Draft minutes of SPA Annual Delegates Meeting, 12 November 2002, Marseille, France

Representatives attended from Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Catalunya, France, Germany, Japan, Poland, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States of America (total 17 people)

1 Completion and adoption of the agenda
With the leave of the meeting agenda items 3 and 4 were taken together and item 4.5 ICA Constitution was added. The agenda was adopted with these changes.

2 Adoption of the minutes of the 2001 delegates meeting
The minutes of the Reykjavik meeting were adopted.

Margaret Turner noted that the new SPA articles had been approved by the ICA Executive Committee. As a result of discussion, an explanatory note about the French translation of ‘records management’ will be added.

3 and 4 Report on the Steering Committee Meetings and Projects
During 2002 the committee met in Dublin, Ireland and in Marseille, France. Major projects discussed at these meetings were:

Interviews with experienced archivists. Work continues on this project. The steering committee will take advantage of possible synergies with a similar project being undertaken by the Association des Archivistes Français.

Code of Ethics. A Catalan translation has been made. Margaret Turner encouraged further translations to be made.

SPA membership. Currently 67 associations are members of SPA. Each association represents several hundred or several thousand members. There is a need to expand membership especially in Latin America and in Africa. To encourage membership a brochure on SPA is being prepared. Delegates will have an opportunity to discuss this issue at the next meeting in 2003.

Webpage. The steering committee is conscious of the importance of a webpage to communicate with individual archivists about SPA products and information. ICA has revised its website and SPA information is included.

Certification of archivists. Work continues on gathering information for this project.

Guidelines for Regional Conferences: Work continues to expand existing guidelines on organising conferences.

Planning for ICA Congress, Vienna 2004. Margaret Turner noted that the format for the 2004 Congress would be different to previous congresses with an emphasis on more concurrent sessions organised by ICA bodies. SPA will propose 2 sessions:
  • A 3-hour workshop on the Archival Solidarity project
  • A 1½-hour seminar on implementing codes of ethics

Proposals are due by February and professional associations are encouraged to consider making their own proposals.
Archival Solidarity. Nancy Marelli, representing the SPA working group on the Archival Solidarity project, spoke about progress with the project. She described the survey that had been circulated to gather information on existing and recent projects, and encouraged further responses. She emphasised the role of Archival Solidarity as a clearinghouse of information with the role of facilitating and encouraging projects.

Ramon Alberch spoke about the ASF projects already undertaken and noted that ASF was pleased to be working with SPA on Archival Solidarity. Margaret Turner thanked ASF for their involvement and leadership. She also thanked Nancy Marelli for her personal commitment and enthusiasm.

Conferences. Margaret Turner asked Wladyslaw Stepniak and Peter Hermann to report on conferences during the open forum.

ICA Constitution. Margaret Turner drew to the attention of delegates that the Administrative Session of CITRA would be discussing proposed changes to the ICA constitution with implications for SPA. She outlined the steering committee’s discussions of the changes and proposed SPA comments if delegates were in agreement. Specifically she outlined 2 potential problems with the proposed changes:

1. Articles 4 and 5 distinguish between full and affiliate members and mention ‘national’ and ‘regional or specialist’ associations. These terms need to be more clearly defined. SPA is concerned that some SPA members will cease to be full members if this change is made to the constitution.

2. Article 18 describes the composition of the Executive Board. At present the SPA President is ex officio a member of the Executive Committee. Under the proposed constitution SPA would cease to have a guaranteed seat on the Executive Board and would only have an opportunity to be one of the 5 Sections represented. While SPA supports the extension of Section representation, we strongly wish to have a SPA seat assured. This is important in order to ensure representation of individual archivists and records managers across all fields who are represented in ICA through their associations.

A number of delegates spoke in support of these views and general agreement was indicated.

5 Open forum for delegates
Margaret Turner opened the floor to delegates asking for anyone to speak on issues of major concern for their associations.

5.1 United Kingdom
Margaret noted that while employment opportunities for archivists were increasing, the number of graduates was not. This is an issue of major concern for the coming years.

5.2 Australia
Kathryn Dan noted that education of archivists and records managers was a significant issue of concern due to changes to the education system in Australia.

5.3 France
The French association is concerned about the revision of archives law and a new building for the National Archives. Training and conferences are being held in a number of areas including business archives, municipal archives and archival research. Elisabeth Verry mentioned that a manual on archives for non-archivists will be published in 2004 as part of the association’s training program.

5.4 Canada
Current issues of concern are the merger of the NAC and NLC and budget cuts to CAIN (Canadian Archival Information Network). In 2004 the Bureau of Canadian Archivists will hold a joint symposium in Montreal on the future of archives.
5.2 Switzerland
Didier Grange mentioned that a 2-year certificate course has been established involving the Universities of Berne, Lausanne and Geneva for archivists already in employment. 25 people are currently enrolled. A working group has been established to discuss development of a national skills centre for electronic records. National Archives Day is to be held 16 November.

5.3 Catalunya
Alfred Garcia mentioned developments in training, a manual of Catalan archival administration, implementation of the 2001 law on archives, and the problems with the repatriation of Catalan documents seized during the Civil War still located in Salamanca.

5.4 ARMA
Peter Hermann spoke about 2 planned conferences to be held in Costa Rica and Singapore during 2003. The conferences are being planned with involvement from ARMA, ICA and SAA.

5.5 USA
In the area of training, EAD workshops are being offered internationally, a digitisation workshop is to be held and distance learning is being investigated. Procedures for implementation of the SAA code of ethics were used for the first time this year and this experience has led to review of the procedures and the code. SAA plans to publish in English a set of readers containing international articles.

5.6 Germany
Katherina Teidemann spoke about the German associations’ conference and an archives open day to be held in 2004.

5.7 Brazil
There are 3 associations in Brazil. They have held seminars on technology.

5.8 Russia
As there is a need for archivists, the Society of Historians and Archivists in Russia has concentrated on a new university course and training for working archivists. The Komintern project is close to completion.

5.9 Poland
The 2005 European conference will be held in Poland with the theme ‘Archival Solidarity’ to cover all aspects of international cooperation. Training and conferences have been held.

5.10 Austria
The post-graduate course in archives that has been spoken about previously commenced in October. Workshops have been held on appraisal and legal problems in private archives. A manual on archives for non-archivists has been published and the Austrian association is developing relationships with colleagues in Hungary and Slovenia.

6 25th anniversary
Henri Zuber welcomed everyone to a celebration of the 25th anniversary of the first SPA delegates meeting following the business meeting. He also invited participants to view the exhibitions in the Municipal Archives.

7 Any other business
The President thanked all those attending. She gave special thanks to Henri Zuber and Jacques Portevin and the Association des Archivistes Francais for their assistance with organising the meeting. She thanked steering committee members and the translators.

Joan Van Albada, Secretary General made a few closing comments. He explained the changes to the Congress program and encouraged the participation of associations. He emphasised that the Paris office is keen to facilitate activities.