

This entire edition is dedicated to the annual reports on the various activities of the IFORS Administrative Committee (AC). We trust you will find these informative and that it will stimulate interest in the activities of IFORS. As you can see from the IFORS logo IFORS is also celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. Although IFORS was formally established in 1959, after the first OR conference in 1957, the celebrations will take place during the IFORS 2008 conference in Sandton, South Africa. It is going to be a wonderful opportunity for meeting new OR colleagues, for renewing existing networks and to be updated on latest developments in the OR field.

Hans W. Ittmann
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Newsletter editor

IFORS President's Report

The year 2007 marked the first one for your AC and as such, much time was spent on a reassessment of where IFORS was relative to its objectives and where it should be headed. That was of course done simultaneously with solving an allocation problem, i.e., determining roles for the AC members, which yielded the following solution:

Elise del Rosario	President, general oversight
Tom Magnanti	Immediate Past President
Michel Gendreau	Vice President, Publications, ITOR, IAOR, other publications
Peter Bell	Treasurer, Teachers' Workshops
Tatsuo Oyama	VP representing APORS, scholarships, new societies
Horacio Yanasse	VP representing ALIO, ICORD, scholarships, new societies
Raymond Bisdorff	VP representing EURO, scholarships, new societies
Michael Trick	VP representing NORAM, Conferences, 50th Anniversary, IDL
Mary Magrogan	Secretary

With the aim of improving communication links with its stakeholders, the AC saw the importance of a newsletter. As such, this function was put under the Office of the President and its editorship given to the very capable hands of Hans Ittmann (South Africa), who, prior to this appointment, edited *Direct Connection to Developing Countries (DC to DC)*. Thus, DC news was integrated into the IFORS News

as a section. Under Hans, three quarterly issues of the IFORS News were produced starting June. Printed copies of this inaugural issue were made available to the participants of the succeeding conferences in Prague (EURO), Seattle, Washington (INFORMS), and Fortaleza (ALIO). Of course, online copies were made available for downloading from the IFORS website.

The **IFORS website** is of course, a powerful tool for ideas exchange. A major effort during the year involved changing the look of the site, and its dependable and long-time webmaster, Moshe Sniedovich (Australia) undertook the effort and saw through the migration to its new site. Moshe continued to add modules to the TutORrial, a web-based source of tutorial modules for OR/MS topics.

Highlighting the term of your AC is the Triennial meeting, which kept the **Conferences** Committee headed by Mike Trick (US) very busy. Supporting him in this role for this Triennial are John Bartholdi (US) and Hans Ittmann, Program and Organizing Committee Chairpersons, respectively. Since the 2008 Triennial coincides with the 50th anniversary celebration of IFORS, Mike was also on top of the activities for this celebration. As part of his involvement with conferences, Mike took charge of the selection process of the IFORS Distinguished Lecturers who were sponsored for the EURO and INFORMS conferences in 2007. In this year too, your decision to hold the 2011 Triennial in Australia was finalized and announced.

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ANNUAL REPORT 2007

IFORS President's Report *(continued)*

Publications had historically been of strategic importance to IFORS. It is with this in mind that your previous officers have put in place several initiatives to ensure the survival and continued success of the International Abstracts in Operations Research (IAOR) and the International Transactions in Operational Research (ITOR). During the year, Hugh Bradley (US) continued to be involved with system development activities that will allow on-line development and access for the IAOR. Providing support in this effort, while continuing operations amid the transition is long-time IAOR editor, David Smith (UK). ITOR saw its newly-appointed editor, Celso Ribeiro (Brazil), revisiting editorial policies and practices and got the production on schedule. Publications Committee chair Michel Gendreau (Canada) details not only the activities undertaken for the year, but gives a historical context of the two major publications.

Developing Countries continued to be one of the focal points of IFORS. Several activities were led by Theo Stewart (South Africa) and Horacio Hideki Yanasse (Brazil). Having handled the Developing Countries committee in the past, Theo helped facilitate International Conference on OR in Development (ICORD) held in Fortaleza, Brazil as well as the Conference on OR Practice in Africa (ORPA). Under the committee, the call for papers and preparations for the OR in Development Prize competition to be held during the Triennial was led by Paul Fatti. With his fresh perspectives, Horacio started on ensuring that ICORD becomes a regular and meaningful initiative for IFORS. The committee started to reassess, refocus and identify new initiatives that address specific concerns. These activities are expected to be fleshed out in the following year.

Regional groupings were ably represented in the AC. Assigned to be liaison, the regional vice presidents monitored regional activities and continued to represent IFORS in these activities. During the year, the AC members spent time getting familiar with their regions, with the exception of Raymond Bisdorff (Luxembourg) who held over from the previous term.

