

1987 and lightly revised in 1994. The Year 2000 revisions will be much more thorough-going, taking into account the considerable international experience of implementing them.

However, ISO says that the revised standards, like the current ones, will impose no rules on the presentation of a quality manual. It states, "This will allow organizations to continue to document their quality management systems in a manner which reflects their own ways of doing business. The revision of the ISO 9000 standards will not require the rewriting of an organization's quality management system documentation."

In order to ensure that the revised standards will be of maximum benefit, ISO has conducted an international survey of user requirements. In addition, it has an ongoing process which allows for direct feedback from users and customers at key points during the development of the revisions. This process is helping to determine how well user requirements are being met in the documents under development and to identify opportunities for improving them further before publication as ISO standards.

The revised standards, ISO 9001 and ISO 9004, are currently at the stage of "Committee Drafts" (CDs), which normally are internal documents circulated for comment only to the ISO members directly participating in their development. After the CD stage, the standards are released to ISO's membership as a whole as Draft International Standards, which are publicly available documents. Due to the huge interest in the ISO 9000 revisions, orders for the CDs of ISO 9001 and ISO 9004 may be addressed to ISO national members and to the ISO Central Secretariat. However, it should be understood that the documents are dynamic ones which will certainly evolve before they reach the status of International Standards.

ISO/TC 176/SC 2, the ISO technical body responsible for developing the revised standards, has established a World Wide Web site to provide information. Users who would like to give input or participate in the validation of the standards may contact ISO/TC 176/SC 2 directly via the web site: <http://www.bsi.org.uk/iso-tcl76-sc2/>. Information may also be obtained from ISO's national members, as well as being posted on ISO's own web site, *ISO Online*: <http://www.iso.ch/>. For more information: Roger Frost, Press Officer, Tel.: + 4122 749 0111, Fax: + 4122 733 34 30, E-mail: frost@iso.ch.

WHO and Pharmaceutical Industry to Set Up Joint Working Group

With one-third of the world population deprived of easy access to the most essential drugs and vaccines, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the phar-

maceutical industry decided to set up a joint working group that will analyse the situation and make recommendations to overcome existing bottlenecks.

The group will be formed and start its work in the immediate future. Its composition will be agreed in consultation with the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (IFPMA), which currently represents over 50 national associations of research-based pharmaceutical companies from countries in every WHO region.

This decision was made on 21 October 1998, after a four-hour meeting organized at WHO in Geneva between Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland, WHO's Director-General, who initiated the meeting, and ten senior representatives of the pharmaceutical industry, selected by the IFPMA.

"The decision we have taken is a first step to benefit an estimated 100 million people worldwide through improved cooperation between the public and private sectors. I am looking forward to further development in this area," stated Dr. Brundtland.

"We in the pharmaceutical industry are pleased to see changes in the renewed WHO, changes that could potentially make everybody a winner. It is up to all of us now to translate this potential into actions," commented Dr. Harvey E. Bale, Jr., Director-General of the IFPMA.

News from the Federation of European Chemical Societies (FECS) General Assembly, 17–18 September 1998, Istanbul Turkey

Millennium Celebrations

100 Distinguished European Chemists

The President informed the General Assembly that the project had been approved by the Executive Committee in March and that in August member societies had been sent a letter inviting them to submit nominations by the closing date of 26 February 1999.

Guidelines for considering the nominations would be approved by the Executive Committee in October. The Working Party on the History of Chemistry would be involved in the selection process, the final decision to be taken by a selection committee

FECS Calendar

The President informed the General Assembly that plans for a calendar to mark the Millennium had been approved by the Executive Committee, although the question of the necessary funding had not been resolved.

FECS Web Pages

The President urged member societies to develop their own web pages, if they did not already exist, and use the help that was available from the Royal Society of Chemistry. He urged member societies to make use of the opportunities provided by Chemsoc for the use of chemical societies and their members, the alternative being commercially provided sites. Dr Gagan added that the Chemsoc web site was a valuable service for Divisions. The General Assembly noted the development of the IUPAC and ACS web sites.

