



IPTC Mirror

IPTC - INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FOR NEWS

Annual General Meeting - 2002

Opening the 37th IPTC Annual General Meeting, Chairman Peter Müller (SDA/ATS) reminded members that this meeting was a specific meeting of the organisation's shareholders - the Nominating Members - and was a legal requirement (under English Law).

He said that there were a total of 36 Voting Shares, so the quorum needed was 18, and since some 27 votes were represented (either in person or as nominees) the Meeting could take any necessary actions. As a first step, Willis Fong (Canadian Press) as Chairman, John Minting (UPI) and Jean-François Richard (AFP) were appointed as scrutineers to oversee any votes that might be needed.

In the Chairman's Report, Peter Müller said that there had been little exceptional activity over the past year, with the three Management Committee meetings that had been held being generally routine, apart from specific efforts associated with the appointment of a new Managing Director, which would be dealt with as a separate item.

Director's Reports

Making his last reports as Managing Director, David Allen said that the Accounts generally reflected the activities of the past year, with Ad-hoc meetings in New York and Washington complementing the Vevey 2001 Autumn Meeting, the Paris 2002 Spring Session, and this year's Annual General Meeting in San Francisco. Participation in the Namic project had come to a (successful) end in March and there had been continuing efforts to promote the organisation with a number of presentations - including one at the launch of the Chinese NewsML community.

Practical working arrangements re-

Following the election the basic composition of the Management Committee was unchanged, though some members had new responsibilities. From the left: Naoshi Hashimoto (NSK); Honorary Treasurer Walter Grolimund (Keystone); Rudi Horvarth (APA); Managing Director David Allen; Klaus Sprick (dpa); new Chairman John Iobst (NAA); Peter Müller (SDA/ATS); and Stéphane Guérillot (AFP).

mained much the same, with a commercial contract providing the formal business address and a contact service while the actual operation was carried out from a "home office".

Most business was now carried out by e-mail, with only formal papers such as the AGM notice being distributed in physical form. In addition, the various IPTC Web sites had been remodelled, and were now on a dedicated server to help ensure continual availability.

Some 104 papers were issued during 2001, with a CD-ROM containing the papers, standards, test images and copies of the IPTC publications being distributed at the end of the year.

Turning to the electronic mailing lists. There were now over 650 members of the NewsML list, with 316 on the NITF list. In general these were very successful, but more resources (possibly from individual members) were needed to manage them and ensure that there was a rapid response.

NewsML

In general it appeared that NewsML had been very well accepted with no adverse comments having been received. However, it was a complex standard that needed a significant effort to learn, and it was to be hoped that the recently-released *Wide Learning* training package (originally produced for Reuters) would be of value in this respect.

Steps had been taken to register NewsML

as a trademark in both Europe and North America and this process was substantially complete. Following suggestions from Japanese Members the process of registration was also under way in Japan. David Allen asked members to continue monitoring the usage of NewsML and ensure that any applications conformed to the standard.

Accounts

Audited Accounts for 2001 were approved. These showed a small deficit (which had been budgeted for). The reserves stood at just over 120% of annual expenditure and although this was higher than the level given in the operational guidelines it was proposed to leave them for the time being to allow for the costs associated with the appointment of a new Managing Director.

Similarly the amended budget for 2002 was accepted. The Budget for 2003 was described as being uncertain, because it would, to some extent, depend on the input of the new Managing Director. However, the proposed budget was much the same as for 2002, with suitable provision for the costs associated with a new Managing Director.

It was anticipated that the reserves would fall below one year's expenditure in the near future and this might lead to a need to consider a subscription increase. However, much would depend on the arrangements made for a new Managing Director.

The auditors were formally appointed for another year - it was felt that any change



would be an unnecessary complication at the moment.

Managing Director

Turning to the recruitment of a new Managing Director, Mr Müller explained that a Nominating Committee had been established to oversee the process, with the members being Peter Müller himself, Klaus Sprick (dpa) and David Allen.

A profile for the new MD had been developed and advertisements placed in the WAN publication, the IFRA Newspaper Techniques, on the IPTC Web site and in the IPTC Mirror, and also posted on the NewsML Web Site. This had resulted in seven appropriate applications, three being based in the USA and four in Europe. Advantage had been taken of the San Francisco meeting to start interviews with the US-based applicants.