Taking over from Raymond in 2008 is M.Grazia Speranza (Italy) as IFORS Vice President representing **EURO**, who filed the report for the 2007 EURO activities. The EURO report shows a very vibrant organization that caters to the needs of its OR practitioners, academicians, and students. From the EURO grouping, IFORS added its newest member, Slovenia, whose membership you voted to accept in 2007.

IFORS VP for **ALIO**, Horacio Hideki Yanasse reported on the national conferences in the region, and led the search for the IFORS scholar who was later sent to the ELAVIO summer school. This represents one of IFORS efforts to help develop a group of young Operations Researchers who will work and network in the future.

Tatsuo Oyama (Japan), IFORS VP for APORS, reported on the regional conferences that were held and being planned. IFORS was on hand to extend its congratulatory greetings as ORSJ, one of the first 10 members of IFORS, celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2007. IFORS will continue to be represented in the various conferences, notably in China.

Canada also celebrated its national society's 50th anniversary, as reported by IFORS VP representing **NORAM**, Mike Trick. Numerous NORAM activities for 2007 include conferences, prize awards, programs, and in the future, a joint meeting between the two national societies making up the grouping, namely, the Canadian OR Society (CORS) and The Institute for OR/MS (INFORMS) of the US.

Lastly, your newly appointed **Treasurer**, Peter Bell (Canada), who took over from Hugh Bradley, reports a strong IFORS financial position, with the audited results for 2007 showing a surplus of \$98,691. Peter Bell assumes the position with a rich IFORS experience behind him, having served IFORS in various capacities, and as President for the years 1995 to 1997.

It can be said that the fine shape IFORS is in now is in direct proportion to the effort put in by its past officers. Tom Magnanti (US), IFORS Immediate Past President, continues to serve in your AC to ensure the continuity of programs and provide advice on day-to-day as well as long-term issues. Along with Hugh Bradley, he continues to be consulted on various matters affecting the organization. Nonetheless, rest assured that your AC, not one to rest on its laurels, is continuing to find better ways to serve you and our profession.

by **Elise del Rosario**, IFORS President, elise@jgdelrosario.com

Treasurer's Report

The IFORS financial position continues to be strong. The audited results for 2007 show a surplus of \$98,691 which is a decline from the surplus in 2006 (\$135,667). Royalty payments for IAOR and ITOR (Journal Royalties are earned in Pounds Sterling but expressed in US Dollars.) both declined from 2006 to 2007. Revenues from Member Subscriptions were down at \$22,752. Expenses were about flat as a result of the payment for ITOR (\$45,300 in 2007) appearing as an accrual in the 2006 statements. Expenses for core activities (Committees, Publications, and Secretariat) were roughly constant. Overall Net Income remained strongly positive.

The 2008 budget (approved by the IFORS AC in Prague) shows an operating profit of \$39,600 resulting primarily from the IFORS cycle (this is a triennial conference year with the associated conference revenues) although there are some significant increased expenditures, particularly on publications.

Looking ahead to the 2009 budget, there are a number of new initiatives underway with respect to publications that are designed to secure IFORS future income streams from IAOR and ITOR but will require resources.

On balance, 2007 continued to add to IFORS financial strength. Prospects for the future are sound with the only significant financial threat being the potential decline in IAOR royalties. In view of the Society's financial position and prospects, no change in member society dues is recommended at this time.

by **Peter Bell**, IFORS Treasurer, PBell@lvey.ca



Regional Reports

NORAM

by Michael Trick, VP representing NORAM, trick@cmu.edu

The societies that make up NORAM, the Canadian Operational Research Society and the Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences continue to be active, with a host of conferences, prizes, and other activities.

CORS (The Canadian Operational Research Society) celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2008. Its annual conference was held in Quebec. Prizes awarded included the CORS Award of Merit (contributions by a CORS member to operational research) to Alain Martel, Faculté des sciences de l'administration, Université Laval; the Omand Solandt Award (organization making an outstanding contribution to operational research in Canada) to R&D pour la défense Canada - Valcartier; and the Harold Larnder Prize (international distinction in operational research) to IFORS Past-President Tom Magnanti. Next year's conference will be held jointly with INFORMS in Toronto, Ontario (June 14-17, 2009). The membership of CORS is currently (March 31, 2008) 462, an increase of 20 over the membership one year ago.

INFORMS held its largest conference ever in November, 2007 in Seattle, Washington, with over 4000 attendees. As is its practice, INFORMS gave out a number of awards at that conference, including the John von Neumann Theory Prize to Arthur F. (Pete) Veinott, the President's Award (contributions to humanity) to Lawrence Wein, and the Lanchester Prize (best English-language publication) to Applegate, Bixby, Chvatal and Cook for their book on the travelling salesman problem. Its next conference will be in October in Washington, DC and will likely break all attendance records. The Society held its "Practice Meeting" in April, 2008 in Baltimore and awarded its Edelman Prize to a team that worked on scheduling the train system in the Netherlands. In 2009, INFORMS will hold a June conference jointly with CORS, its Practice Meeting in April in Phoenix, and its Annual Meeting in October in San Diego.

