

**E.C.C.O. A.S.I.B.L.**  
**EUROPEAN CONFEDERATION OF CONSERVATOR-RESTORERS' ORGANISATIONS**

**SHORT NEWS April 2008**

The General Assembly was held in Brussels on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> March. Thanks are extended to the 21 delegates and observers who attended and so actively participated in the discussions. The days proceedings are summarised below and future activities and associated working groups also outlined and listed.

The committee gained three new members in Mechthild Noll-Minor, VDR, Sebastian Dobruskin SKR/SCR, and Jeremy Hutchings, NKF-N. It is with regret that we lose Natalie Ellwanger SKR/SCR who has served as a dedicated and hard working Vice-President over the last number of years, her contribution has been immense and is greatly appreciated. Fortunately, all contact with Natalie is not completely severed as she has offered to continue as Office Administrator provided this is compatible with her work situation.

The Committee for 2008 are as follows

President: Monica Martelli Castaldi

Vice-President; Suvi Leukumaavaara

Vice-President: Jaap van der Burg

General Secretary: Susan Corr

Deputy Secretary: Jeremy Hutchings

Treasurer: Michael Van Gampen

Committee Members: David Cueco-Aguilella, Barbara Davidson, Mechthild Noll-Minor, Rui Bordalo, Sebastian Dobruskin

**President's Report**

Monica Martelli Castaldi has been working steadily to make E.C.C.O. more visible and engaged with other European and international bodies and continues to work for legislative recognition for conservation-restoration in the protection of cultural patrimony. A very good working relationship has been established with ICCROM and E.C.C.O. was invited to their GA in November '07 and made a short presentation. The President attended a board meeting of ICOM-CC in Rome resulting in an invitation to present a paper on legislation at the ICOM-CC conference in New Delhi and subsequently to give a 3 day workshop on legislation in the University of Delhi;

ICCROM is to launch a Latin American programme, LATAM, on the different and varied issues in conservation. E.C.C.O. was invited to the first meeting which was held in Rome to coincide with the ICCROM GA.

The Brazilian Association of Conservators and Restorers of Cultural Property-ABRACOR, will hold its XIII Congress, from 8 to 12 September 2008, in cooperation with other Brazilian conservator-restorer's organisation ACOR/RS. E.C.C.O. will attend and be represented by the President and Mr Vincent Negri, lawyer and E.C.C.O. consultant.

New Zealand's conservator-restorers' organisation is to become an affiliated body.

From a legislative point of view much work has been done on the text of the "European Recommendations and Charter on Conservation-Restoration" entrusted to E.C.C.O. by the Council of Europe. Together with ICCROM the text has been finalised and approved at the E.C.C.O. GA in Brussels the 17 of March 2008, the final document will be presented to Mr Therond, Head of the Cultural Heritage Division, on the 15th of May, and later to the Council itself in the next year.

E.C.C.O. continues to liaise with ENCoRE. René Larsen, who attended the GA, extended an invitation to the ENCoRE GA in September 2008.

### **The Recommendations to the Council of Europe.**

Following an approach by Mr Therond inviting E.C.C.O. to make proposals on the conservation-restoration of cultural patrimony to the Council of Europe, a draft document was developed by Vincent Negri in consultation with Monica Martelli Castaldi and Mr Bouchenaki General Director of ICCROM. ENCoRE has been informed and invited to comment on the text. Mr Negri reported that the Council of Europe has adopted several Conventions on Cultural heritage but none with regard to conservation-restoration. Texts adopted are suggestions to governments to change their legislation. The aim of the Recommendations is to make visible the field of conservation–restoration in the political sphere.

The proposed document is composed of two parts:

- Recommendations
- Charter

The Recommendations refer to the principles of conservation-restoration and include the concept of ‘integrated conservation’. It is hoped that this concept will inform general politics in planning for social and urban development and it is a signature concept of other Conventions.