Dr. Inch commended in particular the developing conference database within Chemsoc, and encouraged member societies to contribute information.

The European Chemist Magazine

Dr. Inch drew attention to the first issue published in May and urged member societies to provide information that could help create future issues, the next one being expected in November/December. He explained that a major problem was to assemble a number of people who are able to provide information from different countries which could be analysed for its European significance. Until the quality of the magazine meets the required standards, he is not planning to approach industry for sponsorship. Approaches to member societies for firm commitments to purchase the magazine will be made in due course.

Future Direction of FECS

Divisional Status

The General Assembly considered the circulated papers. Dr. Jensen and Professor Pasynkiewicz presented the applications of the Working Parties on Chemistry and the Environment and Organometallic Chemistry for Divisional status. The General Assembly noted that the Working Parties met the required criteria concerning membership and level of activities and accepted the recommendations from the Executive Committee

Green Chemistry

Dr. Jensen reported that the European Environment Agency (EEA) had invited FECS to help organize a European Green Chemistry Award similar to the U.S. Green Chemistry Award. The EEA expected that funding would be available via the European Commission, and planned to publicize the award in the summer of 1999, with the first awards (possibly one academic and one industrial) being made in the year 2000.

There was some discussion of the use of the word 'green', which was not well accepted in all European countries, although it was possible that the U.S. influence would eventually prevail. Dr. Inch reported that in considering the terms 'sustainable' and 'green', the

RSC had concluded that sustainable chemistry went beyond green chemistry. It was noted that the preliminary proposal was for the FECS to appoint and oversee the work of an awarding panel and that the Green Chemistry Network in York University might be asked to be the administrative body.

The General Assembly gave approval in principle to the proposal to work with the EEA in organising a European Green Chemistry Award and agreed that the Division of Chemistry and the Environment should be authorized to continue the discussions and act on behalf of FECS. Dr. Darms urged that efforts should be made to ensure the right amount of visibility for the FECS name in association with the award.

Dr. Malin gave a presentation highlighting the many international activities of the ACS which incorporated green chemistry. The ACS Committee on Environmental Improvement was actively involved in the U.S. Green Chemistry Award. Much staff activity was devoted to, for example, the organisation of workshops in collaboration with other bodies.

Dr. Czedik Eysenberg reported that the Austrian Chemical Society had a working party looking at life cycle questions.

Dr. Inch reported on the arrangements to establish the Green Chemistry Network at the University of York, financed by the RSC, and the plans to publish a green chemistry journal/magazine.

Dr. Jensen invited representatives to send him by post any further information that was available.

International Chemistry Celebration 1999

Dr. Malin circulated information about the plans for the International Chemistry Celebration in 1999. He urged FECS member societies to inform the ACS of any national activity, e.g. national chemistry day, in order to have it included in the diary of events worldwide. The website is <http://www.acs.org/memgen/meetings/ichc/ichc.htm>. The General Assembly delegates indicated that about half of the member societies present had submitted registration forms.

Dr. Walter drew attention to the creation of International Landmark Sites and said he would welcome information to help select other joint activities that could receive this designation.

European Communities Chemistry Council

The General Assembly noted the minutes of the meeting held in March 1998. Professor Alderweireldt drew attention to the European Chemist (EurChem) designation, involvement in which is no longer restricted to ECCC member societies. The EurChem designation is available to members of all FECS member societies who can meet the criteria for membership of the European Chemist Registration Board.

IUPAC

Dr. Hayes, Vice-President of IUPAC, gave an outline of the structure of IUPAC and presented the circulated document on future strategy. He then highlighted his desire for a clearer view of the respective roles of, and links between, the IUPAC as a global organisation, the regional organisations such as FECS, and the national organisations, in order to avoid duplication of effort. He referred to the problems caused by the fact that funding via national adhering organisations left many national chemical societies not directly involved in IUPAC. He also reported that improved links with industry will be pursued, and the Associate Member scheme is shrinking.

