

## **The Secretary General's Column**

### **Meet in Isolation or on the World Stage?**

#### **COINCIDENCE OR THE BEGINNING OF A NEW TREND?**

In conjunction with the CIB World Building Congress in Gävle, about 20 CIB Task Group and Commission Meetings took place. Reports on many of them are featured in this Issue. In principle all these meetings were open to non members which meant that many congress participants participated in meetings of Commissions of which they were previously unaware. Many persons learned about the scope, objectives and work programmes of more Commissions and concluded that there are overlapping interests, that ongoing activities in different Commissions could profit from more collaboration or at least a better structured information exchange and that a number of Commission meetings would be more effective if there was better coordination. As a result from all of this a relatively large number of Commissions decided to go for joint or coordinated events in the years ahead.

In 1999 already two large events are planned under the responsibility of one or two CIB Commissions:

- the 8th DBMC, being the 8th International Congress on the Durability of Building Materials and Components, from 30 May till 3 June 1999 in Vancouver, Canada (organised under the responsibility of Working Commission W080, which is a joint CIB - RILEM Commission)
- the International Symposium on Customer Satisfaction: a Focus on Research & Practice, from 5 - 10 September 1999 in Cape Town, South Africa (organised as the Joint Triennial W055 - W065 Symposium with participation of W092).

As a result of communication between the various Task Groups and Working Commissions at the Gävle Congress, a substantial number of them came to the decision not to have their annual 1999 event as a small stand alone event somewhere in the world, but instead to put it on as a satellite event of one of these two already planned larger events. Elsewhere on this page you see the two listings of satellite events as currently known.

#### **Clear Advantages**

The advantages of doing things this way can be readily perceived: the logistical aspects of such a satellite event are easier to organise, more persons will be attracted to the main event and there will be ample opportunities for achieving a synthesis between the activities of the Commissions involved. It looks like a win-win-situation for all parties involved. The organisers of the main events may expect a larger attendance at their event and the organisers of the smaller satellite events may expect logistical support for organising their event. And the participants of the smaller events may turn out to be the biggest winners of all. When asking for travel budgets they can now seek permission to go to both a smaller meeting of the Commission of which they are a member and to a larger event of importance in their area of expertise. Moreover, after they arrive they will have the opportunity to participate at other smaller events, organised by other Commissions, for which they would normally never have the chance. Especially for the members of more Commissions that have their smaller annual event as a satellite event of the same main event, this formula will be most beneficial.

#### **Coincidence or Significance?**

Is the introduction of this formula for two of the major CIB Events in 1999 a coincidence and the result of nothing more than the fact that the organisers of these two events and myself at the Gävle Congress had the chance for a lot of lobbying? Or does it signal a more structural trend in the CIB Community because it is a formula that fits both in a situation wherein it is becoming more difficult for individual

experts to lay their hands on the resources needed for participation at smaller international events and in a situation wherein persons active in the CIB community are now aiming more at things like active collaboration, pooling knowledge and crossing the traditional boundaries between professions and also between Commissions.

Personally I hope and indeed trust that the introduction of this formula of having a smaller number of main events each year and a larger number of satellite events will prove to be the beginning of a more structural trend. I want it to facilitate the campaign for meaningful synthesis which a growing number of individual experts in the international Construction Sector are seeking.

Because during and after the CIB Congress in Gävle so many persons responded positively to all of this we - that is: John Duncan, the newly elected CIB President and myself - felt that we could take the next step along this road towards generating a measure of synthesis in the CIB community.

I recently approached the Coordinators of all CIB Task Groups and Working Commissions with the request to plan for their Commission's annual event in 2001 to be organised in conjunction with the Triennial CIB World Congress, which will take place in Wellington, New Zealand, very probably from 3rd to 7th April.

Up to now the Coordinators' responses all have been positive and matters indeed look rather promising. We will keep you informed on further developments, both through the Bi-Monthly CIB Information Bulletin and through including the most recent information on CIB Events in the CIB Home Page.

---

**CIB Commission events that will take place in conjunction with the International Congress on the Durability of Building Materials and Components, from 30th May till 3rd June 1999 in Vancouver, Canada:**

**CIB TG22 CIB**

Task Group Meeting on Environmental Design Methods in Materials and Structural Engineering, in conjunction with 8th DBMC

**CIB W080 and NRCC-IRC**

8th DBMC - International Conference on Durability of Building Materials and Components

**CIB W078**

CIB Commission Meeting on Information Technology for Construction, in conjunction with 8th DBMC

**CIB W078**

Workshop on Information Technology for Construction, as part of 8th DBMC

**CIB TG20**

CIB Task Group Meeting on Geographical Information Systems, in conjunction with the 8th DBMC

**CIB TG33**

CIB TG33 Task Group Meeting on Concurrent Engineering in Construction, in conjunction with 8th DBMC

**CIB W086**

CIB Commission Meeting on Building Pathology, in conjunction with 8th DBMC

**CIB W094**

CIB Commission Meeting on Design for Durability, in conjunction with 8th DBMC

**CIB W060**

CIB Commission Meeting on the Performance Concept in Building, in conjunction with 8th DBMC

**CIB W080**

CIB Commission Meeting on Prediction of Service Life of Building Materials and Components, in conjunction with 8th DBMC

**CIB W083**

CIB Commission Meeting on Roofing Materials and Systems, in conjunction with 8th DBMC

**CIB Commission events that will take place in conjunction with the International Symposium on Customer Satisfaction: a Focus on Research & Practice, on 5-10 September 1999 in Cape Town, South Africa:**

**CIB W055, W065, W092, Un. Cape Town**

International Symposium on Customer Satisfaction - A Focus for Research and Practice

**CIB W055**

CIB Commission Meeting on Building Economics, in conjunction with International Symposium on Customer Satisfaction - A Focus for Research and Practice

**CIB W065**

CIB Commission Meeting on Organisation and Management of Construction, in conjunction with International Symposium on Customer Satisfaction - A Focus for Research and Practice

**CIB W082**

CIB Commission Meeting on Futures Studies in Construction, in conjunction with International Symposium on Customer Satisfaction - A Focus for Research and Practice

**CIB TG35**

CIB Task Group Meeting on Innovation Systems in Construction, in conjunction with International Symposium on Customer Satisfaction - A Focus for Research and Practice

**CIB TG31**

Workshop on Macro-Economic Issues, Models and Methodologies for the Construction Sector, in conjunction with International Symposium on Customer Satisfaction - A Focus for Research and Practice

**CIB TG36**

CIB Task Group Meeting on Quality Assurance, in conjunction with International Symposium on Customer Satisfaction - A Focus for Research and Practice

**CIB W092**

CIB Commission Meeting on Procurement Systems, in conjunction with the International Symposium on Customer Satisfaction - A Focus for Research and Practice

For more information on the Contact Persons and Addresses for all events mentioned above: see the CIB Home Page.

The information is included in the part Meetings of the section Databases of the CIB Home Page.

Wim Bakens