INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SECTIONS CHAIRS (SCM)

9 April 2014, 14:30 – 17:53

Archives Nationales, Paris, France

Present: Deborah Jenkins (SLMT, Chair of SCM), Esther Cruces Blanco (SAR), Marie-Françoise Limon-Bonnet (SAN), Emilie Leumas (SAFT), William Maher (SUV, Secretary of SCM), Milovan Misic (SIO), Paola Caroli (SAN), Günther Schefbeck (SPP), Kenth Sjöblom (SPO), Bruce Smith (SBL) David Sutton (SLA), Fred Van Kan (SPA), and Geir Walderhaug (SAE).


1. **Announcements.** Chair Jenkins reported that Vice-President for Finance Andreas Kellerhals had been hospitalised the preceding Saturday. Thus, the upcoming Executive Board discussion of the finances would be hindered by his absence. SCM members expressed their concern for Andreas and wishes for his speedy recovery.

2. **Adoption of the Agenda.** After Jenkins noted the need to insert, between items 4 and 5, an item on the PCOM meeting just completed, and after Walderhaug recommended adding an item on the Universal Declaration on Archives, the SCM adopted the revised agenda by consensus.

3. **Minutes of the 20 November 2013 Meeting.**

A) The minutes of the previous SCM meeting had been circulated by e-mail several weeks ago and no amendments had been recommended. Thus, the current SCM recognized the adoption of those minutes as distributed.

B) Matters Arising from the November 2013 Minutes. The issue addressed under November’s Item 5 (budgets and repartition key) will be addressed within the current meeting’s review of finances. In regard to November’s Item 7 (internal regulations), Walderhaug commented that there were not any internal regulations currently on the agenda for the Executive Board. Jenkins noted that one of the internal regulations to be developed relates to Sections, and that it will be necessary for the SCM to develop these in due course. Meanwhile, we have viable governing documents for the Sections.
4. **Planning for Nomination of SCM Vice-Chair.**

Jenkins noted that Sjöblom has indicated the need to step down as Vice-Chair effective with the October Annual Conference. Van Kan is willing to step in to assume the rest of Sjöblom’s term, through 2016. As Chair of SPA, he is in a good position to be well aware of matters central to ICA’s operation. The recommendation of Van Kan as Vice-Chair through 2016 was approved by consensus.

5. **Report on PCOM Meeting.**

Jenkins reported on the just concluded meeting of PCOM. She noted that with David Fricker as the President-elect, it seems clear that PCOM will be in charge of ICA’s programme and that PCOM must have a budget and control of its budget.

5.1 **Africa policy.** PCOM is beginning to draft an Africa policy. While Africa is one of the most archivally underdeveloped areas, the lack of cooperation among the African branches has inhibited attention to the need to further develop professional programmes. There followed a general discussion of the rationale used to justify not proceeding with holding the 2015 Annual Conference in Africa. Jenkins returned the discussion to PCOM’s consideration of an Africa strategy, which might be most logically pursued through the Forum of National Archives (FAN). In addition, there has been consideration of whether there might be value in consolidating the African Branches into just two, one for Anglophone Africa, and the other for Francophone Africa. While this is not a debate for Europeans or North American to manage, Cruces Blanco and Schefbeck noted the problematic issue of how it is that “Africa” is defined and by whom, and who it is who should be creating the agenda for what the African branches should be doing. Schefbeck and Walderhaug noted that the continent’s archival needs were not limited to the scope of FAN but would benefit by relation with work in many of the Sections such as SAFT and SAE. Jenkins suggested that the SCM suggest one or two people to be part of the task force on Africa. The SCM agreed and approved, by consensus, SAE and SPP be named to this project.

5.2 **The ICA website** is being rebuilt, and funds are being devoted to the project. Most importantly the Sections will need to be providing ideas for content to the new website.

5.3 **ATOM project.** Jenkins reported that PCOM has decided to go back to the original developers of the ATOM programme.

5.4 **Expert Groups.** An Expert Group has been created for Emergency Situations with Emilie Leumas as its chair. Jenkins provided an overview of the other Expert Groups. As new ones are created, she expects that the Section Chairs will be contacted to propose members. Sutton emphasized that there needs to be more than just a call for volunteers. To avoid the problem of résumé builders, PCOM will need to develop a process for review of potential members. Caroli expressed the concern that PCOM may be just recreating the old pre-2004 committee structure, so there needed to be attention to how it is that the membership of the Expert Groups is created and how these activities are selected. Leumas noted that, having just gone through the process of being selected to head the Emergency Planning Expert Group, there indeed had been some
vetting, and the size of the group is to be limited to 10 people. Van Kan noted that PCOM will be creating a register of all projects whether they are funded or not.