It was planned to continue the process over the next few months with the Nominating Committee producing a shortlist of two or three candidates for interview by the full Management Committee. The intention was that the successful candidate would be presented to the Members during the Autumn 2002 Meeting. If possible the appointment would then start in January 2003 to allow an overlap period before the departure of David Allen.

Ideally the new MD would be appointed on a part time basis - though an initial full-time period might be appropriate. Similarly the ideal candidate would be able to work from home (as with David Allen). Progress to date was considered satisfactory and Peter Müller said that he was confident that it would be possible to find and appoint a



Having completed a three-year term as IPTC Chairman, Peter Müller (left) from the Swiss newsagency SDA/ATS stood down at the 2002 AGM. The new chairman is John Iobst (right) from the Newspaper Association of America (NAA).



suitable candidate within the proposed timescale.

Chairman

Since Mr Müller had completed a three-year term as IPTC Chairman he was stepping down from the position. John Iobst (NAA) had been put forward as the new Chairman, and he was elected unopposed. The other members of the Management Committee were also re-elected; Walter Grolimund (Keystone) as Honorary Treasurer; with Vice-Chairmen Stéphane Guérillot (AFP), Klaus Sprick (dpa), Rudi Horvarth (APA) Peter Müller (SDA/ATS), and Naoshi Hashimoto (NSK).

Unfortunately Anthony Allday had left Reuters at short notice just before the AGM and so was unable to continue as a Vice-Chairman. It had been decided to leave the situation vacant for the time being, with the possibility of co-opting a new member if it was considered necessary. Formal regrets were expressed at Tony Allday's departure with best wishes for the future being forwarded to him.

Following the election of the Management Committee members, Klaus Sprick proposed a Vote of Thanks to Mr Müller

saying that he had carried out a difficult role magnificently - a sentiment that was warmly endorsed by the Members.

An invitation has been received jointly from the Danish NewsAgency Ritzaus Bureau I'S and the Swedish Agency Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå to hold the 2003 AGM in Scandinavia. This invitation had been brought forward by a year so details had not been finalised and members will be informed of the location and date as soon as possible.

No suggestions had yet been received for the 2004 AGM and proposals would be welcome. The US hosts of this year's AGM were thanked for their choice of location and the smooth operation of the meeting.

Farewell

This was the last AGM that would see David Allen as the Managing Director and the Chairman said that it was hard to imagine an IPTC without David, and that it will be very difficult to find a replacement who offers the same combination of (admirable) qualities. Speaking directly to David Allen, Peter Müller said that everyone appreciated the value of his work to IPTC and that all were grateful with sincere thanks for all his efforts over the years.

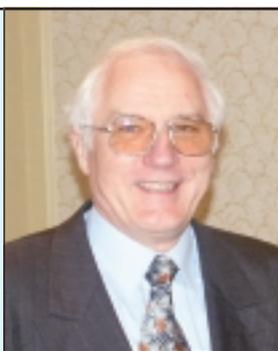
Parting thoughts

At the end of the AGM, David Allen took the opportunity to speak to his assembled colleagues and friends, looking back at the changes that have taken place while he was Managing Director.

These included major organisational changes with the move to electronic working; significant improvements in the finances and enlargement of the membership, with many members now coming from outside the traditional newspaper industry.

Work was now strongly influenced by the internet, with all three standards being based on XML. This had been accompanied by expansion of IPTC's influence and it was now seen as a leader in technology - despite the fact that it was some 30 years old.

Concluding, David Allen said that he was sad to leave what had been a very interesting and challenging job - but he had decided that it was now time to start spending more time with his family



The San Francisco Meeting also saw a full programme of Working Party and Committee sessions, along with a number of special presentations.

Significant progress was made in a number of areas. These included the release of NITF 3.1, along with the development release of SportsML V0.7. Work in hand is planned to result in a NewsML V1.01 and a formal SportsML V1.0 at the Autumn 2002 Meeting (to be held in Amsterdam on the 9th to 11th October). Full reports on the various sessions and presentations will be given in future issues of the Mirror.