The General Assembly noted that decisions on future action would be put on the IUPAC website <http://www.iupac.org/>.

Future Strategies of Divisions and Working Parties

Division of Analytical Chemistry: The President, as interim Chairman of the Division, following the death of Professor Robert Kellner, reported the appointment of a new Chairman, Professor M. Valcarcel, Spain and a new Secretary, Professor Korte, Germany. He stated that a report from Euroanalysis 10 in Basel will be published. The next two Euroanalysis meetings will be in Lisbon in 2000 and Dortmund in 2002. The publication of the 2nd edition of the 900-page analytical chemistry textbook based on the Eurocurriculum is a major project and it is expected that this edition would be more widely applicable to university chemistry teaching worldwide.

Division of Food Chemistry: Dr. Battaglia reported that, in the light of his appointment as FECS President Elect, the Division would need to appoint a new Chairman. The Division's links with the European Commission were developing well and he hoped in time that the Division would be accepted as the body of reference to the European Union. He commended to other Divisions the strategy of having individuals formally recognized as experts. The General Assembly supported the Division's efforts to influence Springer to use the English name *International Journal of Food Research*, instead of the German title *Zeitschrift für Lebensmittel Untersuchung und Forschung*, to promote wider circulation. He reported collaboration with the medical community in the Symposium on Food Allergenicity in Taormina. The 10th Eurofoodchem will be held in Budapest.

Division of Chemical Education: Dr. Gagan reported that this was the Division's 25th anniversary year. A special edition of the *International Journal of Science Education* had been prepared by the Division. The first European Conference on Chemical Educa-

tion, in Budapest in August, had been attended by 200 Hungarian teachers of chemistry and 150 participants from 30 other countries. The FECS Lecture had been given by Professor A. Johnstone, University of Glasgow. The next European Conference would be held in 2001 in Portugal, avoiding overlap with the International Conference held in alternate years. The 5th ECRICE, in Greece later in 1998, included a workshop for young researchers.

Division of Chemistry and the Environment: Dr. Jensen reported on the success of the recent Conference on Atmospheric Chemistry and Air Pollution in Copenhagen. Following the conversion to a Division, the next business meeting will consider the establishment of subgroups. The next Euroenvironment Conference will be held in Oporto in 2000. A venue for the 25th anniversary conference in 2002 will be sought. The Division was actively cooperating with the European Chemistry Thematic Network activity and Dr. Jensen planned to develop links with IUPAC.

Division of Organometallic Chemistry: Professor Pasynkiewicz reported plans for the XIIIth FEChem Conference on Organometallic Chemistry on 29 August–3 September 1999 in Lisbon. The Division supported local activity in Poland and Germany and held regional seminars for Ph.D. students. The web site listed the names, together with fields of interest, of those members working in organometallic chemistry.

Working Party on Computational Chemistry: Dr. Naray Szabo reported that the next conference will be in Italy in 2000. A directory of European computational chemists is being compiled for publication on the Internet. Summer schools, mostly in Italy, are being organized. He added that the long-term aim is to become a Division.

Working Party on History of Chemistry: In the absence of Dr. Deelstra, the President reported that, in addition to the *Guide to Museums*, the Working Party is planning a history of chemical societies. Another in the series of lists of important events in the history of chemistry, giving anniversaries for 1999 and 2000, is expected.

President Elect

The President reminded the General Assembly of the provision in the statutes for appointment of the President Elect: *The Executive Committee shall nominate to the General Assembly one individual for appointment as President of the Federation of European Chemical Societies. The individual shall serve for one year as President Elect before taking up the office of President. The President shall serve for a single term of three years and may not be re-elected for a second consecutive term of office as President.*

The President presented the recommendation from

the Executive Committee and the General Assembly agreed to appoint Dr. R. Battaglia, New Swiss Chemical Society, to serve initially for one year as President Elect with the effect from the end of the General Assembly and succeed Professor Niinisto as President in September 1999. (See below for a biographical sketch of Dr. Battaglia.)