APORS

by Tatsuo Oyama, VP representing APORS, oyamat@grips.ac.jp

APORS (Asia-Pacific Operational Research Societies) had the following executive members in the last 25 years since it was established in 1985.

PAST APORS OFFICERS

- 1985-88:** **President:** Dr Woong Bae Rha (KORS)
Vice President: Prof. Guang-Hui Hsu (ORSC)
Secretary: Prof. Wakayama Kunihiro (ORSJ)
Treasurer: Dr Robert E. Johnston (ASOR)
- 1989-91:** **President:** Prof. Guang-Hui Hsu (ORSC)
Vice President: Teresa Ling (ORSHK)
Secretary: Prof. Wakayama Kunihiro (ORSJ)
Treasurer: Hugh Barr (ORSNZ)
- 1992-94:** **President:** Prof. Masao Iri (ORSJ)
Vice President: Kirn Lin Chew (ORSS)
Secretary: Prof. Sung Joo Park (KORS)
Treasurer: Prof. Robert E. Johnston (ASOR)
- 1995-97:** **President:** Santosh Kumar (AORS)
Vice President: Hiroshi Takamori (ORSJ)
Secretary: Prof. Sung Joo Park (KORS)
Treasurer: Ms Elise A. Del Rosario (ORSP)
- 1998-00:** **President:** Kim Lin Chew (ORSS)
Vice President: Prof. Victoria Mabin (ORSNZ)
Secretary: Prof. Tatsuo Oyama (ORSJ)
Treasurer: Ms. Elise A. Del Rosario (ORSP)
- 2001-03:** **President:** S.P. Mukherjee (ORSI)
Vice President: (Philippine) & (Malaysia)
Secretary: Prof. Tatsuo Oyama (ORSJ)
Treasurer: (Australia)
- 2004-06:** **President:** Ms Elise A. Del Rosario (ORSP)
Vice President: Xiang Sun Zhang (China)
Prof. Sung Joo Park (KORS)

Secretary: Prof. Tatsuo Oyama (ORSJ)

Treasurer: (Singapore)

2007-09:

President: Han Chun Kwong (MSORSM)

Vice President: Prof. Tatsuo Oyama (ORSJ)

Secretary and Treasurer: (Singapore)

APORS Conferences were held as follows.

	Year	Site	Organiser
1	1988	Seoul, Korea	Dr. Woong Bae Rha
2	1991	Beijing, China	Prof. Guang-Hui Hsu
3	1994	Fukuoka, Japan	Prof. Masao Iri
4	1997	Melbourne, Australia	Prof. Santosh Kumar
5	2000	Singapore	Prof. Kim Lin Chew
6	2003	New Delhi, India	Prof. S. P. Mukherjee
7	2006	Manila, Philippine	Dr. Elise A. del Rosario

The last APORS Triennial Meeting was held from January 16 to 18, 2006 in Manila, Philippine. Delegates from the member societies of the Operational Research Society of China (ORSJ), Operational Research Society of India (ORSI), Operations Research Society of Japan (ORSJ), Korean Operations Research and Management Science Society (KORMS), Management Science/Operations Research Society of Malaysia (MSORSM), Operational Research Society of New Zealand, Operational Research Society of Singapore (ORSS), and the host, the Operational Research Society of the Philippines (ORSP) met in Manila.

The APORS Council Committee appointed new Executive Administration Members of the APORS for the term 2007-09 as President: Han Chun Kwong (MSORSM), Vice President: Prof. Tatsuo Oyama (ORSJ), and Secretary and Treasurer: to be nominated from Singapore. Next APORS Meeting will be held at Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia next year in 2009 under the MSORSM.

In 2007, several representative members from major APORS Societies including China (Prof. Xiang-Sun Zhang, Chinese Academy of Sciences), Korea (Prof. Sung Joo Park, KAIST) and Philippine (Dr. Elise del Rosario), gathered in September 26-28 in Tokyo, Japan, in order to celebrate the 50th Anniversary for the ORSJ. Also in 2008 ISORA (International Symposium on Operations Research and Its Applications) is going to be held in China, where some APORS representatives will meet to discuss the next APORS Meeting to be held in Malaysia.

ALIO

by Horacio Yanasse, VP representing ALIO, horacio@lac.inpe.br

ALIO (Association of Latin-Iberoamerican Operations Research Societies, <http://www.dc.uba.ar/alio>) was created in Rio de Janeiro in 1982, following agreements stated in a meeting, also in Rio, the year before between several IO researchers and practitioners from Argentina, Brazil and Chile. At the present moment 10 Latin-American Societies (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, México, Peru, Venezuela) are members of ALIO which includes also the societies from Spain (SEIO) and Portugal (APDIO) Also researchers from Uruguay actively participate of ALIO activities.

