

**IEEE Information Theory Society Board of Governors Meeting
Hotel des Grands Hommes, Paris, France, Monday, March 31, 2003**

Aaron Gulliver

Attendees: John Anderson, Joseph Boutros, Paul Cota, Marc Fossorier, Tom Fuja, Andrea Goldsmith, Alex Grant, Aaron Gulliver, Hideki Imai, Torleiv Kløve, Ralf Koetter, Urbashi Mitra, Bixio Rimoldi, Shlomo Shamai, Alexander Vardy, Han Vinck.

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:15 PM by Society President Han Vinck. Those present were welcomed and introduced themselves. The Agenda was approved as distributed.
2. The minutes of the Board of Governors meeting held in Bangalore, India on October 21, 2002, were approved with amendments.
3. Society President Han Vinck thanked former President Tom Fuja for his efforts on behalf of the society during 2002. Aaron Gulliver was also thanked for his work as Board Secretary from 2000 to 2002. The appointment of Mehul Motani as the new Board Secretary was approved unanimously. Ubli Mitra was appointed Information Officer, the mandate being to provide continuity of information to the society executive as the officers rotate on a yearly basis. This support is particularly important for the Society Officers. Ivan Fair was appointed as Chair of the Education Committee, replacing Ezio Biglieri. Lance Perez was appointed Publications Officer, his primary mandate will be to explore electronic publications. Marc Fossorier agreed to continue as Treasurer for one more year, and a replacement will be sought for 2004.

The President then presented a report on the recent Technical Activities Board meeting, a major topic being IEEE finances. The Seidman report was presented, and the actions implemented by IEEE as a result were approved by TAB. The IEEE is still losing money, but the deficit for 2002 may be lower due to cost savings, in particular staff reductions. The Information Theory Society is on the IEEE watch list due to its financial situation.

The Swiss Winter School funded by profits from ISIT 2002 was a success with about 50 young European Ph.D. students in attendance.

4. Marc Fossorier presented the Treasurer's Report. He distributed an overview of the current financial status of the society, including a chart of the net worth of the society from 1996 to 2002 which shows that it has fallen to \$441,000.

IEEE charges for 2002 amounted to \$40,800 for infrastructure, \$159,900 for market fluctuation (unbudgeted losses in long term investments), \$50,000 for corporate recovery, \$73,000 for IP recovery and \$53,300 for TAB support (total \$377,000). For 2003, the charges total \$205,000 and for 2004 the total is \$215,000. This is virtually the society net worth and does not include possible investments losses. The society budget deficit is projected to be \$185,600 for 2003.

The losses due to market fluctuation charged to the society for 2002 of \$159,900 were levied without prior notice. This makes the task of balancing the budget

difficult, as there was no warning of this IEEE action. The question of the society reaction was discussed, as well as the future society relationship with IEEE. Some felt the solution is more independence from IEEE, financial and otherwise. A main concern is the journal. Many members provide free labour to the journal as editors and reviewers, and this is not recognized by the IEEE as a contribution. The issue of being more proactive with the IEEE will be considered at the Annual Meeting, with the possibility of forming an Ad-hoc committee to further investigate the issue.

The financial status of recent and pending conferences was also presented. The \$6,000 approved at the last BOG meeting has been paid to the Swiss Winter School.

5. The report from the Balanced Budget Ad-Hoc Committee was discussed next. It was determined that the budget shortfall is approximately \$180,000. Two options were put forward by the committee.

- (a) Increase dues by \$30 for all members
- (b) Increase dues by \$30 for members requesting a paper version of the transactions, and keep the dues the same for members who request an electronic version.

The committee also recommended that a reserve fund be established as a contingency in case of unforeseen costs (such as those levied by IEEE) and conference shortfalls.

The production of a DVD containing the transactions, as well as page charges for the Transactions, were also discussed.

The issue of membership reductions due to the availability of the IEL was considered. At present the IEEE does not have any statistics or feedback available on this issue. For some, there may no longer be any incentive to join the society. It was suggested that a fee structure be employed at symposia whereby IT society members will pay a lower registration fee. In addition, the benefits should be more than financial, i.e., the society should also strive to create in members a sense of belonging.

The following two motions were passed unanimously:

- (a) Membership dues will be \$60 for a p-membership (paper copies) and \$30 for an e-membership (electronic copies).
- (b) Symposium registration fees will be structured so that the amounts charged from highest to lowest are for IEEE non-members, IEEE members and IT society members.

The President thanked the committee members for their efforts on behalf of the society.

6. The Awards Committee Report was presented by Hideki Imai. The membership of the Awards Committee and the Joint IT/ComSoc Paper Award Committee were circulated. The Call for Nominations for the IT Society Paper Award will

appear in the March Newsletter and is posted on the society website (ieeeits.org). The deadline for nominations is May 2. The final list of nominees will be circulated to the BOG members by June 8. The Awards Committee will submit two papers to the Joint IT/ComSoc Paper Award Committee by April 15. The selection of the paper to receive the award will be made by May 15.

