

**Society of American Archivists  
Council Meeting  
November 8-10, 2015  
Chicago, Illinois**

**External Representative Report:  
International Council on Archives  
Section of Professional Associations  
(Prepared by Becky Haglund Tousey, CA)**

The International Council on Archives' (ICA) Section of Professional Associations (SPA) Bureau met in Reykjavik, Iceland, in conjunction with the ICA Annual Conference held September 26-29, 2015. Approximately 500 delegates attended the Annual Conference, representing 79 countries. I attended as a representative of both the Academy of Certified Archivists and the Society of American Archivists.

**SPA BUREAU MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

The SPA Bureau business meeting was held on Sunday, September 27. This Bureau meeting is the shorter of the two yearly meetings; the longer meeting will be held in late March 2016 in Troyes, France, hosted by the French archives association (Association des archivistes Français – AAF).

Other SPA Bureau members present in Reykjavik were from the Netherlands, Germany, Canada, Switzerland, Israel, France, Norway, and Spain (Catalonia). The Poland association representative sent his regrets.

Country associations again not sending a Bureau representative were Mexico, Korea, China, and Hong Kong. The Hong Kong association has officially resigned from the Bureau due to lack of funds. The other country associations have not replied to inquiries from the chair to explain their lack of participation.

Most of the meeting dealt with administrative issues and reports from the chair.

**Report on ICA Executive Board Meeting**

Chair Fred van Kan reported on the ICA Executive Board meeting held that morning.

- The Programme Commission (PCOM) submitted a draft of its African Strategy document to the Executive Board for approval. The strategy aims to encourage and

support African participation in ICA and enhance archive operational capabilities in that region. The English-speaking African representatives were in favor of the draft strategy, But the French-speaking African members expressed concern that the draft is too heavily influenced by the English-speaking African members. So the draft strategy was tabled while the remaining issues are resolved. Related to the African Strategy, the Executive Board did announce that ICA will proceed with plans to hold its Annual Conference in Africa in 2018, but a specific country was not mentioned.

- The Executive Board also tabled the Human Rights Working Group’s “Basic Principles on the Role of Archivists.” President David Fricker feels there is still work to be done to reach consensus on the wording. ICA’s Expert Group on Records Management will provide input. The Forum of National Archivists (FAN) is also dissatisfied with the wording of the role of “government archives.” PCOM is overseeing the ongoing revisions and will submit another draft to the Executive Board at its next meeting.
- As the ICA Secretariat looks at its financial situation, there is a desire for the Annual Conferences and Quadrennial Congresses to generate some revenue. Typically these meetings just break even financially or, in some cases, end up with more expenses than income.<sup>1</sup>
- There was significant staff turnover this year at the Secretariat office in Paris. Two long-time staff retired and three new staff came on board – a marketing and communications manager, a website manager, and a corporate business manager.
- David Leitch, Secretary General of ICA, informed the executive board earlier this year that he will not seek another term when his contract ends in September 2016. Therefore, a search for a new Secretary General will begin in early 2016. The Secretary General leads the ICA head office staff and operations based in Paris.

### **Report on ICA PCOM Meeting**

Chair Fred van Kan reported on the PCOM meeting and the meeting of section chairs, both held the previous day.

- In previous years, each section chair submitted an annual report to PCOM about her/his section’s activities during the year. A decision was made at this meeting that, going forward, all section chair reports will be rolled into one Sections Report to PCOM.
- There is concern within PCOM about the lack of qualified applications for its program funds. Each year €125,000 is available for programs, yet only €46,000 was awarded this year. There are too few funding requests, some of which did not meet the criteria for funding. The criteria are not onerous: The program deliverable(s) must cross national borders and impact more than just one country or institution. Discussion centered on how to increase awareness of the funding and the application process.

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<sup>1</sup> *Staff Note:* Consider this information during discussion of Agenda Item 1115-VI-C re hosting of 2020 ICA Congress in conjunction with SAA Annual Meeting.