The current board of ALIO is composed by:

President: Héctor Cancela, Universidad de la República, Uruguay, cancela@fing.edu.uy.

Vice-presidents: Isabel Méndez Díaz, Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina, imendez@dc.uba.ar.
Victor Parada, Universidad de Santiago de Chile, Chile, vparada@diinf.usach.cl

Secretary: Andrés Medaglia, Universidad de los Andes, Colombia, amedagli@uniandes.co

IFORS-Vice-president representing ALIO: Horacio Hideki Yanasse, Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas Espaciais, Brasil, horacio@lac.inpe.br

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Regional Reports *(continued)*

ALIO's purpose is to promote the exchange of experiences and information among researchers, academicians and practitioners working on Operations Research in the region, and foment the use of techniques and methodologies related to this discipline. The main goals include to contribute, establish, and deepen ties between researchers and practitioners of countries within **ALIO**, and to help young undergraduate and graduate students in their professional development.

The main tools used to achieve these goals are the following two events: the **CLAIO** (Latin-Iberoamerican Congress on Operations Research), that takes place biannually since 1982 in different Latin American cities, and the **ELAVIO** (Escuela Latinoamericana de Verano de Investigación Operativa) that have been held yearly since 1994, with the attendance of between 50 and 70 young scholars from Latin America and more recently from other countries following agreements with **IFORS**, **CORS** and **EURO**.

ALIO activities have had an extraordinary impact on the teaching, research and postgraduate activities in the region. Many fruitful collaborative works between researchers of different countries are being increasingly observed.

i) **XIV CLAIO** (<http://www.socio.org.co/CLAIO2008>) will be held in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, from September 9 to 12, 2008, organized by the Colombian Operations Research Society, SOCIO (Sociedad Colombiana de Investigación Operativa). Arrangements are under way in order to have a successful event. Special issues dedicated to CLAIO 2008 will be published by *Annals of Operations Research* and the *Journal of Intelligent Manufacturing*

During the meeting in Cartagena de Indias, an ALIO regular meeting will be held, and a new board will be elected.

ii) **XIII ELAVIO** (<http://sistemas.unmsm.edu.pe/elavio2008/>) was held in Chosica-Lima, Peru, from February 4 to 8, 2008, organized by Professors Rosa Delgado and David Mauricio from Facultades de Ingeniería de Sistemas y de Matemáticas – Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Peru.

Chosica is located about 30 Km from Lima, Peru. The conference had 57 registered participants, and some 35 papers by young researchers were presented, in addition to the tutorials and papers of the invited speakers. The majority of those attending were from the home country; but participants came from 11 different countries.

The young researchers indicated by CORS and EURO that attended the XIII ELAVIO were: Navneet Vidyarthi from Canada; Morteza Purakbar from Holland and Yael Berstein from Israel. Adonis Robilla Cagape from the Philippines who also participated in the event was the IFORS fellow selected among 10 applicants.

Andrés Medaglia (Colombia), Héctor Cancela (Uruguay), Horacio Hideki Yanasse (Brazil), Luciana Salette Buriol (Brazil), Nélio Domingues Pizzolato (Brazil) gave tutorials and/or invited talks.

iii) **National OR Conferences:** As usual several national OR conferences were held in Latin-America during 2007.

iv) **ICORD-VI**, the International Conferences in OR for Development, took place in Fortaleza, Brazil during August 29-31, 2007. The series of conferences, which has run since 1992, aims to offer a space for the discussion of OR in the context of development. Previous conferences have been held at Ahmedabad and Jamshedpur (both India), Rio de Janeiro, Manila, and in the Kruger National Park (South Africa). The theme of the conference, as for the annual conference of the Brazilian OR Society SOBRAPO which ran alongside, was sustainable development. The conference had 45 registered participants, and some 35 papers were presented, in addition to those of the invited speakers. The majority of those attending were from the home country; but participants came from 4 continents and 16 countries.

Sira Allende (Cuba), Subhash Datta (India), Dania El-Hraqi (Egypt), Isaac Mbeche (Kenya), Helen Moshkovich (USA), Jonathan Rosenhead (UK), Theo Stewart (South Africa) and Arabinda Tripathy (India) all gave invited talks. Topics ranged from how OR could improve public service delivery (Mbeche), through

an account of how methodologies based on connectivity could help in the transformation of societies (Datta), to the use of OR tools in the Management of Cultural Heritage (El-Hraqi). But undoubtedly the high-point was the address by Professor Jorge Giordani, Minister of Planning and Development of Venezuela, and the most senior member of President Hugo Chavez' cabinet. His talk described the prominent role of OR's problem structuring methods in the ongoing transformation of Venezuelan society.

v) A joint meeting **INFORMS/CLAIO** will be held in 2010 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Activities towards the organization of this meeting already started.

