

We Visited for You

FIG Working Week 2003

Every year members of FIG, the Federation Internationale des Geometres (International Federation of Surveyors), gather together for their annual meeting; this year the FIG Working Week was held on the outskirts of Paris from 13-17 April. The Federation was originally founded in Paris in 1878 and it is fitting then that on the 125th anniversary of FIG this year, Paris should host the annual meeting. The theme of the working week - 'Still on the Frontline' - was most appropriate given the longevity of the Federation.

The venue for the meeting was the Ecole Nationale des Sciences Geographiques (ENSG) of Institut Geographique National (IGN), located in Marne la Vallee to the east of Paris. This futuristic building with its large open atrium made an ideal space for the exhibitors and over 600 delegates were able to access the extensive exhibition directly from the technical sessions and meetings held in adjacent rooms.

Various Sessions

The full working week included a number of separate meetings, which

allowed the council, the ten technical commissions and the General Assembly to progress the ongoing work and plan the future strategy of FIG. Primarily, FIG is a federation of national associations and is the only international body that represents all surveying disciplines. It is administered by its General Assembly and a total of 51 member associations were represented in Paris.

In addition, the working week normally includes a technical conference and exhibition. This year the conference included 3 plenary sessions and 27 technical sessions along with 60

poster presentations. In total, the number of professional papers exceeded 180.

Commission 4

Commission 4 'Hydrography' had a successful working week with direct input to two technical sessions representing the ongoing work of the workgroups. The first session considered the challenges and opportunities in the development of a seamless vertical reference system. This is an important topic as there are many issues surrounding the collation of data from differing sources into new products, say in CZM and 3D ECDIS.

The second session was the subject of a joint workgroup with Commission 7 'Cadastre & Land Management' looking at Marine Cadastres and Coastal Management. Many countries are now in the process of defining their marine boundaries - environmental





and human interactive - and actively participate in ocean governance programmes.

A highlight of the week was the opportunity to attend a gala dinner at the Chateau de Versailles, built for Louis XIV, in the splendid Gallery of Battles. It was a truly memorable experience to dine in such imposing surroundings.

Lastly, full credit must be given to the local organising committee for the time and effort necessary to organise such a successful event.

All of the papers presented in the two Hydrography sessions are available from the FIG Commission 4 website (www.fig.net/figtree/commission4/index.htm), as are the minutes of the

Commission 4 meeting. Future FIG meetings include a regional conference in Morocco in November 2003 and the next working week is to be held in Athens, Greece, in May 2004.

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