



Task Force on the Future Governance of FIG

**Appendix 1 to ITEM 17:
43rd General Assembly, Amsterdam, Netherlands
10- 14 May 2020**

1. Introduction

This paper has been developed by the Governance Task Force (Footnote 1) in order to provide a framework for discussing the future governance and management of the International Federation of surveyors (FIG).

Our purpose is to concentrate on the efficiency and effectiveness of our governance structure; ultimately the task force (TF) is to ask: 'Are we "**Fit for the Future**"?' Our work is in the context to consider if any change to our mode of operation and to be fit for the future in the short term; the long term is being considered by the 2028 initiative. (Footnote 2)

Section 2 of this paper refers to the FIG Governance web site that holds information including a resource on 'Futures'. I.e. identifying references to some of the driving forces of global change and the main issues and trends arising from them

Section 3 outlines the key issues that will be debated by the FIG actors attending the 2020 Amsterdam working week (WW). These have been developed as a result of member engagement throughout 2019. It is envisaged that face-to-face debates at the WW2020 in Amsterdam will be key to drafting our conclusions.

The sequential debating activities proposed at this WW include:

1. Interactive session during the first GA (45 mins)
2. Roundtable meeting (90 mins)
3. Forum of Member Associations & Regional Bodies (90 mins)
4. Reporting back to second GA (Next steps)

In advance of the break-out session you may wish to make some notes of your initial thoughts and reflections on points raised. The Task Force would be happy to receive copies of these written comments for its subsequent deliberations if you are willing to submit them.

Dear Members, to prepare for the debates above, please consider the questions posed in section 3.

2. Some of the Key Pressures for Change (refer to web upload)

FIG is not alone in facing up to the challenges of the next millennium. As part of its work, the Task Force has looked at how other international professional organisations operate. According to the Union of International Associations (see www.uia.org), there are circa 40,000 international NGO's; before considering the additional numbers of other Inter Governmental Bodies, Regional Bodies and Networks. Each has its own governance and management structure, each reflecting its history and traditions. No specific model has been identified that meets all the needs of FIG.

3. Key Issues to be discussed

The development of the debates have been drawn from consultations with Member associations (MA) and deliberations during 2019. This involved face-to-face and online engagement – read the [results from the SWAT analysis here](#). The responses have been clustered into three broad headings: Governance, Branding our Conferences and Volunteering, each with 1-3 Key issues.

The considerations listed are not exhaustive, and are noted to assist you with your own thinking and preparation for discussion

3.1 Governance: GA Processes and Procedures

3.1.1 *The need to consider the format of GA and how it is conducted*

To continue to be able to respond to changing conditions it is vital that the FIG structure enables the organisation to respond quickly and effectively, whilst at the same time ensuring that appropriate levels of accountability exist. The General assembly is a key platform to disseminate information and gain input and direction from FIG members

Although there is continuing support for a General Assembly (GA) the present form has become a cumbersome forum for decision making. The physical layout of the room in which GA's take place tends to encourage a more adversarial rather than collaborative approach to decision making. Furthermore, over time, the agenda for GA has increased in length, often dealing with operational issues which could be delegated.

In general, members perceive that the structure is seen to be strong in terms of transparency and reporting. However, in terms of the decision-making process it is not a debating or an influencing platform; with poor attendance levels; further it could be a more effective platform for review e.g. for progress on commission work plans.

Key issue A:

To what extent do we need to adapt the GA format and to change how we conduct our business?

Considerations:

- **Accountability:** The GA agenda is structured in response to our Statutes
- **Availability & engagement:** Will we receive sufficient and prior MA engagement and response (in writing or electronic) to agenda matters? Could the GA time allocation be reduced and only focus on 'points of order'; which will need to be raised by members in writing prior to the meeting?
- **Ownership:** Will there be a loss of engagement if the GA is reduced to ½ day e.g. management items and essential updates? And the afternoon e.g. could relate to extended commission meetings and activities?
- **Alternatively:** Would it be more appropriate to hold a General Assembly every two years, for example, rather than every year as now? And delegate more responsibility to the Council or to Executive Committees that may be set-up and empowered to deal with specific items such as finance, membership relations, revisions of statutes, or international affairs?
- **Assuming:** is it correct there is willingness for the closing GA to remain as ½ day activity, particularly for voting issues

3.1.2 The need to consider increased members involvement in decision making to ensure transparency

Although the GA is mentioned as a strength, the feedback pointed to the need for MA's to have more influence in decision-making at the GA. It is essential to be clear if the key factor forcing this idea for change. Is it a) the GA an operating procedure or b) across the entire FIG matrix decision approach?