Composition of the Executive Committee

The President informed the General Assembly that there were four vacancies for individuals to serve on the Executive Committee for three years from September 1998. He stressed that elected members of the Executive Committee serve in a personal capacity, not as representatives of a member society. The General Assembly accepted the recommendation from the Executive Committee that Dr. R. Darms, Professor S. Gultekin, Professor V. Simanek, and Professor A. Zamojski be elected to the Executive Committee.

Membership of the Federation

The General Assembly received the circulated application and accepted the recommendation from the Executive Committee that the Lithuanian Chemical Society become a member of FECS.

Relations with Other Bodies

American Chemical Society

Dr. Walter, President of the American Chemical Society, gave a presentation on international links and the increasing interdependency of national chemical societies. He believed that the promotion of global co-operation was a vital role for chemical societies.

He outlined his proposal that there should be a 'C7' group of the major national chemical societies, including the GDCh, the RSC, and the Chemical Society of Japan, having special responsibilities since they were better equipped in terms of wealth and knowledge. He proposed that an agenda for such action be discussed in Berlin in August 1999.

The President questioned the need for another new organisation in the form of an 'exclusive club', bearing in mind the plans for increased IUPAC activity. Dr. Walter responded by explaining that he saw it not as another organisation but as an opportunity for a group with common interests to compare what they do and see what they could do jointly. He referred to the fact that IUPAC member organisations were often the national academy rather than the national chemical society.

The President referred to the existence of the International Council for Chemistry, and Dr. Hayes explained that it was a IUPAC/UNESCO collaborative activity promoting links with developing countries.

During discussion of recruitment, Dr. Walter reported that the ACS membership campaign had hitherto been confined to the United States. He acknowledged that extending it to countries in Europe could be perceived as competing with national societies and said he would welcome suggestions on how action could be taken without endangering existing good relationships. It was suggested that reduced fees for members of European societies could be an option.

The President thanked the President of the American Chemical Society for his presentation and participation in the General Assembly meeting.

General Assembly

Dr. Herve presented the invitation from the Association of Finnish Chemical Societies to hold the 1999 General Assembly meeting in Finland and this was unanimously accepted. She confirmed that the General Assembly would be held on 16–17 September 1999 in Helsinki.

Appointment of New President Elect of FECS

At its recent General Assembly, FECS appointed Dr. Reto Battaglia, of the New Swiss Chemical Society, as its President Elect. Reto Battaglia will serve one year as President Elect before succeeding Professor Lauri Niinisto as President of FECS after the 1999 General Assembly in Helsinki on 16–17 September 1999.

Reto Battaglia has been involved in the work of the Federation since 1981, having been a member of and, since 1995, Chairman, of the Division of Food Chemistry. He has been President of the Swiss Society of Food and Environmental Chemistry and has been active in the IUPAC Commission on Food Chemistry.

Following his doctoral studies at ETH Zurich, Reto Battaglia was a post-doctoral fellow at the University of Manchester (UK) in organic synthetic chemistry. In 1973 he joined the Cantonal laboratory of Zurich, later becoming deputy head. Since 1989 he has been Director of Migros Laboratories, Zurich.

FECS Award for Service

FECS has decided to give its 1998 Award for Service to Dr. Johannes van Spronsen of the Royal Netherlands Chemical Society, The Hague, The Netherlands.

The FECS Award, consisting of a medal and a scroll, was given to Dr. van Spronsen in recognition of his services to FECS and for his outstanding work as a historian of chemistry.

Dr. van Spronsen is the present Secretary and former Chairman of the Working Party on the History of Chemistry of the FECS. Dr. van Spronsen has edited