More details about ALIO activities and news can be seen, in Spanish and in English at <http://www.dc.uba.ar/alio>

EURO

by M. Grazia Speranza, VP representing EURO, speranza@eco.unibs.it

EURO is the Association of European Operational Research Societies within IFORS. The President of EURO for 2007 has been Martine Labbé. The members of EURO are full members of IFORS and comprise the national OR societies of countries located within or nearby Europe. EURO represents 29 national OR societies gathering about 10000 OR specialists. A recent new member of IFORS, the Slovenian Society, will increase to 30 the number of the national OR societies of EURO.

Several activities have been organised in 2007:

- EURO XXII is the major event and was held in Prague, Czech Republic, July 8-11, 2007. The Organizing Committee was chaired by Josef Jablonsky (University of Economics, Prague, Czech Republic), while the Program Committee was chaired by Ulrike Leopold-Wildburger (University of Graz, Austria). The conference was very successful and highly participated.
- The 28 EURO Working Groups represent European wide scientific networks in all major topics of OR. Most EURO Working Groups had a meeting in 2007 where the members exchanged ideas, experiences and research results, and supported each other in research work.
- The EURO Winter Institute on Location and Logistics was held on January 27-February 10, 2007 in Estoril, Portugal and was organized by Francisco Saldanha da Gama.
- The OR Peripatetic Post-graduate Program ORP3 2007 was held at Minho University, Guimaraes, Portugal, September 12-15, 2007. The Organizing committee was chaired by A. Ismael F. Vaz.
- The EURO Gold Medal 2007 was awarded to Aharon Ben-Tal. The Jury was composed of: Edmund Burke, Martin Grötschel, Roman Slowinski (chair), Daniel Vanderpooten, Jyrki Wallenius.
- The EURO Excellence in Practice Award was bestowed to Hans-Jakob Luethi. The Jury was composed of: Angel Corberan, Geir Hasle, M. Grazia Speranza, Stefan Voß (chair), Stavros A. Zenios.
- The Management Science Strategic Innovation Prize was awarded to M. Frisk, M. Goethe-Lundgren, K. Joernsten, M. Rönnqvist for their paper "Cost Allocation in Collaborative Forest Transportation" and to L. Houghtalen, O. Ergun, J. Sokol for their paper "Designing Allocation Mechanisms for Carrier Alliances". The jury was composed of Jean-Charles Billaut, Heinrich Braun, Laureano Escudero, Bernhard Fleischmann, Ben Graeve, Ulrike Leopoldwildburger and Luk van Wassenhove (Chair).
- The EURO Doctoral Dissertation Award (EDDA) was bestowed to Bram Kranenburg. The Jury was composed of: Denis Bouyssou, Laureano F. Escudero (Chair), Gautam Mitra, Mikael Rönnqvist, Jacques Teghem.

EURO has also collaborated with IFORS on a support program for the development of operations research in Africa.

Extensive information about EURO and its activities may be found in the EURO website: www.euro-online.org



Developing Countries Committee

The **committee** is currently constituted as follows:

Theo Stewart (Chair)	- South Africa
Horacio Yanasse (IFORS VP, DC portfolio)	- Brazil
Elise del Rosario (IFORS President)	- Philippines
Claudio Bornstein	- Brazil
Subhash Datta	- India
Goutam Dutta	- India
Paul Fatti	- South Africa
John Friend	- UK
Serigne Gueye	- France
Hans Iltmann (IFORS newsletter editor)	- South Africa
Irene Loiseau	- Argentina
S P Mukherjee	- India
Shigeo Muto	- Japan
Graham Rand	- UK
Jonathan Rosenhead	- UK
Eric Soubeiga	- UK & Burkina Faso
Arabinda Tripathy	- India
Claude Yugma	- France

A number of previous developing country initiatives have now matured to become main stream IFORS activities, and as such have been transferred to other portfolios on the IFORS AC, and are no longer reported here. These activities include scholarships for EURO and ALIO summer and winter institutes, and the proposed volume on "Readings in Operational Research for Development". In addition, the former developing countries newsletter has been extended to become a general IFORS newsletter.

The present report thus deals primarily with the two conferences (ICORD and ORPA) and the OR in Development Prize.

International Conference on OR for Development (ICORD VI), Fortaleza, Brazil, 29-31 August, 2007

The chair and vice-chair of the organizing committee were Carlos F. Simões Gomes, and Danielle Morais, both from Brazil. The conference was run in parallel with the national conference of the Brazilian OR Society (SOBRAPO), but occupied a separate stream and venue in the conference centre.

