# ASPAC asia-pacific region news

# **Project Financing**

Jon Lorentz (jlorentz@worley.co.nz) from New Zealand has been nominated by the ASPAC Member Associations as a Correspondent to the FIDIC-EFCA Task Force on Project Financing chaired by Wilhelm Reismann w.reismann@iC-vienna.at) from Austria. The Task Force has internal FIDIC.org web area for communications and document archiving (contact FIDIC for password).

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The display of interest by Member Associations in providing the correspondent has shown how important an issue project financing is in ASPAC. Rather than leave matters to the Europeans, the ASPAC Chairman, Dick Kell, has proposed that MAs should form an ASPAC Working Group on Project Finance to discuss the issue in a regional context. As FIDIC has asked ASPAC to make a single nomination, Dick Kell has considered all the nominees and has decided that the ASPAC Working Party on Project Finance should be chaired jointly by ACEM (Malaysia) and AJCE (Japan).

# Message from ASPAC Chairman

My greetings to all our ASPAC colleagues and friends.

This is Issue No 1 of a planned regular ASPAC Newsletter, in which we can exchange news and experiences of FIDIC consulting engineers in our region. Subject to support from ASPAC MAs, we expect to distribute two or three issues per year.

The concept of an ASPAC Newsletter was born in discussion at FIDIC, Edmonton and at previous meetings, concerning the difficulties and costs involved in ASPAC representatives getting together. This Newsletter may go some way to providing a forum for regular exchange of views and information.

Good fortune to all of you for 1999 - I certainly hope that we will see the beginning of a strong upturn in the economies of our region.

DICK KELL AM

#### **ASPAC Member Associations (MAs)**

Attached is a list of ASPAC MA contacts. Those who have responded to our request for current details are noted and thanked. We would appreciate details of current office holders from all MAs. Thanks.

#### **ASPAC Issues Paper**

Many ASPAC MAs have responded with comments on Dick Kell's paper and we encourage the remainder to reply by 30 April 1999. Responses to date have been positive, which will be helpful in developing a programme of activities for the ASPAC Group.

### **World Trade Organisation – General Agreement on Trade in Services**

The WTO has embarked on a series of negotiating rounds designed to liberalize

international trade in services. Accountancy was chosen as the test case and work on developing an agreed set of principles is drawing to a close. The next profession to be "negotiated" is engineering, with the round scheduled to begin in October 1999.

While national governments will be doing the negotiating, they will all benefit from the advice and assistance of their professional engineering and associations. This could be an issue in which ASPAC plays a role, and MA comments on the concept of developing a cooperative position are welcomed.

#### **APEC Engineer**

This concept of a set of qualifications that would enable engineers from any APEC country to work in any other is being developed by the authorities responsible for setting professional engineering qualifications in the region. It might be that ASPAC should become involved in these discussions, as it is an issue at the nub of many current difficulties in exchanges between MA countries. Dick Kell would welcome responses on this point.

# **UN Technical Consultancy Development Program for Asia and the Pacific (TCDPAP)**

Since 1992 the UN, through ESCAP, has administered the TCDPAP, which is designed to promote the role of local consultants in national and regional projects through continuous upgrading of consultancy capabilities. The TCDPAP Secretariate is located in New Delhi. Several ASPAC MAs are members of TCDPAP, which has strong parallels with a former FIDIC program, Consultant Management Training.

The Director of TCDPAP, Dr JF Elliott, briefed the September 1998 ASPAC meeting on the program. It was agreed that cooperation in the area of consultant education was possible. A further meeting was held in November 1998 between Marshall Gysi of FIDIC and Dr Elliott at which the concept of operating together was further refined. It is up to ASPAC now to develop this relationship in a way that harmonises interests and serves ASPAC MAs as well as TCDPAP. Dick Kell would welcome proposals from MAs on this point.

# **ASPAC Meetings Proposals for 1999**

We will hold our traditional ASPAC meeting at FIDIC 99 in the Hague during 19 - 22 September 1999. FIDIC has organised an outstanding conference program on the theme *Expanding The Boundaries* and we hope that as many representatives of our ASPAC MAs as possible will attend.

Consideration is also being given to ASPAC participation in the TCDPAP Workshop to be held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia 18-20 October, 1999. The workshop is being organised by ACEM and PWD Malaysia with the theme *Strategies for Globalization* Since many ASPAC members will be attending as TCDPAP members, this would seem an excellent opportunity for an ASPAC get together in the heart of our region. The theme is relevant and ASPAC/TCDPAP relationships could be reviewed.

Your views on this proposal for ASPAC to meet jointly with TCDPAP will be most welcomed by our ASPAC Secretariat.

#### **Industry Prospects Surveys**

The Hong Kong and Singapore MAs have recently conducted surveys into the prospects for consulting engineering in their countries, while ACEA has practice performance survey results going back several years. These Associations will be pleased to share the results if there is general interest.

We would be interested to learn of the experiences and views of Members on the benefits (or otherwise) of certification of Quality Systems. Members may be aware that ISO 9000 is being re-written and is due for re-issue within 12 months, so comment from ASPAC would be timely.

# ASPAC CONTACT LIST (as at 15 April 1999)

Please consult www.fidic.org/directory for updated information.

Member Association	Contact Details
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