6. **Human Rights Working Group HRWG.**

Giulia Barrera joined the SCM to discuss the HRWG’s current project to draft *Principles on the Role of Archivists in Working in Human Rights* following a suggestion from both SPA and HRWG. Barrera asked for comments from the SCM on the draft document. Sutton expressed support for the document but noted that there is a conundrum that arises when the archives might have to work with other than good governments. In such cases, there could be detrimental consequences to both the records in question and the archivist managing them. Maher noted that the HRWG’s chair comment about the challenges of not receiving attention to archival issues from the UN Human Rights Special Rapporteur suggested that once the *Principles* is adopted there will need to be a special initiative to secure the Special Rapporteur. Leumas noted that it might be appropriate to reexamine the ICA’s Code of Ethics to see if it can be revised to incorporate reference to elements of the *Principles* or if they should be maintained as separate and related documents. Walderhaug recommended that the *Principles* be a separate document. He also noted that there are going to be instances where good government does not exist, but this is an opportunity for ICA to market itself to those professing to have good governance. Van Kan Reported that the SC of SPA finds the *Principles* well written and very clear but suggests including records managers in the document. Jenkins summarized the SCM’s consensus by indicating that the format and presentation that the format of the *Principles* was on target and that the main issues were around its relationship to the Code of Ethics, and she stated the SCM’s consensus was to encourage the HRWG to work on the next stages.

7. **Review of the Executive Board Agenda.**

Jenkins directed the SCM’s particular attention to the Strategy Direction Document (Item EB 2014.1.9) about which there had been some controversy in its development. Specifically, it had been suggested that ICA’s budget should be reduced to cover just governance with the balance needed for the programme coming from fund-raising. Sutton noted that the page 13 paragraph on the “Hybrid Nature of ICA” should be deleted because it undercuts the rest of the document and that the six objectives should be reduced to three. Schefbeck agreed on the deletion of the “Hybrid Nature” paragraph, and added that the overall amount of funds allocated to the programme was not that substantial but that if it were eliminated, it would take away the life-blood of the ICA. In relation to the organization diagrams showing advocacy as being the province of the FAN, Maher and Walderhaug noted that advocacy extended beyond just political lobbying and that it also needed to be within the mandate of the Sections as well. Caroli added that national archives cannot be assumed to be able to have that much in common with all sorts of other archives such that they would be able to understand, and advocate on behalf the needs of other kinds of archival institutions. She further noted the difference in tone the Strategy document used when talking about Sections as if they were somehow Bohemian.
Before moving on to the next agenda item, Jenkins noted that one of the first issues to be considered by this Executive Board meeting was what would be the process to follow for approval of the Strategy document. Would this be reviewed and approved only by the Executive Board or by the General Assembly in Girona as well?

8 **Budget and Finance.**

Jenkins noted that the Brussels Executive Board had considered a proposal to restructure the allocations to Sections and Branches based on the number of Category A and B members in each. Following the expressions of unhappiness with this idea at and since Brussels, that proposal has been withdrawn. Furthermore, because the Brussels Executive Board had never reached a clear decision point, the minutes for that meeting have not provided clear direction for distribution of the 2014 budget. To address this issue, some alternate text has been proposed for the Brussels minutes, and is highlighted in yellow in the most recent set of draft Brussels minutes.  

1 Jenkins recommended that under the circumstances, with 2014 already having started, it would be best to accept the approval of the yellow-highlighted text, which would have the 2014 allocation for Sections to be the same as it was in 2013. Walderhaug asked what had happened with the 25 percent of the 2013 Sections’ funds which had been held back pending outcome of the rest of the year’s finances. Jenkins responded that the 25 percent is “gone,” although PCOM did receive 90 percent of its 2013 budget.

Leumas inquired of the status of the proposal that PCOM allocate the funds to the Sections based on submission of specific proposals. Sutton indicated that this was the plan for 2015, but that 2014 would follow the status quo but with only 75 percent of the allocations being released until and unless the rest of ICA’s finances show improvement. A discussion followed reflecting multiple concerns about equity and rationality in the allocation of funds and the control of expenses, especially travel costs. Schefbeck indicated he would support the acceptance of the principles in the yellow-highlighted text, but there would need to be clarification of when the remaining 25 percent might be released. However, changing policy by altering the minutes of a meeting did not seem to be the sort of good governance that ICA has been trying to promote as an organization. In a democratic structure control should be exercise in rules, and a set of rules needs to be in place before PCOM takes over the funding allocation in 2015. To close the discussion on this agenda item, Jenkins called for, and obtained confirmation that the SCM’s