7. The Membership and Chapters Committee Report was discussed next. Membership is down 20% to 4095, while IEEE membership is down 18%, thus there is not a significant difference between the two. The first Best Chapter Award (2002) will be presented at ISIT 2003 in Yokohama. Steven McLaughlin is involved with IEEE research to develop a society membership survey which should help with member retention and providing better services to members.
8. The Newsletter Report by Editor Lance Perez was considered next. The goal is to improve the technical content of the newsletter and in support of this, the membership is encouraged to submit articles for consideration. In addition, organizers of meetings of interest to members should send a picture along with a brief report to the editor. The newsletter archive is in place, it can be accessed at the same website as the Transactions (www.cparity.com/it/welcome/demo.html).
9. The Transactions Report by Editor-in-Chief Paul Siegel was distributed and discussed. The Transactions continues to have no backlog and to be mailed on time. An article for the March Newsletter has been prepared.

One new appointment to the Editorial Board was presented to the BOG for approval:

- (a) Source Coding: Tamas Linder replacing Ram Zamir, effective July 1, 2003.

The appointment was approved unanimously.

Two new Associate Editor positions (Coding Techniques and Communications) were also approved. The current editorial load is approximately 2-2.5 papers/month/AE, but in these two areas the load is consistently heavier.

There have been author complaints of delays of 1-2 years due to delinquent AEs and reviewers. It was suggested that AEs who continually neglect their duties be relieved of their position. In addition, persons submitting papers should expect to be called on to provide reviews. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the AEs to find reviewers. The BOG requested that the EIC discuss this issue with the Editorial Board and report back to the BOG.

The Board commended the EIC for his thorough report and excellent leadership of the Transactions.

10. The reports on Symposia and Workshops was presented by Committee Chair, Bixio Rimoldi. He noted that there are as yet no proposals for ISIT 2006, and a proposal is being developed for a workshop in St. Petersburg in 2006.
- 10.1. The Workshop held in Bangalore, India in October 2002 had 188 attendees, including 117 from India and 58 students. Due to the diligence of the organizers, a surplus of \$10,000 was generated. A motion was passed to grant \$5,000 to

Bangalore, India Chapter for the promotion of IT activities when (and if) it is established.

- 10.2 The Paris Workshop currently underway has 142 attendees and 9 companions. This is a good total considering the current war in Iraq and the SARS outbreak. The budget was based on a total of only 120, so a modest surplus is forecast.
- 10.3. Hideki Imai reported on the progress of ISIT 2003, to be held in Yokohama, Japan. 494 papers have been received, and 125 rejected. Of note are the 12 papers from Australia and 11 papers from India, the sites of recent workshops. The President recently visited the symposium venue and was impressed with the facilities. The costs were discussed, including the registration fees. It was noted that several low cost hotels are located within walking distance of the Pacifico Yokohama.
- 10.4 Raymond Yeung presented a report on the Information Theory Workshop to be held in Hong Kong July 6-10, 2003. More than 80 papers have been submitted, acceptance will be announced on April 15. Andrew Yao, recipient of the 2000 Turing Award, has agreed to be the keynote speaker. A deposit of HK\$ 60,000 has been made to secure the venue.
- 10.5. An update on the 2004 Information Theory Symposium to be held in Chicago, IL, was circulated. The slate of plenary speakers is nearly complete, and the tutorial speakers have been chosen. In line with society requirements for a budget surplus, non-student registration fees have increased by \$25. It was noted that the new policy of lower registration fees for IT society members will have to be incorporated. The report also included detailed information on the venue, the organizing committee, social events, and costs for participants.
- 10.6. Workshop organized by Costas Georghiades is being planned for late 2004. A formal proposal will be presented at the Annual Meeting.
- 10.7. Alex Grant presented a report on ISIT 2005 to be held in Adelaide, Australia. The Technical Program Chairs are currently selecting committee members. The convention centre has been booked, an official announcement should be made later this year. The budget has been designed to break even, and calls for an IEEE member early registration fee of AUD \$850. A motion to provide a loan of \$15,000 to the organizers was approved unanimously.
11. The Nominations Committee report provided the composition of the 2003 Awards Committee, 2003 Joint IT/ComSoc Paper Award Committee, and 2003 Fellows Committee.
12. The new Education Committee Chair, Ivan Fair, has been provided with a list of seven items to consider.
13. Aaron Gulliver presented the report on the IT society website. The new website developed by IEEE Entity Creation Services was successfully launched in January. Some minor bugs were reported by members, and these have been fixed. Although the design was excellent, the migration done by IEEE ECS required significant editing before it was suitable to go online. A new feature of the website

is the IT Forum, which should provide a good venue for discussing issues facing the society. The UCSD link for the Transactions vanished early this year causing some minor disruptions, but it has now been bypassed by linking directly to www.cparity.com. In addition, the domain name itsoc.org expired late in 2002, and was replaced by ieeets.org. This follows the convention of several other IEEE society websites. The volume of activity thus far in 2003 is approximately the same as in 2002.

14. Under other business, Andrea Goldsmith asked Board members to consider an update to the society TIP codes. These are the fields of interest of the members and provide valuable information to the society and IEEE.
15. The next board meeting will be held in Yokohama, Japan, on Sunday June 29, 10:00 AM, at the Hotel Pacifico Yokohama. The organizers of the workshop were thanked for making arrangements for the Board Meeting.
16. The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 PM.