7 Draft Budget

The initial 2008 budget was presented showing a surplus of £25,000, but this is dependent on exchange rates. It was **agreed** that the Treasurer, Secretary General and Ian Wolstencroft should review the current provisions for support costs to ensure appropriate budgets for each activity. **Action SMK, RM, IW**

The meeting was called off at 17.40 hours.

The meeting resumed at 09.00 on Monday 25 June 2007.

8. Committees, Working Groups and Division Chairs

The President reported that the ballot on his proposals for the various chairs had proved favourable. However, he commented that only 7 members had voted, and asked for more responses in future. Prof Kikuchi reported that almost all the Chairs had accepted.

9. Report from the Federation Journal Committee

In the absence of the Chair of the Committee, Prof Nagel, the President gave a summary of the achievements of the Committee over the last two years. However the President reported that Prof Nagel felt that during 2006 the relationship between him and the Editor-in-Chief, Prof Spaan, deteriorated, but was prepared to continue as the interim Chair of FJC to complete the transfer to Springer.

Prof Kikuchi reported Prof Nagel's comments at the Officers' meeting in Washington regarding the performance of the editor, Springer's views on the situation and the difficulties encountered in the process for page charging. He also reported the discussion on the appointment of the Chair of FJC. Subsequent to that meeting, Prof Nagel informed the President that he could not accept either the interim Chair or substantive chair of FJC. The President recognised the continuing difficulties between Prof Nagel and Prof Spaan but stressed that the FJC's role in safeguarding the journal income is important for the Federation and therefore Council needs to carefully review its position. Following questions from members requesting further detail on the discussion at the Officers' meeting in Washington it was **agreed** to accept Prof Nagel's resignation as Chair of FJC. It was **agreed** that before further consideration of the FJC itself Council would receive the editor's report.

Prof Spaan referred to his previously circulated report and highlighted a number of statistics:

- i) the editorial work has increased since the transfer of publication to Springer;

	PPL	Springer
Issues	6	12
Pages	800	1,200
Papers	115	145

In addition the acceptance rate has fallen from 50.6% in 1996 to 29.5% in 2006, although the number of papers has increased the quality, generally, has fallen.

- ii) The Journal Impact Factor, JIF, reflects the citations to the previous two years' papers, the recently announced 2006 JIF of 1.018 reflects the 2004/2005 papers, while papers handled by the new editorial team started to be published in 2006. Hence, the 2008 JIF will be the first one entirely dependent on the work of the present editorial team and the prevailing conditions during the transition and start-up period with the new publisher. Prof Spaan stated that only analyses of 2006-2007 can be used to judge the success of the editorial team. Based on an analysis of citation development to the papers in the past years it is to be expected that the IF for 2007 will remain above 1 although performance of 2005 is poor but which is compensated by better citations to papers in 2006. Prof Spaan also outlined the dangers of a falling JIF (MBEC is in the lowest 25% of Biomedical Engineering journals sorted by JIF) and also the measures he is taking to improve the situation. He also commented on a new measure of individual performance, the Hirsch factor, and used this measure to demonstrate the strength of the Editorial Team.

It was **agreed** that Dr Stephen Smye be reappointed Deputy Editor until 2009.

- iii) Prof Spaan commented on the difficulties his editorial team is having following articles through the process once passed to Springer, and identified several areas in Springer's processes in general which are causing problems. He especially expressed concerns with respect to the delay in indexing our papers for PubMed and Medline.

At this point Prof Spaan felt Council should discuss his report in his absence and therefore left the meeting for a little while.

Considerable discussion ensued and the outcomes were as follows:

The Impact Factor does need to be increased.
It is too soon after the editor's appointment to assess results
The difficulties identified in Springer's processes should be addressed

Council continues to be extremely supportive of the journal, and regardless of everything that has gone on in the last twelve months, reiterated that the most important outcome is a good journal.

Prof Spaan rejoined the meeting.

The issue of Page Charges was raised and an explanation given of the history of page charges and the relative views of their impact held by various officers. The actual process of issuing the charges was also discussed and a number of details were identified where changes to the process would improve the overall result.

There followed a discussion on the history of the FJC and how Prof Nagel had moved things forward, culminating in a new editor and new publisher, but it was **agreed** that the work of the FJC must develop beyond that.

Several suggestions were made regarding a potential new Chair of FJC, Council then decided to move into "executive" session to discuss the issues and requested those not elected members to retire for a short time.

Summary of the “Executive Session”

Administrative Council expressed their support to the President and his activities to meet the mission of the IFMBE.

Council then discussed a number of approaches to the appointment of a Chair and membership of the FJC. The conclusion was reached that Council should signal its support for the journal by becoming involved in the regeneration of the FJC. The President nominated Prof Voigt as Chair of FJC until 2009 and this was unanimously **agreed** by Council. It was also **agreed** that Dr J G C Hong be appointed as a member of FJC, that Prof Voigt be asked to approach David Holder to serve on the Committee and that Council members submit suggestions for a fourth member taking into account geographical and gender balance.

It was also recognised that one of the FJC’s first tasks is to recruit an Associate Editor from the United States to help generate more submissions from there.