Reporting at GA is necessary for the sake of transparency but there has to be a time limit to how long presentations (commissions and others) are allowed to be made. What could be considered as the minimum requirements for reporting?

Key issue B:

To what degree will members be able to practically increase their involvement to enhance their input into decision making? And will this aid in greater transparency?

Considerations:

- Which decisions do members feel that they are not involved in?
- Do MA's have time to be more involved?
- Should the GA involve all our members in decision making; i.e. not just Member Associations
- Is it practical that the current GA role (as an oversight forum) be changed to detailed management?
- Ensure technology is integral to the way we develop and communicate our GA, and/ or consider part of the meetings to be available virtually. Both approaches are likely to have cost implications
- Is the annual communication of the management reports untimely?
- Consider the balance of resources for a) FIG office and b) Members

3.1.3 The need to become more effective in the use of our collaborative and cooperation structures to better and ensure open communication channels:

Drawing on the trends in society and working practices of professionals: Is the depth of our collective working and experience best served by the current platforms? Do we have clear roles and responsibilities that are agile to respond to the demands of society as well as our MA needs? And do they effectively contribute to the range of work expected to meet the emerging needs, technologically as well as societally?

The Federation operates on a matrix structure, with roles and responsibilities set out in the FIG Statutes, this in turn implies the routes of communications. Member's associations often reported that their easiest route to contribute is through the commissions, which are seen as a window of influence. Does this then point to considering how the structure of the FIG may adapt in such a way as to further enhance the speed with which policy decisions are confirmed and implemented?

Key Issue C:

What structural change across our current matrix organisation (i.e. Permanent Groups, Task forces, Commissions etc) would ensure a more relevant, transparent and efficient FIG and therefore making communication easier

Considerations:

- Relationship between Task Forces, Networks and Commissions, ensuring they work closer together

- Drive collaboration across the organisation by the use of online platforms, “go digital”, webinar’s, e meetings, etc
- NB the communication and activity *within* commissions is reflected below
- Will there be a greater uptake that will benefit the organisation if the current 4 year term cycle is shortened, e.g. to 2 years

3. 2. FIG Branding and Conferencing:

3.2.1 *The need to maintain effective working weeks and enhance the FIG brand*

The feedback acknowledges the centrality and importance of FIG Working weeks to our brand, enabling members to network, to conduct the federations business and is also our main communication channel. Our brand defines our purpose, sets our culture, above all it fosters forward momentum to achieve our strategy. Does our conferencing brand deliver a clear promise?

Key issue D.

Do we need to modernise and reformat the way in which we hold our annual working week conferences to meet members expectations. (i.e. currently, Plenaries, technical sessions, roundtables, special sessions etc)

Considerations:

- **Reality check:** do we want or need our WW to exceed numbers every year i.e. be larger, bigger, more attendees etc . Is this a sustainable business model? Does it unnecessarily pressurise our host MA?
- **Encourage** cost reduction by considering less iconic venues/ secondary cities; noting that very few centres can hold conference with the number of attendees that FIG attracts. Is the current venue selectin process appropriate for members needs today
- **Ensure** technology is integral to the way we develop our conferencing, and/ or consider part of the meetings to be available virtually. Both approaches are likely to have cost implications
- **Evaluate** the MA benefit and what do they gain to attend our conferences, and is this greater than other WW participants that are not normally involved?
- If so, is more flexibility needed and to be built into the registration fee? What would the criteria be for flexibility? And note that this may impact on the conference revenue)
- **Maintain** the technical program; but have parallel professional issues on strategy/policy and oversight to provide a suite of ‘decisional forums’
- **Involve** other associations to act as co-organiser of technical sessions
- **Evaluate** outsourcing the conference activity

3.3 People & Volunteering

3.3.1 *The need to improve and widen involvement, and to attract a new generation of contributors to FIG*

The current FIG four - year work plan ‘Volunteering for the future of our organization’, recognises that the nature of our organisation is predicated upon volunteering activities. The strategy seeks to embrace the people factor, considering mechanisms for ‘purposeful’ individual engagement and attracting the next generation and above all encouraging nominations.

Above all, the benefit of FIG as an international network is of significant value to our members; particularly on a personal level, as well as to add value to MA's.

