

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF WELDING  
STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKING GROUP  
OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

FINAL REPORT

**INTRODUCTION**

At the meeting of the Executive Council on 9th September 1989 in Helsinki a new Working Group entitled "Strategic Planning" was set up. The function of the group was to prepare a strategy which could be implemented by the relevant units of IIW.

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

- To advise the Executive Council on the future direction and development of IIW in non-technical matters;
- To recommend objectives and the means of implementing defined strategies in respect of areas such as membership, funding, management and policies towards other international bodies.

**COMPOSITION**

Dr. G. F. Costa (Chairman)

Mr. R.V. Salkin  
Dr. N.F. Eaton  
Mr. M.J. Bramat  
Mr. J.G. Hicks

Mr. F.G. DeLaurier  
Mr. J.C.S. Bowler  
Mr. R. Timerman  
Mr. J. Kemppi

Plus Special Working Group of:

Dr G Costa  
Mr R V Salkin  
Mr F R Coe

## MEETINGS

- 23rd July 1990 - Montreal, Canada
- 16th January 1991 - Paris, France
- 6th March 1991 - The Hague, Netherlands
- 4th April 1991 - Detroit, USA
- 29th June 1991 - The Hague, Netherlands
- 25th January 1992 - Paris, France
- 8th May 1992 - Madrid, Spain

## SOURCES OF CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WORKING GROUP

Apart from the members of the Working Group itself views were sought from Member Societies and Chairmen of Commission. It must be said that the number of responses from these sources was very few although those which were received were extremely valuable.

## THE INSTITUTE AND ITS OBJECTIVES IN 1992

IIW is an international non-governmental organisation, recognised in such terms by the United Nations, whose objectives are to promote the development of welding both independently and in cooperation with other bodies. These objectives are achieved by:

- providing for the exchange and publication of information relating to research, design, manufacture, health, safety, education and training.
- preparing international standards in collaboration with ISO
- promoting the formation of national welding institutes or associations in countries where they do not exist
- organising regular assemblies and congresses.

IIW has Member Societies in 37 countries covering the majority of the world's industrialized nations. The first two of the above objectives are achieved by the activities of the Commissions of IIW. Fifteen Commissions in permanent session meet on a regular basis and reporting to them are Sub-Commissions and Working Groups. These bodies examine specialised subjects and pass their reports to their parent Commissions for decision as to whether they represent a suitable basis for further study, co-operative research or publication. In addition there are select committees and study groups in more specialised areas.

## FINANCE

The running costs of IIW are met out of income received as subscriptions paid by national delegations, comprised of national welding societies and institutions which are referred to as the Member Societies of IIW. In addition income is received as levies on enrolment fees for assemblies and congresses and as royalties on sales of publications. This income is sufficient only to pay for the facilities provided by the Secretariat and other services and there are no funds for disbursement for technical or other projects. All the resources put into the Commissions are contributed by the participants themselves and their connections.

## CORPORATE STATUS

The Constitution states that the "registered office" of the Institute shall be situated in the country of which the Secretary General is a delegate. At the present time the office of the Secretary General is in the United Kingdom, in the parish of Abington which is in the county of Cambridgeshire in England. There are no records to show that the Institute has been registered in any way and legal opinion is that the Institute is defined under English law as an "unincorporated association".

The Board of Inland Revenue, the Department of the United Kingdom Government which administers and collects taxes, considers IIW to be a charity which status relieves it of any obligation to pay taxes on its income. This benefit might be lost if the Secretariat were to be located in another country. Value Added Tax on purchases has to be paid at the current rate of 17.5%. This is administered by another Government Department - Her Majesty's Customs and Excise and under present legislation IIW cannot offset this against sales. The Secretariat is maintaining its surveillance of the position and advantage will be taken of any changes which may arise as a result of any harmonisation of VAT rates and regulations within the European Community.

## THE CURRENT POSITION

The structure and operations of IIW can be reviewed under some of the more commonly used management characteristics.

### Strengths

Over its 43 year life the Institute has attracted the involvement of a large number of people at high levels and of high professional standing in government, industry, research institutes and universities. This has given IIW a sound reputation within the areas of technology which it serves. The structure of the Institute gives participants an unrivalled opportunity of meeting their peers in a working environment rather than the frequently encountered conference environment. The result is the development of close professional and personal relationships which can last for many years giving a benefit both to individual professional development and the development of the technologies themselves.

The current structure of IIW is a potentially powerful administrative machine for communication with and between societies and individual specialists of many disciplines on a worldwide basis. In addition, the personal nature of many of the contributions made to IIW means that communications can be addressed in most cases to individuals which is likely to elicit a more prompt and constructive response than communications addressed to organisations.

