

Accreditation and Quality Assurance – mobility of Surveyors across International Professional Institutions.

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FIG Bridging the Gap Between Cultures

INTRODUCTION

- The growth of surveying services in different countries has, in the main, not been coordinated and as a result surveying professions can vary tremendously.
- There are common values making mutual recognition of skills possible but these values vary from country to country.
- The establishment of a common core curriculum on surveying training schemes is possible, but difficult due to the existence of a wide range of surveying sub-disciplines, although some areas such as **ethics** and **sustainability** stand out as areas where a common approach should be possible.

FIG Bridging the Gap Between Cultures

INTRODUCTION

- This presentation reviews issues relating to accreditation and quality assurance in relation to international mobility of labour, with regards to surveying services, in order to help develop a project for a Commission 2 working group.

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INTRODUCTION

- The aim of this project is to develop a methodology of research that will assist in developing FIG and member policy on:
 - academic accreditation of surveying education programmes and mutual recognition of surveying education degrees.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- FIG has been investigating mobility of labour and educational/training standards for some time. A task force on mutual recognition and qualifications has been created by FIG and has reported back (Enemark, 1999).
- The terms of reference were to:
 - investigate existing regional agreements;
 - develop guidelines for assuring competence; develop guidelines for establishing agreements;
 - develop a concept and a framework for the implementation of threshold standards.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- This task force was led by Prof. Stig Enemark
- FIG developed a theme of Building the Capacity from 2007-2010 and this had the impact of improving co-operation between member institutions.
- Liberalising market services was a key objective and this led to the publication of FIG Publication No 27. (Enemark & Plimmer, 2002) There are already regional agreements between member institutions, that have built on the mutual recognition work of FIG, such as the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Services (AFAS) (Teo, 2004) which came into force on the 19th February 2008. To encourage mutual recognition FIG has developed a website that illustrates the basis of recognition (Fédération Internationale des Géomètres [FIG], 2011).

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Clearly FIG recognises the importance of mobility of labour and is promoting this through:
 - encouraging communication; developing a methodology with its members;
 - supporting professional member organisations; working with external organisations such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO).
- The formulation of International agreements by FIG is a hugely complex task as there are already many powerful regional agreements in such organisations as the European Union (EU) and the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) to name just two.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- FIG Publication No 27 (Enemark & Plimmer, 2002) has provided a review of five regional case studies - but regional level analyses can often be difficult when member institutions are also global institutions in their own right operating in areas of many recognition frameworks.
- The key to understanding some of these complex issues is understanding how professional surveyors qualify and how professional competence is assessed.
- At this point perhaps there is a conflict regarding the definition of surveyors as the term can mean different things in different countries.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Mutual recognition despite these complexities is a concept worth progressing for FIG but it is difficult to develop a set of common standards. This is something that other professions, particularly Medicine, are also grappling with as professional competence is a key global issue. This issue may eventually be resolved by legislation, agreements or possibly just market forces.

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MOBILITY OF LABOUR

- Mutual recognition begs the question: recognition by who? Recognition can be at five levels:
 - international organisations/institutions;
 - regional organisations/institutions;
 - national states;
 - national institutions;
 - and FIG member institutions.

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MOBILITY OF LABOUR

- In the case of FIG all of these have a relevance but the easiest to progress is probably mutual recognition by its member organisations.
- There is of course a language barrier and this might promote agreements between countries of similar speaking peoples. The desired end result must be, despite cultural and language difficulties, the benchmarking of professional competence.

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MOBILITY OF LABOUR

- FIG Publication No 27 (Enemark & Plimmer, 2002) identifies three pre-conditions for managing the process of mutual recognition:
 - an individual must be professionally qualified in the home country;
 - a similar profession must exist in the host country
 - and political will must be available to support the process.
- These are important concepts as they imply, that as Surveying definitions vary so much from country to country, mutual recognition may be something to aspire to but will probably never be completed in total.
- There are some core values that might form the basis of a common training curriculum such as:
 - Ethics;
 - Sustainability
 - and possibly Geographical Information Systems.

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MOBILITY OF LABOUR

- To give an example of the scale of the challenge facing FIG in promoting mutual recognition and the subsequent mobility of labour in surveying services two countries are briefly reviewed below.

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MOBILITY OF LABOUR

- The profession of Surveying in the UK has developed around a number of professional institutions of which the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors) is the largest.
- Established in the Victorian era it has evolved into a very broad based property profession concerned with land, property and construction, with over 17 types of surveyor existing under one umbrella.
- This development is partly reflected in the nature of the UK which is diverse and densely populated but also has a relatively recent history of extensive International influence. Chartered Surveyors do not have a licence but agree to a professional code and must prove professional competence.