Is there a need for a formal group or committee to 'sense check' and support people wish to volunteer for roles within the organisation? Such a group could evaluate the willingness and ability for members to volunteer, and to provide insight on how to ensure the process of selecting those responsible for the future governance and management of FIG. This group will need to be transparent, open and supported by Council, Chairs and Members.

Key Issue E

Is it considered that the establishment of a Nominations Committee to assist with leadership and election process will be helpful?

Considerations:

- **Encourage** member associations to be more involved, and retain the enthusiasm of individuals *within* MAs
- **Explore** the possibility and desirability for a Nominations Committee to assist with leadership and election process, And to consider global diversity in representation at officer level
- Revisit the extent of geographical diversity operating within commission activity- how do we change this?
- **Provide** a group to identify, mentor and encourage people to run for office and also other activities such as expert group meetings, ad hoc committees etc.

This committee could also assist with the next 2 key issues: Issue F to widen the pool of contributors within Commissions and Issue G to encourage the transition of our Young surveyors

3.3.2 Need for increased levels of involvement in commission work

Over the past 5-10 years the activities of the Federation have been managed to increase the numbers of individuals who are involved in its work. Through the work of ACCO, in particular, Commission chairs have become more actively involved, although some might suggest that for the future the increasing demands on the Commission Chairs could act as a disincentive for some candidates to stand for office.

Because the commission are seen by many as the engine of FIG, is this the forum in which influence is built further? Currently, the commission work is considered closed (especially work plan development). And notwithstanding that FIG is global; the concentration of activities is received as tending towards one geographical area and by a select group.

So, for the future should this model be built upon in order to increase the involvement of other groups in the work of FIG? Such as MA taking on specific working groups and/ or tasks, this may facilitate their proactive role in the future evolution of the Federation's working outputs?

Key Issue F

How can we ensure that MA's and individuals increased activity within commissions becomes a reality and is also balanced by the constraints of time and funding

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Considerations:

- **Identify** how commission chairs can actively increase and encourage members to participate
- **Outline** the required development steps to ensure better linkages are in place between the Council 4 year strategy and Commission work plans
- **Assess** if the relationship between Task Force and Network needs to be improved
- Is MA involvement further compounded by a decrease in professional recruitment at the country level across the world, thus less members effectively undermines MA's ability to be active in FIG.

3.3.3 Need to address the transition of young surveyors from the YS Network to the main FIG activity

FIG is a special type of international body, one which leads to strong and lasting friendships, many continuing for 20 years and more. This has clear benefits and helps assure the ongoing work of the Federation. On the less positive side, however, this has, over the past 15 years or so led to a dramatic 'greying' of the active membership. The number of new, younger faces involved in the past 5 years has been limited. Does this require an investigation of ways to help the young surveyor member to transition to 'mainstream FIG' and increase their involvement?

Key Issue G

How can we ensure that the long term involvement of some members is balanced by the involvement of a new, younger generation of members (as delegates, members of commission working groups etc.)?

Considerations

- Long lasting FIG friends and friendships are a resource but it should not have an automatic priority over new/young people coming in and leading.
- Change should be a continuous process.
- Can MA's readily support their young surveyor members? Noting that the FIG foundations offers some supporting opportunities

The Task Force would be happy to receive copies of these written comments for its subsequent deliberations if you are willing to submit them, either before the 2020 WW or immediately thereafter .

Thank you in advanced for your consideration and input.

END

Footnote 1: The members of the Task Force are:

- **Chair: Diane Dumashie Vice President FIG**

- Jakoba Kgopolelo, Botswana
- James Kavanagh UK
- Hansjoerg kutterer Germany
- Kate Fairlie Australia
- Kwabena Asiana Ghana
- Maurice Barbieri, Switzerland
- Mikael Lilje Sweden
- Pekka Halme, Finland
- Melissa Harrington USA

Footnote 2:

With the advent of the FIG 2028 initiative the distinguishing terms of reference for each are defined as follows;

- **FIG 2028:**
refers to the visionary processes by which a body assures itself that the long terms interests of its stakeholders* are satisfied.

- **FIG Task Force 2021:**
the Task Force on Governance refers to the short term process (2 year horizon) by which a body plans, organises, implements and monitors its day to day operations and administrative matters, and if a change is required to its statutes.

* In the context of FIG these stakeholders include; the Members (the Member Associations, Affiliate Members, Sponsors and Academic Members), specialist interest groups (Commissions and Task Forces), the clients of surveyors, the employees of FIG, and the general public at large.

Footnote 3: FAQ's Are available on the FIG Governance web site:
https://fig.net/organisation/general_assembly/task_force/governance_19-22.asp