Despite the recent difficulties Council acknowledged and were appreciative of the work done by Prof Nagel, both in moving the journal forward with the new arrangements and also raising the profile of the Federation generally on the world stage.

The “executive session” closed.

10. Project for the World Survey on Biological Engineering Activities and Academic Programs

Dr Calil referred to his previously circulated proposals for a survey on Biomedical Engineering Activities and highlighted its major aspects, including a cost of \$11,393 plus costs for a web site.

It was **agreed** that the scope of the survey should be increase, and Dr Calil was asked to revisit the proposal and resubmit it to the Treasurer for consideration as part of the 2008 Budget process.

Action SJC

11. Women in Medical and Biological Engineering

Dr Siebes referred to her previously circulated report. She commented on the low number of women in IFMBE governing boards and the disappointing attendance of the symposium at Seoul and hoped for an improvement in 2009. Dr Siebes appealed to the AC, IAMBE fellows, and other Committees for support in highlighting the work of this group and in promoting women’s participation in IFMBE. As part of the attempt to increase visibility of women in IFMBE it was **agreed** that items of interest to WimBE be included on the Federation website.

Action RM

Dr Siebes’s report detailed the proposed activities for 2007 – 2009 and also the subsequent budget implications. The report was accepted by Council and the budget proposals are to be reviewed in the light of the overall budget.

12. Industrial Working Group

Prof Wojcicki presented his previously circulated report, and emphasised the difficulties in getting industry involved in IFMBE activities. He proposed a meeting in December, in Poland, 2007 to bring together members of IFMBE, EUCOMED and the International Society of Science Parks to investigate how the transfer of knowledge from research to development and application can be facilitated. Council supported the proposal, but deferred a decision on the funding until later on the Agenda when the Budget will be reviewed.

The President agreed to report to the next Council meeting on the involvement of industry in Japan. **Action MK**

13. Asian Pacific Group

J G C Hong reported that there are now representatives from 8 Societies on the Working Group; Australia, China, Taipei, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Singapore and Malaysia. Further representation is being sought from Indonesia, Thailand and New Zealand, and eventually Vietnam and Mongolia. The intention is to meet once a year which in 2007 is planned for China and in 2008 in Taipei.

He also reported on the success of the Asia Pacific Travelling Fellowship, where 5 young biomedical engineers from Singapore, Hong Kong, Taipei and Korea had visited Institutions in each other's countries and also met leaders of the local Societies. He reported that it is intended to further develop the fellowships in the future. In addition, it was **agreed** that in future years reimbursement will only be made after receipt of biographies, short papers and appropriate graphics by the News Editor.

14. Permanent Office

Mr Wolstencroft gave an update on the work undertaken by the office in York.

15. Review Committee

Prof Jaron referred to the proposal circulated to Council members, and supported by a number of Past Presidents that Council should create a Review Committee made up of Past Presidents, reporting to the General Assembly, and that this Committee should systematically review the activities of the various committees and Working Groups of IFMBE, including the Administrative Council. Prof Jaron supported this proposal by a more detailed presentation.

His presentation stimulated a wide discussion as to the possible detailed role of such a Committee and it was **agreed** that a more detailed paper be submitted to the next Council meeting. **Action DJ**

16. WHO/ICSU

Prof Jaron agreed to report to Council electronically on developments at ICSU, but did inform Council of an ICSU project on "Science for Wellbeing in Changing Urban Environments". **Action DJ**

Dr Magjarevic reported that Prof. Nagel has attended the WHA in Geneva and contributed that the WHA accepts the Resolution on Health Care Technology. The latest Newsletter contained details on the developments with the WHO and a joint initiative on "High Technology and Training Group" with IOMP and IUPESM.

Prof. Nagel has also arranged for IFMBE to become a partner at three important world meetings regarding Health Care to be held in Washington, DC in 2007.

17. World Congress 2006

Dr Kim gave a presentation on the outcome of the World Congress 2006 held in Seoul, including statistics indicating the scale of the event. He reported that the overall surplus was \$61,050, much less than had been anticipated originally due to the adverse movement of the Korean Won against the US Dollar.

The President thanked Dr Kim and his colleagues for all their efforts in organising such a successful event.

18. 2008 Budget

It was **agreed** that the 2008 Budget should be re-examined after all new proposed activities for 2008 have been fully costed. The Treasurer was asked to circulate a template for submitting bids to all working groups etc for submission to him for review.

Action SMK

It was also **agreed** that because of the time pressure the proposed costs for the Industry working Group's proposed meeting in Poland of \$7,000 be approved.

19. Past President's Report

The President reported that he had received an emailed copy of the Past President's Report today at 16.30 hours, and it was **agreed** that consideration of the report be delegated to the Officers.

20. Approval of Submitted Reports

Council expressed their formal acceptance of the following reports:

Treasurer
General Secretary
Editor-in-Chief of MBEC

21. Officer's Visit

Prof Voigt reported that he had been invited to attend the Iberian Peninsula Consortium meeting to be held in September. The meeting also includes representatives from South America, and would be at no cost to IFMBE.

22. Next Meeting

It was **agreed** that the next Administrative Council meeting will be held in association with the Nordic Baltic Conference to be held in Riga, Latvia in June 2008.

The meeting closed at 18.30 hours.

IW/RM/MK
19/09/07