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MOBILITY OF LABOUR

- The United States of America (USA) as a nation is much younger than the UK and has a different constitutional structure supporting a Federation of States, each having the possibility of instigating professional licences to practice. The definition of a Surveyor in the USA is linked to an engineering culture. Surveyors wishing to operate in the USA may be benchmarked by a technical engineering evaluation.
- Valuation Surveyors in the USA would be regarded as part of a different profession – appraisers rather than the valuation surveyors found in the UK. This creates huge issues for mobility of labour as professional institutions vary so greatly according to professional culture and legislation.

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MOBILITY

- It can be seen from the analyses of the RICS and the very simple comparison between the UK and the USA that mobility of labour between countries can meet many barriers. In practice the professional institutions offer a great deal of flexibility to allow new members to join their organisations.
- To promote mobility of labour it is proposed that FIG develop a 'Mobility' site on the FIG web site with a sub site for each member professional institution. This site would have to recognise that some institutions have regional and International identities as well as national identities.

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MOBILITY

- Although transferability of surveying services between countries is difficult there are things that FIG could promote to advance mobility on a practical level.
- To offer services across national borders surveyors need knowledge of national systems.
- From a pragmatic standpoint FIG could be the centre of a knowledge bank of how Surveying operates globally and make this knowledge available for practicing surveyors.

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MOBILITY

- A knowledge bank could be developed to contain the following three sets of data:
 - Country profile – develop a country profiler for all FIG members clearly illustrating the routes to qualifying as a Surveyor;
 - Data bank of mutual recognition - the FIG site already contains a mutual recognition site, this needs to be enhanced by a practical guide explaining how Surveyors can operate in different member countries;
 - Data bank of top up requirements – a data bank of top up qualifications is required to inform surveyors how they can convert their qualification to that of another institution.

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MOBILITY

- The key to disseminating this knowlege might be a 'FIG Mobility Web Site'.
- This could be a professional FIG mobility site with a member page updated annually.
- Like all databases this will live or die by its currency

FIG Bridging the Gap Between Cultures

MOBILITY

- In order to develop this knowledge bank data would have to be retrieved from FIG members.
- A suggest a draft template has been produced below for retrieval of data from FIG members. This draft template has been produced to promote discussion at the FIG working week in Morocco 2011.

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MOBILITY

- There are now numerous routes to membership of Surveying Institutions providing mobility opportunities but these are often complex:
- Example the RICS :
 - Student membership- free and available to those on RICS accredited courses.
 - Graduate route – after completion of an accredited course a two year training period with an assessment of professional competence.
 - Academic route – available to academics teaching on accredited courses.
 - Senior Professional Route – 10 yrs of experience plus a relevant degree.
 - Application Routes – direct applications from professionals from other disciplines or related bodies.
 - Research Route – 5 years surveying experience, at least 2 years post PhD and to hold a senior industry position.
 - Associate Route – 5 pathways in with a mix of training and work based learning

FIG Bridging the Gap Between Cultures

In terms of the site there are a number of key issues that would form the basis of the template:

- Types of Surveyor
 - Land
 - Property
 - Construction
- Membership routes
 - Student
 - Graduate
 - Senior Professional
 - Direct Application
 - Technician
 - Associate
- Mutual recognition
 - Institutions recognition agreements
- Professional 'top up requirements'
- Licence requirements
 - Top up requirements required by institution to obtain licence or membership
- Continuing Professional Development Requirements
- Ethics Standards
- Process for applying for membership or licence
- Contact details
- Fee

FIG Bridging the Gap Between Cultures

MOBILITY

- The full make up of this template needs further discussion to put it into context of the broader work of Commission 2. It would have to be something that every professional institution within FIG would be prepared to buy into. If it provides a useful service for their membership it is highly likely that they would.

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Conclusion

- The work that has already been undertaken by FIG on mutual recognition illustrate the relevance and need for further work in this area.
- The most obvious target at first sight is the development of a common FIG curriculum. Other than in the areas of ethics and sustainability, given the wide variance in Surveying practice this may be extremely difficult and in some cases impossible.
- The area of mutual recognition is perhaps much easier to progress.
- There is a major opportunity to improve the mobility of surveyors globally through further development of practical and pragmatic systems to underpin the solid work already undertaken by FIG.

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