



The Secretary General's Column

A Different CIB Congress

In many ways the Triennial CIB World Building Congress 1998 is markedly different from past CIB Congresses. Through various articles in the CIB Information and through the Congress Announcements hopefully this message has come across.

I would like to make use of this Column to highlight the importance for CIB of one special difference.

Below you will find a list of all CIB Commissions' Events organised as part of or in conjunction with the Congress. You may conclude from this list that 28 CIB Working Commissions and Task Groups have organised their annual 1998 event in conjunction with the Congress. I have been told that such a situation has never occurred to this extent before and for me this is a clear indication of a rather positive development in the CIB Community for which I have been striving for some years now.

When I was a CIB Coordinator myself during the period 1989 - 1994 I have to confess to a somewhat limited communication with the rest of the CIB Community. In fact one or two brief contacts each year with the CIB Secretariat was about it. I knew there were other CIB Commissions, but to be honest I did not really care what they were doing. My focus was on my own Commission and that was it.

One of my obligations when I was appointed as the CIB Secretary General was to create amongst the CIB Commissions and especially amongst their Coordinators, the sense that they are a real part of the wider CIB Community and not only an independent group of individual experts who just happen to have CIB in their name.

The fact that so many CIB Commissions now participate actively in the CIB Triennial Congress and that more have already indicated their intent to do so in the next Congress in 2001, demonstrates to me that slowly the sense of being within the CIB Community is becoming a part of the normal thinking of our Commissions and their Coordinators. Because of this the CIB Congress in Gävle is not simply a Congress that happens to be organised by the CIB President. It is more than that - it is a genuine CIB Congress.

It may sound somewhat ambitious to some of you, but one of my objectives over the coming three years is to convince everyone in the CIB Community that in our next Triennial Congress in 2001 not many but all CIB Working Commissions and Task Groups will be actively involved; not just because they feel they have to or because there will be the possible free availability of meeting facilities, but because they are convinced that doing so is clearly beneficial to them and to their membership.

Wim Bakens

