



THE INSTITUTE OF ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONICS ENGINEERS

UNITED KINGDOM AND REPUBLIC OF IRELAND SECTION

COMMUNICATIONS CHAPTER

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Minutes of Chapter Committee Meeting held at SECC (Scottish Exhibition and conference Centre Glasgow, on 4th June 2003

Present: Peter Hill (Chair), Trevor Clarkson, David Parish, Jaafar Elmighani, Fary Ghassmlooy, Maaruf Ali, Iain Thayne and John Thompson (guest).

Prof Peter Hill chaired the meeting.

Due to the unavailability of Tony Boucouvalas, David Parish took the minutes.

Apologies for absence were received from Mike Darnell, Sean McGrath and Yichuang Sun.

1. The Minutes of the meeting on 19th February 2003 were approved. Additional comments were made as follows:
2. The following were reported under Matters Arising:

Attention was drawn to the new prize for the best M.Sc project.
Approximately 29 Liaison Officers have responded to the request for continued service.

3. Chairman's Report :

Since the last meeting, the Chairman had presented the six monthly Chapter Chair report to the UKRI Section meeting. A written report was presented which highlighted details of the committee membership, finance, student activities, prizes; the possibility of a new Scottish Chapter and of hosting ICC in 2007 at Glasgow.

A number of issues were reported:

1. The electronic database of members is not up to date, and it is difficult therefore to know the exact number of ComSoc members. It is claimed that IEEE in the USA do have an up to date database.
2. Training material is available for new Chapter Chairs (and Vice-Chairs)
3. Prof. Leslie Smith (CS Stirling University) is the new Chapter Chair for Neural Networks.
4. There is great concern regarding the lack of return of L31 forms from UKRI Chapters. (Our Chapter is fine).
5. IEEE is keen on upgrading Members to SMIEEE status as this is good for retention.
6. IEEE is keen on encouraging non-academic involvement and Simon Jones has established an Industrial Liaison Team for the UKRI Section.
7. Peter is to give a presentation on 'The problems of being a large Chapter' to the Region 8 Chapter Chair's Congress in Rimini, 21-23 September 2003.
8. The next Section meeting (and the last for Peter) will be held in Dublin on 17-18 October 2003.
9. Due to the financial problems afflicting IEEE in general, a tax may be imposed on reserves. This is of considerable concern to UKRI ComSoc, as most of the Section reserves are effectively held by us. We need to ensure that we retain at least sufficient monies for the ICC 2007 bid, and also to fund the Chapter's representation at Congress. The Section rebate has been approved for 2004.
10. IEEE is getting concerned about the age profile of it's members. It now has 900 people who are "Life Members" (defined as the sum of the member's age and years of IEEE membership exceeding 100 years).
11. The IEEE Brussels Office has now been closed.
12. Region 8 has appointed a Standards Co-ordinator.
13. Region 8 are being encouraged to bring Conferences to the area.

14. An increase in “live” events in Region 8 has been noted.
15. It is intended to hold two History Milestones events. One will commemorate the invention and development of public-key cryptography at GCHQ, the other the first transoceanic radio telephony broadcast.

4. Finance and Membership:

Trevor Clarkson reported that the Chapter balance is £55346 in total, meaning that we remain financially healthy as a UKRI chapter. Trevor pointed out that we will spend some of this in the near future on the three sets of prizes. A request to ensure students are aware of these prizes before they are awarded was made and, to assist this activity, Jaafar distributed copies of his draft poster.

5. Student Activities, Prizes and Awards:

Discussion centred on the poster mentioned above. A request was made for a short introductory statement introducing the IEEE, ComSoc and the Chapter. There should also be an area where the Liaison Officer (or other) can add contact details for further information.

The “Project Prize” should be changed to “Final Year Project Prize”

It was decided that the poster should be A2 in size as this is easier to accommodate on University notice boards. An initial print run of 150 was authorised and Jaafar was thanked for his work and also requested to modify and complete the poster as discussed and agreed.

The meeting was reminded that all student prize-winners should be requested to become IEEE members, if not already so. A proportion of the prize money could be used for this purpose and the meeting requested Tony to make this clear to all prize-winners in the award letters. A similar comment applies to all Student Liaison Officers who should make this point clear to their students.

The issue of student bursary support for conferences was raised with particular reference to the forthcoming ISCTA Ambleside conference. It is important that any student in receipt of a bursary must be a member of IEEE via the UKRI Section.

Chapters have been asked to appoint Membership Development (MD) Officers. A CDROM is available to support the MDs and whilst some bits are US specific, other sections are more widely applicable. It was suggested that this could also be a useful resource for the Student Liaison Officers. Fary offered to customise the CD for this purpose.

6. Foundation of a Communications Chapter in Scotland.

Iain Thayne reported that he had held meetings with relevant people in the EE/CS Departments of Glasgow and Strathclyde Universities in connection with this activity. The response has been positive. A similar situation was reported by John Thompson from Edinburgh, but there is concern about achieving practical working integration at an operational level between the Glasgow and Edinburgh areas. Discussion then centred on the workload to be placed on the new Secretary and Chair. This led to discussions concerning the issue of critical mass; essentially the need to find suitable people to fill these roles.

The formal process to establish a new Chapter will require a Petition to be signed by at least 12 people.

It was decided that the next stage is for Iain and John to set up a meeting in the next few months to identify local support for the activity.

7. ICC 2006/07 Glasgow.

The intention had been to hold a second meeting in the afternoon to discuss this issue in detail. However, Tariq Durrani and Iain Thayne were unavailable (Tariq having held informal discussions over dinner the previous evening), so discussions progressed in the morning, followed by a tour of the SECC facilities. An informal meeting involving SECC and others was then held in the afternoon.

Peter reported that the initial bid to host ICC'07 in Glasgow had been submitted, and although there was competition, there was a reasonable chance of success if the required processes for follow-up are adhered to. Basically these involve securing sponsorship from relevant organisations and industry and identifying and confirming committed support within the local area to drive things forward. It was suggested that a minimum level of support would be £100,000, and possible sponsors must be identified and approached. Zahil Deen was mentioned as a possible contact in Scottish Enterprise who may be able to help with locating suitable sponsors.

Iain mentioned the support provided by Scottish Enterprise to University/Industry activities in the area of Digital Media and Communications as evidence of support in the general area.

A list of the major carriers who fly direct to Glasgow International Airport was requested and Iain agreed to provide this, (note – this information may already be available in the first bid document).

Post Meeting Comment:

The venue offered for ICC'07 appears to be very suitable for the event. Significant support has already been given by the proposed venue staff, and this is a most encouraging and positive lead for us.

The general conclusion was that the bid is highly sensible and the next stages now involve finding sponsorship and committed (technical) people in the local area to progress this.

8. AOB

1. Peter reiterated the benefit of having industrial representation in the Chapter Committee and mentioned that a member from industry is keen to become actively involved with the committee. This was warmly received by all present.
2. Peter has been invited by SECC and the GG&CV Tourist Board to attend an event and lunch in London on 18th June 03.

The meeting closed at 11.45.

Date, time and place of the next meeting to be arranged.