

W78 - Information Technology for Construction



The annual Commission meeting took place on 11th July 1997 in Cairns, Australia and was scheduled as part of a three-day Workshop. It was attended by 25 people.

Work Programme

Use of Internet

A verbal report was made by Ziga Turk, Bo-Christer Björk and Per Christiansen. As regards the Electronic Journal (first featured in Information Issue 1/95), progress in publishing 5 papers was reported. A further 5 papers were currently being refereed. In discussion, the issue of the Journals academic acceptance was noted. Suggestions were put forward to make the existence of the Journal better known in the International Alliance for Inter-Operability (IAI) and Construct IT Communities. The possibility of the journal's papers extending to non-refereed practical papers was also raised.

All W78 members were encouraged to look to the Journal as a vehicle for publication and to promote its visibility among their own networks of contacts. More generally, the commission's list server, web pages, database and other services were discussed. Control over access to the List Server would be subject to editorial control following recent unwelcome incursions. Members of W78 were encouraged to make their own web activities link with those of W78 under their own individual or collaborative funded projects.

Virtual Building Model

A colleague of Matti Hannus reported that some progress was being made with this in VTT. IAI were also progressing such a development as a test bed for IFC development. It was agreed that as soon as progress was made with such a model from either VTT or IAI, this would be brought to the attention of W78 members through the list server and web links.

National IT Strategies

Little progress had been made with this project over the past 12 months. It was reported that the SCENIC Project which was addressing this task, would be reporting within the next 6 months and that this would be used as a basis for extending the work to other countries, including Australia and Singapore, where efforts were known to be underway.

A new proposal was made to arrange a workshop on a review of process modelling activities. Work would continue in collecting information on process modelling methods and tools to support them. Making such information available on a web site as part of the W78 web activity would be explored.

Future Meetings

For 1998 a detailed proposal was made by Bo-Christer Björk for the next meeting to be in Sweden from 3-5 June to coincide with the CIB World Congress from 7-12 June. The Theme of the next Workshop would be the Construction IT innovation cycle embracing: research, standards, software development and best practice implementation. Participation in the meeting would be particularly encouraged from prominent members of major EU projects, from standardisation groups, and from national Construction IT Centres including those forming part of the Armathwaite Initiative.

The format would be:

- Day 1: Leading Research Projects
- Day 2: Standardisation and Software Development
- Day 3: Best Practice Case Studies

An international organising committee would be assembled to render assistance in identifying people for invited presentations. An open element would also be included in the programme for W78 members in general.

For 1999 a proposal was made for this to be held in Vancouver. This might be a W78 specific event possibly involving Thomas Froese from UBC and Martin Fischer of Stanford. In addition it might allow W78 to participate in the 8th International Conference on the Durability of Building Materials with W60, W80, W94, TG11, TG16 and TG22.

For 2000 a proposal was made for the Meeting to be hosted by the Icelandic Building Research Centre in

Iceland. This proposal would be further developed at the next meeting in Stockholm.

Other offers for hosting future W78 meetings had been received from Georgia Tech in Atlanta and from the Construct IT Centre in Hong Kong. These would be considered as possible future venues after the year 2000. Georgia Tech would be kept in mind as a venue in the unlikely event that Vancouver proved unsuitable for 1999.

External Links

The suggestion was made that W78 should foster a closer working relationship with the IAI and with the Armathwaite Initiative of collaboration between major national research centres. The opportunity for W78 members to become part of the Object Technology network being formed by the UK Government was also raised.

The Coordinator warmly thanked Robin Drogemuller for having so generously and efficiently hosted the meeting, and the Board for their support during the year. He also noted the worthwhile and constructive contributions which participants had made at the meeting.