- There was also discussion of whether any additional languages should be named official languages during the Congress in Seoul, Korea, next year. ICA's official languages are English, French, and Spanish. Some suggested Russian and Arabic be added because the Congress will be more geographically accessible to those members. This is a difficult decision, as each additional official language adds to the meeting expenses. No final decision was made.

### **SPA Budget**

There is a balance of €2,800 in the allotted SPA program funds for 2015. Discussion focused on how best to spend the balance before the end of the year. It was agreed that translating the SPA Advocacy brochure into more languages would be the best use of the money and could be accomplished by year-end. The two languages chosen were Russian and German. The brochure is already available in English, French, and Spanish.

### **SPA Membership**

Bureau Chair Fred Van Kan reported at the Spring 2015 Bureau Meeting in Warsaw that there are currently 72 member associations in SPA. He will have updated membership numbers at the Spring 2016 SPA Meeting.

### **SPA Bureau Membership 2016-2020**

A decision needs to be made as to which SPA member associations will be represented on the Bureau for the 2016-2020 term, to start at the ICA Quadrennial Congress in Korea in September 2016. Chair Fred van Kan will send an invitation to all member associations, soliciting their participation on the Bureau for the 2016-2020 term. The by-laws do not limit the size of the Bureau, so the chair welcomes any association wishing to participate to send a representative. The Bureau roster will be drafted at the Spring 2016 SPA Bureau Meeting and then submitted to PCOM for approval prior to the Congress in September.

This is the final term for SPA Chair Fred van Kan. A new Bureau chair will have to be chosen from the 2016-2020 Bureau roster.

### **SPA Projects and Strategic Objectives**

- African strategy – The discussions at the Executive Board are the result of political/cultural differences and the SPA Bureau will not take a position. SPA currently has only two member associations in Africa. Once the strategy is finalized and adopted by the Executive Board, the Bureau will discuss what steps it can take to support the strategy.
- As part of SPA's focus on advocacy, the section is planning a film festival ("Movies on Archives") for the 2016 ICA Congress. The goal is to share videos highlighting what archives do, how to use archives, or their value to society. Much of the meeting was spent discussing the submission process, judging criteria, and logistics for this

event. A call will be sent out for institutions and associations to submit their archives/records management-themed videos. I will share that when it is available so that ACA and SAA can pass this along to their members.

## **SPA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

The annual SPA general membership meeting was held immediately following the SPA Bureau Meeting on Sunday, September 27.

This meeting was not well-attended. In addition to the Bureau members, only three other country association representatives attended, from Finland, Australia, and Spain. This may have been due to the “off-site” location of the meeting; due to the limited number of meeting rooms at the conference hotel, the SPA Bureau meeting and the SPA general membership meeting were both held in a building several blocks away.

Attendees approved the removal (from the section’s Bureau) of the three country associations that have been absent from Bureau meetings for the past two years (Korea, China, and Mexico). These member associations will not be asked to send a representative for the 2016-2020 term. This is unfortunate, as the Korea National Archives will be hosting the Congress in 2016.

## **Future ICA Meetings**

- 2016 Spring SPA Bureau meeting will be held March 30-April 1 in Troyes, France, hosted by the French archival association (AAF).
- 2016 ICA Quadrennial Congress will be held September 5-10 in Seoul, Korea, hosted by the National Archives of Korea. The theme will be “Archives, Harmony and Friendship.”
- 2017 – No word yet as to the location of the ICA Annual Conference.

## **FOR SAA COUNCIL: DISCUSSION OR ACTION TOPICS**

- Confirm whether SAA wishes to continue its representation on the ICA SPA Bureau for the 2016-2020 term. If yes, would you like me to continue in my role as representative?
- Publicize to SAA membership the 2016 ICA “Film Festival” and encourage submission of videos. I will forward the announcement once it is posted.
- Publicize to SAA members the availability of ICA Programme Commission funds for archival or records management projects that provide benefit or deliverables across national borders. I will forward the 2016 application and rules when they are available.