The invited keynote addresses were: ICORD: *Past, Present And Future* (Arabinda Tripathy), *Is there a Good Reason for Doing Operational Research?* (Jonathan Rosenhead), *Public Strategic Planning in Developing Countries: A Case Study in Pernambuco* (Carlos Bana e Costa), *A Review of Multicriteria Decision Analysis with Emphasis on Developmental Problems* (Theodor Stewart), *Improving Decision Making Through Verbal Decision Analysis* (Helen Moshkovich), *Origins and Development of Operations Research in Cuba* (Sira Allende), *The Ongoing Venezuelan Socio-Political Transformation and Problem Structuring Methods* (Jorge Giordani), *OR For Efficient and Effective Delivery of Public Service in Developing Countries: The Case of Kenya* (Isaac Mbeche), *Operations Research and Cultural And Cultural Heritage Management: A Road to Sustainable Tourism in Egypt* (Dania El Iraqui), and *Sustainable Development Through Demonstrative Effects of OR Models* (Subhash Datta). These presentations formed the basis of lively discussions around the topics presented.

In addition, nearly 50 contributed papers were also presented in the ICORD conference stream.

Those members of the DC committee who were able to be present in Fortaleza met over an extended lunch. Some of the topics discussed are taken up in the section on new initiatives below (and will be presented in more detail in a forthcoming report to the IFORS AC).

It has been decided that future ICORD meetings will be held on a regular three-year cycle, to take place the year before the main triennial conference. The formal call for proposals to host ICORD meetings will in future be handled by the meetings portfolio of the IFORS AC.

Conference on OR Practice in Africa (ORPA), Cape Town, South Africa, 11-13 September

This conference was arranged jointly with the annual conference of the Operations Research Society of South Africa (ORSSA). The organizing committee was chaired by Theo Stewart. The meeting was co-sponsored by IFORS and EURO. In addition, a workshop on OR education, organized by Jim Cochran and partly supported by INFORMS, was arranged in conjunction with the conference. Approximately 15 delegates from other parts of Africa were able to participate.

The keynote address for the ORPA component of the conference was delivered by Eric Soubeiga. A substantial proportion of contributed presentations did relate to OR practice in Africa outside of South Africa. Full details of the programme are available from <http://www.orssaorpa2007.org.za/>

OR in Development Prize

The OR in Development Prize will again be offered at the triennial meeting in Sandton, July 2008. The convener of the prize competition is Paul Fatti, and the other jury members are Irene Loiseau, Arabinda Tripathy, Leroy White, Joao Neiva de Figueiredo and Theo Stewart. A total of 8 finalists have been selected for presentation of their papers in Sandton.

New Initiatives

The DC committee has been charged with developing new initiatives for the DC activities of IFORS. A more detailed document is still in preparation, but on the basis of the discussions of the committee during the ICORD meeting in Brazil, the following are areas of concern in which new initiatives may be needed.

- Restructuring of ICORD meetings to have more of a working group/workshop nature (rather than a traditional conference format), linked to smaller and more frequent regional conferences on OR in Development.
- Greater provision of scholarships to younger delegates from developing countries to attend IFORS and associated events.
- Publicity for OR in Development activities and success stories, especially to decision makers in developing countries.

by **Theodor J Stewart**, Chair – Developing Countries Committee,
tjstew@stats.uct.ac.za



Meetings Report

The 2008 IFORS Conference will be held 13-18, 2008 in Sandton, South Africa. The theme of the conference is "Operational Research: Developing communities, managing the connections between them". The conference organization is proceeding smoothly. Conference Chair Hans Iltmann and Program Chair John Bartholdi report that there are currently (April 2008) 600 registrations and 900 abstracts submitted. The conference has attracted significant sponsorship with R 260,000 received and a further R 800,000 promised. The conference has also received 15,000 euro from EURO and US\$5950 from IFORS specifically to support delegates from developing countries. This has been allocated, through a formal process, to approximately 30 delegates. The organizers expect to at least break even of this conference.

Overall, I believe the organizers and program committee have done an excellent job in putting together this conference.

The 2011 Conference will be held in Melbourne, Australia. I did an informal visit of the venue in December 2007, and spoke with both the organizers and the professional conference management company they are working with. The dates of the conference are July 11-15, 2011. The conference will be held at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre, a new facility scheduled to open next year. I think the facility is ideal for an IFORS conference, with an excellent number of rooms of an appropriate size. We are currently working at finding a Program Chair for the conference, and expect to announce one at the IFORS 2008 conference. The Administrative Committee, or a subset thereof, will do a formal site visit in 2009.