### Weaknesses

The principal weakness of the Institute's operations is the length of time which actions take to be implemented. To a degree this is inherent in the nature of an international organisation in which it is essential that all participants have adequate information, opportunity of disseminating it within their own organisations, and adequate opportunity of contributing to decision making. Notwithstanding this some of the pace of activity is fixed by the timing of meetings of the Governing Council and Executive Council. Clearly it would be unrealistic to expect members of the Governing Council to meet other than at the Annual Assembly. However there is scope for considering that further meetings of the Executive Council could be held. At present two meetings of the Executive Council are held at the Annual Assembly and one meeting three months prior to the Annual Assembly. Depending on the timing of consecutive annual assemblies there can be an interval of 10 months between meetings of the Executive Council. The shortest interval is 6 months. Although the Secretariat is empowered to conduct certain activities without reference to the Executive Council its abilities are limited by such infrequent meetings.

The Executive Council comprises six Vice-Presidents, the President, Treasurer, Secretary General, Scientific and Technical Secretary and, as a non voting member, the Immediate

Past President. Three of the Vice-Presidents are chosen from delegations who have just been or are about to become or the next year will be organisers of the Annual Assembly. The other three are chosen for their personal contribution to IIW. These individuals have no specific responsibilities unless so allocated once they have become Vice-Presidents. Three chosen because of their connection with annual assembly organisation seems an over concentration. The Executive Council can then be seen to have no basis in executive functions. Members elected through having direct responsibilities for Committee and Working Group activity would be a more rational and effective arrangement.

A further area of weakness which has existed in the past and is currently being attended to by the Secretariat lies in the administrative practices which appear to have remained virtually unchanged since the founding of the Institute. Over the past two years the Secretariat has been introducing the effective use of modern technology and modern management methods into the work of the Secretariat and in its communications with the Member Societies, Councils, committees and working groups of the Institute.

The possibility of establishing total fax connections between the Secretary General, the Scientific and Technical Secretary and Member Societies for the exchange of documents, and even for voting, could speed up the administrative work.

Surveys have shown clearly that the attraction of IIW to participants in its activities lies principally within the facilities provided by the Commissions. These have always been at the core of IIW since its foundation and without them IIW would have no purpose. Recognising this it is strange to find that the Chairmen of Commissions upon which so much depends have no formal representation in the management structure of IIW. Their opportunity of making formal contributions to the operation of IIW is through the resolutions of their Commissions and through their attendance at the annual meeting of the Chairmen of Commissions. In neither case are they, as a group, taking part in the formal planning and decision making activities.

The technical work of the Commissions is under the guidance of the Technical Committee which occasionally invites Commission Chairmen to make a presentation to them but this seems to be considered more as an ordeal by the Chairmen than an opportunity to contribute to the management of IIW. It therefore seems only appropriate to suggest that Chairmen of Commissions should be represented on a body such as the Technical Committee. Whether they act as a total of 15 individuals or whether on some representative basis is not fundamental to the basic question.

It has been observed that the attentions of most Commissions are attached to a particular set of academic disciplines. Surveys have shown that a majority of participants are content with this position but there is a view that it fails to appeal to industry whose representatives would be more clearly served by work which proceeded on interdisciplinary lines related to their own particular applications of the technologies.

There is in the Constitution of IIW what may be regarded in today's world as a surprising lack of commitment to any form of wider social responsibility than that relating to the welding related industries and the people employed in them. Clearly this represents a lack of conscience which needs to be addressed.

### Threats

In discussing matters under this heading one has to be careful to differentiate between threats which are potentially damaging and threats which represent a challenge. It is only the former type which will be addressed here, any others will come under the next heading "opportunities".

The number of participants in Annual Assemblies seems to have changed little over many years and probably the greatest potential threat to the continuing activity of IIW in the form in which it presently exists lies in the difficulty which some delegations have in acquiring funding and time for their representatives to attend meetings at various levels. This threat has to be countered by the provision of more information on the benefits of IIW's activities and on improving the actual and perceived value of these activities to participants.

There have been suggestions that membership be open to companies or individuals outside national delegations as a means of attracting wider support. This might undermine the basis on which IIW is approved by ISO as a standardising body and held by UNIDO in consultative status. Such a move could be seen also as undermining the role of the member societies who are being encouraged to be more active in their promotion of IIW.

### Opportunities

Opportunities for IIW can be seen in a number of directions. The first opportunity which presents itself is that the existing machinery by which IIW operates and as is formally expressed in the Constitution and Bye-Laws is capable of far greater effectiveness than in the past. The Secretariat is implementing changes which will provide a better service, more widely distributed information and increased accessibility for member societies to the Secretariat.

In the technical sense opportunities arise through the need to respond to the changes that are occurring in the welding industry worldwide. Among these changes can be mentioned

- the shifting economic balance between developed, intermediate and underdeveloped countries,
- the trends towards the use of materials other than steel for construction and manufacture,
- efforts to conserve energy and protect ecosystems,
- the need to improve skill training at all levels.

These changes will continue and IIW must have a strategy which recognises them so it can be seen to provide a relevant and essential service for its Member Societies and industry.

The growth of multinational companies and the increasing practice of welding societies to form themselves into regional groupings provide opportunities to sustain and grow current membership - which will be necessary to support a higher level of information and advisory services.