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1The highlighted text read: “Post-meeting note, based on meeting of Elected Officers and invited members of the Executive Board on 14 February 2014. The Elected Officers have agreed and are recommending that the existing system of allocations should be applied in 2014. They are also recommending that, at this point in time, only 150,000 euros of these allocations (75K for PCOM, 37.5K for the branches and 37.5K for the sections) may be spent until such time as the VP Finance is satisfied that revenue received is likely to match estimated revenue. The total spendable budget for 2014 shall be further discussed at the Executive Board. The Elected Officers are further proposing to recommend that this system be applied for the last time in 2014 and that the new system from 2015 onwards should focus on financing professional activities that meet ICA’s strategic objectives. First proposals for the new system will be the subject of a paper at the Executive Board in Paris on 10-11 April.”
consensus was to deal with the resolution of the budget issue within the context of a revision of the Brussels meeting minutes.

9. **Website Issues.**

Leumas opened the discussion of what the SCM would like to see in the way of revisions to the ICA website noting the importance of accuracy, clarity of authorship, credentials of the author(s), currency of information, and extent of coverage. Walderhaug noted that a redesigned site should provide statistics on use, a mechanism to accommodate databases within the site and an ability to handle large volumes of simultaneous users as might arise when providing online courses. Van Kan would like to see the ability of the site to serve as the digital archives store for the ICA. Jenkins stressed the importance of making our “wish list” as comprehensive as necessary and to plan to revisit the matter of priorities later if there were cost issues not resolvable by use of reserve funds. Cruces Blanco noted that she had had a group of 42 students assess the ICA website, but they could not find the place where the Sections were included in the current site. Jenkins closed the discussion of this item by requesting Leumas to prepare a one-page overview of the issues. After other SCM members have provided views and suggestions, Jenkins will send the document on to PCOM and David Fricker and others.

10. **2014 Annual Conference**

10.1 Changes in Schedule. Jenkins noted that the most recently prepared conference schedule shows the Section Chairs’ Meeting as being 9:00-12:30 on Saturday 11 October and that 16:00 to 18:00 for Section Bureau meetings. She will recirculate the timetable to have the SCM members share with their respective Sections so each can make clear the preferences of their particular group.

10.2 There is the possibility that the Sections can have an exhibit hall desk/stall with the “main ICA.” Thus, Jenkins will be looking for materials from Sections to distribute at the table.

11. **“Tour de table”**.

Jenkins invited SCM members to provide brief announcements of activities and projects within their Sections.

**SAN** met in Brussels and used the fact that the world president of notaries was present to highlight the work of SAN. The Section is beginning to look at the adoption of electronic methodologies by notaries.

**SAR** This November there will be an international assembly in Alhambra regarding architectural monuments and restoration, looking particularly at the need for archives and records by those doing restoration.

**SLA** will meeting in Girona and plan to have an open session for people beyond Section members to introduce them to the SLA’s work and current projects.
SPA met this past March in Boston. They are planning on a 10 June Twitter event calling for every archives in the world to Tweet what they hold in regard to World War I.

SAFT will be meeting in Girona. SAFT has also proposed a session for the Annual Conference, which if accepted will be combined with its Section meeting.

SBL The edited version of papers presented at the SBL’s 2013 Conference will be published as a peer-reviewed item. The 2014 SBL conference will occur next week in London. Meanwhile, SBL is hoping to be able to have its meetings “catch up” with the ICA Annual Conference, but this is not likely until at least 2016.

SPO is planning to have a meeting to examine the future course of SPO at the Girona annual conference.

SIO has just finished a project to create a mobile technology application for archives and records, and its annual conference will be in the Netherlands in mid-May. Jenkins noted that PCOM has said that the mobile application will be available on the public side of the ICA website.

SPP’s annual conference will be in October in Oslo with financial support from Norway on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the Norwegian constitution. The conference will be on the topic of the new types of constitutions being created. SPP’s 2015 meeting will be in Berlin.

SAE A conference of European archival educators will be held in on the Friday of the Girona ICA Annual Conference. Meanwhile, SAE is working on a MOOC project.

SUv’s 2014 annual conference will be held in Paris in early July on the theme of research data, “archiving” of data, and reuse of it for research. In addition, the Section’s PCOM to create appraisal guidelines for the records of students has been completed and the guidelines document is being prepared for printing and distribution.

SLMT’s main work has been focus on preparation of 16 to 20 articles for a special edition of Comma with a particular attention to the varying practices among local, municipal, and territorial archives across the world.

12. **Other Business.**

12.1 Walderhaug noted that, working with the national archives as a co-sponsor, the *Universal Declaration on Archives* has been translated into Norwegian.

12.2 Leumas reminded the SCM members that the programme for Girona should contain a 100 word description of the scope and activities of each Section.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 17:53.