Since our last meeting, the following IFORS Distinguished Lecturers have been appointed: Ralph Keeney (INFORMS 2007), Stavros Zenios (CLAIO 2008), and Michel Balinski (INFORMS 2008).

by **Michael Trick**, VP, trick@cmu.edu

IFORS Publications Report

Since its very beginnings, publications have played a very important role within IFORS. In fact, besides the triennial conferences, the *International Abstracts in Operations Research (IAOR)* has probably been, since 1961, the most visible contribution of the Federation to the O.R. community. For many years, *IAOR* has been a key tool for those wishing to know what was being published in O.R. journals around the world. Furthermore, *IAOR* has been a very significant source of revenues for IFORS. Since 1994, IFORS has also sponsored a second publication, the *International Transactions in Operational Research (ITOR)*, a journal publishing scientific articles on a variety of O.R. topics. Among other things, a vast number of issues of *ITOR* have been devoted to the publication of papers presented during the triennial conferences. This year, IFORS started publishing a newsletter which contains news from the AC and all the societies. It incorporates news and features previously covered in the *Direct Connection to Developing Countries*. The President's report contains other details about the newsletter.

However, time passes and things change. In recent years the role of *IAOR* as a key listing for O.R. references has been eroded by the development of the World Wide Web and of powerful browsers, such as Google, which allow one to access references and links to the websites of journals in a matter of seconds. As for *ITOR*, it is maturing but has not established itself as a premier journal and submissions were falling, even though subscriptions are growing. As a consequence, both *IAOR* and *ITOR* were in periods of strategic transition in 2007. The challenges faced by both journals and the plans that have been made to address them are discussed in more detail below.

ITOR

As mentioned earlier, in the past, a significant number of *ITOR* issues used to be devoted to the publication of papers presented during the triennial conferences. While this may have been attractive to authors presenting at these conferences, it also tended to make the journal unfocused, since more often than not, the only thing these papers have in common was that they were all presented at the same triennial conference. Furthermore, many potential authors perceived *ITOR* to be a proceedings journal, not a research journal, so they submitted their best work elsewhere. In July of 2005, the then Editor-in-Chief, Cathal Brugha (Ireland), reported to the Administrative Committee that it was difficult to secure a steady stream of quality submissions to *ITOR*. He felt that the issues mentioned above were the cause of this situation.

The IFORS Administrative Committee appointed an *ITOR* Review Committee to make strategic recommendations to address these issues. This Committee, chaired by Bill Pierskalla (US), former President of IFORS, recommended in February of 2006 that, in so far as possible, *ITOR* should be oriented toward international perspectives of operations research and focused on application areas, but with supporting algorithmic, methodological, and theoretical papers and that the next Editor-in-Chief be provided sufficient financial support to initiate programs to attract more submissions.

Cathal's term of office expired in 2005. After an extensive search, Celso Carneiro Ribeiro (Brazil) became Editor-in-Chief in February, 2007. During 2007, he reconstituted the Editorial Board and revisited the editorial policy.



In the future, the space devoted to articles from the conferences will be drastically reduced to make space for other material. Among other things, Celso intends to have special issues focused on current topics. Finally, there is a definite need to give more importance to what makes *ITOR* unique, in particular, the applications of O.R. in development, a subject that is seldom covered by other major O.R. journals.

Celso has been successful in attracting more submissions and he has brought the journal in line with its production schedule, so that the last 4 issues in 2007 were distributed on time or earlier.

The journal is continuing to improve as a commercial success. Total Revenue, excluding a transfer of certain 2007 revenue into 2006, increased by 8% and Expenses increased by only 5%, resulting in an Earnings increase of 13%. Most of the revenue improvement came from a substantial increase in library members through Consortia Subscriptions, which went up by 302 to a total of 2626 by year-end. Conventional Institutional Subscriptions declined by 3 to 73 and Individual Member Subscribers including IFORS Triennial Conference delegates declined slightly to 912.

Volume 14 (2007) consisted of 6 issues in 600 pages, about the same size as Volume 13. However, the number of papers published was up significantly from 39 in Volume 13 to 44.

IAOR

This journal continues to be the largest financial contributor to IFORS. In 2007, Institutional Subscription revenue was down 9% reflecting a decline of Institutional Subscriptions from 242 in 2006 to 220 in 2007. Revenue from Society Licensing, which permits online access for all members of a subscribing IFORS Society, was up significantly (76%) from a low base. We are expecting this to be a positive trend. Total Revenue for *IAOR* was down 7% and Operating Expense, excluding a one-time favorable accounting adjustment in 2006, was down 2%. The resulting decline in Gross Profit to IFORS is a reversal of the upward trend of the past 10 years, which had been driven by price increases in the face of declining Institutional Subscriptions. The marketplace is now resisting those price increases.

The *IAOR* Editor-in-Chief, David Smith (UK), recommended to the Administrative Committee in July of 2005 that *IAOR* embrace new technologies which could strengthen the journal and help maintain its historic leadership in providing access to the OR literature. In response, the Administrative Committee appointed an *IAOR* Strategic Planning Committee to make recommendations about strategy and actions to accomplish this objective.