There is opportunity for IIW to recognise its stated objectives by communicating with potential Member Societies and with welding specialists in those countries which have no Member Societies. In this way the opportunity for IIW exists to provide support for developing countries at a level which has not been exercised so far. The Institute should encourage the further development of its Regional Activities to match the aspirations of the national delegations in the regions. It should also make its facilities known to multinational companies, both those represented in delegations, and others, to develop their support and perhaps also to offer a revenue earning service for facilitating the meetings of their personnel on a global scale.

A proposal has been made to widen the scope of the activities of IIW to include the setting up of an information or even a consultancy service. In another direction it has been suggested that IIW should support, represent and defend the welding profession.

### STRATEGIC TARGETS

From the foregoing, three broad strategic targets can be stated. These represent both continuing and also new directions.

1. Continue the enhancement of services provided by the Secretariat. This should include an upgrading of the machinery for document and information handling so that benefit will accrue to Member Societies.
2. Restructure and redefine the tasks of the Executive Council and the Technical Committee. This should also aim to bring the Chairmen of Commissions into policy making discussions.
3. Widen IIW's interests towards issues of increasing importance to Member Societies and industry. This process should include a re-examination of fee structures, the development of additional membership categories and the re-enforcement of IIW's activities in the areas of standardisation and of training.

### PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A sequential plan of action can be proposed. Progress towards target 1 is already being made and should continue in order to create the facilities for later changes. The Committee changes implied in target 2 will allow more effective progress towards target 3.

1. Enhancement of Secretariat facilities (TARGET 1)
  - 1.1 The present objectives concerning document control and other matters internal to the Secretariat will be pursued in accordance with a programme which has been in operation since August 1991.

- 1.2 The Executive Council has considered a report concerning the computerisation of document handling and the benefits which could accrue thereby to Member Societies in general.
- 1.3 At present the Secretariat provides copies of Working Documents to enquirers from all over the world. If the proposal to transfer this information onto disk is implemented it is hoped that many of the Member Societies will be able to service their own countries themselves.
- 1.4 With the enhancement of the computer facilities within the Secretariat referred to under item 1 it should be relatively easy to offer a service providing information on sources of consultancy and commercial opportunities if these are made available to the Secretariat and up dated by their sources.
- 1.5 The matter of technical consultancy would require the establishment of a separate unit within the Secretariat. Because of the diversity of subjects and the geographical distribution of Member Societies it would almost certainly be more feasible to operate as an intermediary putting enquirers in contact with specialists from the Commissions rather than to try and develop an in-house consultancy service. This type of operation would fit well with the type of enquiries we receive from UNIDO seeking information on assistance with various programmes. At present IIW finds it difficult to respond to these within the time frames set by UNIDO.

### 2. Committee restructuring (TARGET 2)

- 2.1 The Executive Council should be restructured so that Vice-Presidents become responsible for specific subject areas and the operation of corresponding Working Groups.

President

Treasurer

Secretary General

Scientific and Technical Secretary

Vice-President (Regional Activities)

" (Technical programme)

- " (Commissions)
- " (Publications)
- " (Assembly planning)
- " (without specific responsibility)

Immediate past President (non-voting)

Plus an elected representative of Chairmen of Commissions

- 2.2 The Technical Committee should be strengthened - either by incorporating elected representatives of Commission Chairmen, - or by replacement with a Technical Council comprising all Commission Chairmen plus appropriate members of the Executive Council.
- 2.3 The constitution, terms of reference and relationship to the Governing Council should be developed accordingly.

### 3. Widening of IIW interests (TARGET 3)

- 3.1 The current funding structure for IIW should be continuously re-examined to ensure that a viable and equitable basis for establishing fees is maintained and alternative sources of income identified.
- 3.2 An additional membership category should be introduced to allow industrial organisations to become Associate members of IIW. Means should be developed to allow such members to contribute to the technical content and direction of IIW.
- 3.3 Efforts should be made to encourage all Commissions to be active in the field of standardisation since this is an area of particular value to industry.
- 3.4 Special attention should be paid and activity encouraged in the areas of industry relating to transportation. This sector of industry is not well represented in IIW but contains many multinational companies with interests in new and non-metal materials.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE PLAN

### TARGET 1.

Much is being done within the present budget. The development of a computerised document storage and retrieval system is the subject of a separate study. An improved information service on sources of consultancy etc. has no financial implication for IIW except for possible increase in Secretariat workload. However, provision of technical consultancy from within the Secretariat would have substantial cost implication depending on scope of activity. One full time person would cost, say, CHF 50,000. If this could not be supported by an increase in annual subscriptions then a reimbursement system would have to be established, whether funds would come from users or suppliers would have to be decided.

### TARGET 2.

No financial implications for IIW.

### TARGET 3.

The objective would be to seek a gradual growth in annual income through new membership. This growth would be necessary to support extension of information and advisory benefits to IIW members from the Secretariats. Initiatives emerging from some of the proposals to widen IIW interests may well require fundings that would not be possible at current income levels.