

# **ASPAC NEWS**

Issue No 2: August 1999

## **ASPAC: the Asia Pacific Grouping of FIDIC Consulting Engineers**

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### **A Word from the Chairman**

I have been delighted with the response to our first ASPAC Newsletter. Almost all ASPAC MAs have responded and raised a number of common interests and issues which ASPAC, as a regional grouping, should be tackling. These are discussed in this issue.

Our efforts to identify an opportunity for a face-to-face meeting of MAs are beginning to bear fruit. We will hold an ASPAC meeting for those MAs represented at the FIDIC meeting in The Hague, but I am now concentrating on organising our fullest meeting to date to coincide with the TCDPAP Seminar in Kuala Lumpur in April 2000.

A strong theme running through MA responses is the need to work together on regional issues and to represent the interests of ASPAC persuasively to FIDIC and to regional entities (for example, the Asian Development Bank). In this regard, MAs should note that I have made myself available as a candidate for the FIDIC Executive Committee and you may consider supporting my candidature.

Dick Kell  
Chairman ASPAC

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### **General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS)**

This year, GATS will discuss trade in engineering services. Noting that it is governments, rather than professional associations, which negotiate agreements, it would be useful for ASPAC MAs to exchange notes on the position they have recommended to their respective government negotiators.

### **APEC Engineer**

This concept seems to be taking on a life of its own. In several MA countries Monitoring Committees have already been set up to begin the task of accepting and considering applications for "APEC Engineer" status. ACEA has been asked to provide a member of the Australian Monitoring Committee, which is chaired by the Institution of Engineers Australia – the national certifying body for engineering professions. ACENZ has achieved a similar position. It would be of interest to know whether other MAs have managed to become in the process to this extent. (ACEHK has already indicated that it will not be involved).

### **Quality Certification**

In some countries government clients insist on consultants maintaining a prescribed standard of quality certification in order to be eligible to bid for work. As consulting engineers we would all instinctively support this concept, but many find that it does not apply in practice. It would be of interest to know how extensive the requirement for ISO

9000 and third party quality certification is in members' countries and whether MAs are actively involved in encouraging and assisting their members to attain these standards.

It is also important to note that ISO 9000-2000 is to be issued next year and will include new concepts for consulting engineers' quality systems. Members interested in obtaining information should advise the ASPAC Secretariat.

#### **Project Finance: EFCA/FIDIC Task Force**

There was a good response from MAs on the FIDIC request for nominations for the position of "correspondent" to the EFCAS/FIDIC Project Financing Task Force. ACEA, ACEM, AJCE, ACENZ and ACES expressed interest. Details of these nominees were considered, and Jon Lorenz of ACENZ has been appointed.

Project Financing is an issue of growing importance in consulting engineering, and it has been proposed that we should form a Working Group and discuss the subject in an ASPAC context rather than leaving it to the Europeans. Could MAs wishing to participate in an exchange of ideas and experience on project financing please advise. It is proposed that the Working Group be chaired jointly by ACEM and AJCE.

#### **APEC Young Engineer Forum**

AJCE has suggested the idea of an ASPAC young engineers forum as a means of developing future leading figures in ASPAC engineering circles. The proposal is an outgrowth of the current exchange program of young engineers between Japan, Australia and New Zealand – the "Homestays Program". AJCE suggests that the Homestays program be remodeled into an international conference of young (under 35) engineers at which our future leaders will be given the opportunity to express and exchange ideas on selected issues of importance to the profession in the region. The conference would be followed by opportunities for young engineers to gain practical knowledge of the profession in other MA countries through exchanges and visits.

This is a most innovative and forward-looking proposal. Your views on it and issues arising from it, as well as suggestions on how it might be organised would be welcomed.

#### **ASPAC Website**

FIDIC has suggested that ASPAC should consider using the FIDIC Website as a means of displaying and exchanging information about itself, its MAs and their member firms. The model for this would be the GAMA page on the FIDIC Website. Now that almost all our MAs are connected to the Internet, this is a practical and attractive suggestion that we should examine. Your views on the proposal would be welcomed.

#### **MA Elections of Officeholders**

We all have a different cycle for electing office holders. It would assist the Chairman and the Secretariat to keep the ASPAC contact records current if MAs could advise when they plan to hold elections for officeholders.

**ASPAC Meeting in Kuala Lumpur, April 2000**

ACEM has shown great initiative in undertaking to host the next TCDPAP Seminar in Kuala Lumpur in April 2000. As many MAs are also TCDPAP members, this gathering offers ASPAC the best opportunity in years to meet together, either before or after the Seminar. This will be a useful precursor to FIDIC 2000 (see below). The ACEM-TCDPAP theme is "Globalisation of Engineering".

It is suggested that the theme of the ASPAC meeting should concern the many changes in the business and professional environment in which consulting engineers now work, and the role of consulting engineering into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. We will propose a theme and a program for the meeting following MA responses.

Could MAs please advise:

- Whether they are intending to be represented at the TCDPAP Seminar
- Suggestions for a theme and program items for an ASPAC meeting
- Their willingness to supply speakers and papers.

If there is good support for an ASPAC meeting in KL, we will approach ACEM to discuss details.

**FIDIC in Hawaii, September 2000**

Please note in your diaries that FIDIC is to be held in Hawaii in September 2000. The conference will have a strong Asia-Pacific theme, and we should take advantage of this great venue.

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