The *IAOR* Committee recommended and the Administrative Committee approved in February of 2006 that *IAOR* be restructured as an online journal which also publishes a paper version. This is opposite to the historic approach where the paper version is published first, then transferred to an online database for user inquiry. A computer-based system is now being developed to provide electronic capture of source materials, online editing and classification by *IAOR* Editors, and prompt transfer into an improved online database for user inquiry. New reporting to facilitate improved management of the flow and indexing of abstracts will be included. The intent is to introduce the new system (in its Beta version) at the 2008 IFORS Triennial Conference and open the new system to subscribers at the beginning of 2009. To that end the Publisher will begin a site license sales campaign in April of 2008.

Not only will this new system provide improved service to the OR community, but we expect it will reverse the recent decline in journal Revenues, and by reducing the number of paper copies produced and distributed, reduce Expenses, and remain a robust offering as paper journals are being phased out.

Volume 58 (2007) consisted of 8 issues containing 3899 abstracts, a 5 % increase from 2006. This continues the recent upward trend in the number of abstracts included in *IAOR*.

For each article, *IAOR* provides an abstract, with title, author name and affiliation, and bibliographic information. *IAOR* Editors add value to the abstracts by identifying and including in the indexing OR concepts which are not explicit in the original published abstract. The table below shows by source the number of abstracts published in 2007. Most of the sources are identified by country of publication, but some abstracts are submitted by Contributing Editors responsible for specific application areas. The preponderance of abstracts from the Netherlands reflects the number of OR journals published there.

Source of abstracts published in *IAOR* during 2007

Australia	1	Japan	22
Belarus	9	Lithuania	5
Canada	32	Netherlands	820
China	82	Nigeria	2
China (Hong Kong)	12	Poland	1
Cuba	10	Portugal	7
Environment	13	Production (NL Journals)	165
Finland	2	Production (UK Journals)	150
Forestry	1	Production (US Journals)	30
France	45	Serbia and Montenegro	18
Germany	117	South Korea	37
Greece	73	Tanzania	1
India	61	Transport (NL Journals)	8
Indonesia	1	United Kingdom	874
		United States	1189

Although these numbers are impressive, the real story is in what is missing. There were no abstracts submitted from several National Contributing Editors. This must result in some important papers missing from *IAOR*, which undermines its credibility. The number of volunteer Contributing Editors has become so large that there is continual turnover, leading to spotty coverage. National Societies do not always report changes in their Contributing Editors promptly, or sometimes at all, to the Editor-in-Chief, and in some instances fail to replace a Contributing Editor who steps down, resulting in gaps in coverage. And occasionally Contributing Editors become lax. It is an objective of the new computer system to provide tracking reports to the Editor-in-Chief to help correct these problems.

Acknowledgement

Hugh Bradley, previous Publications Chair, has played a key role in *ITOR*, and continues to actively oversee *IAOR* initiatives. His major inputs to this report are gratefully acknowledged.

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IFORS tutORial Project

In early 2000 the IFORS Educational Resources Committee launched a special project called tutORial. Its mission was to initiate a long term international collaborative effort aiming to develop a comprehensive collection of web-based tutorial modules for OR/MS topics. At present the project's web site (www.ifors.org/tutorial/) provides more than 30 modules covering a wide range of subjects. The complete list is as follows:

Dynamic Programming	Die Hard at the Pub
Towers of Hanoi	Shortest Path Problem
Dijkstra's Algorithm	Knapsack Problem
Critical Path Method	Chained Matrix Product
Replacement Problem	Bridge & Torch
Dropping Eggs	False Coin Problem
Traveling Salesman Problem	Integer Programming
Branch and Bound (Knapsack)	Gomory Cuts
Royal Optimization	New Royal Optimization
8 Easy Pieces	Linear Algebra
Row Operations	The Equator
The Inverter	Determinants
Linear programming	The Simplex Place
Virtual Duality	Dual Simplex Method
Transportation Simplex Algorithm	Hungarian Algorithm
Simulation	M/M/1 Queues
G/G/s Queues	Queueing Networks
Random Generator Tester	Other
Geee Park	

This project also incorporated an experimental on-line encyclopedia (IOE). Various technologies were experimented with over the past six years.

It was decided to terminate the IOE project and the development of new on-line tutORial modules at the end of 2007. The modules will remain accessible to the public via the IFORS website but will not be updated/maintained.

by **Moshe Sniedovich**, m.sniedovich@ms.unimelb.edu.au

IFORS Web Site

IFORS regards its web site as an important tool for the promotion of OR on the international scene. Special attention is given to

- Supporting OR activities in developing countries.
- Strengthening the links between the national OR societies and regional groupings.
- Promoting OR internationally.

For many years the IFORS web site was hosted by Via Networks (www.vianetworks.net).

The account was very basic. A decision was made by the AC to relocate the site to the INFORMS server. Consequently, the site was redesigned and was re-launched in 2008.

by **Moshe Sniedovich**, m.sniedovich@ms.unimelb.edu.au

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