The Charter contains technical terms and definitions referring to the APEL publication, the E.C.C.O. Code of Ethics and Guidelines. The CEN 346 project and the ICOM-CC work on terminology were also considered in discussion.

A literal translation of this draft document from French into English, together with an improved English version, was presented to the GA by Mr Negri. Additions and further recommendations from member organisations made prior to the GA were added in an aside column.

The proposed document was then subject to intense discussion and debate over the course of the GA. Each change and addition was voted on. Given the pressure of time, Jeremy Hutchings offered to draw up a broader interpretation of the term Integrated Conservation which could be put forward for later approval and amendment to the text.

With this the document went forward for final approval and was carried with two abstentions on behalf of the Slovakian delegation.

The Slovakian delegates were concerned that the spirit of the document did not reflect the ‘artistic’ or ‘creative’ dimension of the work of conservation-restoration which is expressly defined in the statutes of the Slovakian Chamber of Conservation-Restoration.

The Slovakian delegation prepared a document with proposed amendments which might best reflect their position and which might be considered for insertion into the text at a later date. Much discussion followed, Mechthild Noll-Minor, VDR pointed out that the Slovakian position reflects an east–west divide in thinking and tradition which needs to be respected given the accession of more eastern European states into the EU and if our eastern colleagues are to be represented by E.C.C.O..

The Committee later decided that the final text approved at the GA would not be further amended, but the issues of “Integrated Conservation” and the requests of the Slovakian organisation would be inserted into the accompanying document that Mr. Negri will attach to the Recommendations to be presented to the Council of Europe.

### **The ECPL.**

The first part of the project was officially closed on September 25<sup>th</sup> 2007 in Malta. The project produced sample Descriptors for levels 7 and 8 of the EQF and a set of Minimum Common

Standards Definitions were written for 3 specialisations: Books and Paper, Metals and Wooden Artefacts.

A sequel to the project, to be known as CRELLS, has been proposed by the project partners. As part of its remit the sequel will explore how any future licensing body would be structured which would necessarily involve the participation of E.C.C.O. and ENCoRE. The sequel will not be funded through the Leonardo da Vinci programme and another funding mechanism will have to be sought.

### **The EQF**

The Working Group of the EQF is to meet in Paris in May. Analysing, modifying and using the work that has been achieved to date on the Descriptors for the ECPL project, E.C.C.O. will continue to work on the Descriptors for all levels following a mandate from the GA arising out of discussions on same.

### **Questionnaire**

Thank you to everybody for completing the recent questionnaire on membership status within membership organisations. There was a 100% return rate. Several questionnaires need to be clarified before the final results will be published on the web page as soon as this has been done. Analysis and interpretation of the questionnaire will inform any future proposals or strategy.

### **Membership**

Welcome is extended to the Bulgarian Association of Conservator-Restorers ARBBG whose membership was ratified by the GA. We look forward to meeting their delegate Mr Stefan Belishki and their contribution to E.C.C.O. work.

It is with regret that the President announced ICON's withdrawal from E.C.C.O., the committee will continue to liaise with ICON to try and resolve the issue of membership.

### **Legislation - "Reasoned study on international documents concerning the protection of cultural heritage"**

E.C.C.O. in conjunction with ICCROM commissioned Catherine Heim to carry out a review of international documents, charters, recommendations and conventions which refer to the conservation of cultural heritage. The study contains an analysis of how the position of the conservator-restorer is considered in the existing documents on conservation-restoration, and where they contain legal references.

The work is printed and will soon be ready for distribution and publication on the E.C.C.O. website.

### **CEN**

It was agreed by the GA that E.C.C.O. is to pursue a formal liaison role with the CEN project.

### **EU Projects**

There are two EU projects which E.C.C.O. is to become involved with in the coming months, if approved by the EU commission: TREN and CHARISMA.

E.C.C.O.'s participation in these projects came about as a result of a petition presented at the 7th EU Conference in Prague organised in 2006 by the EU DG-Research. Following this, one of the requirements for future EU projects for research in conservation is to have conservator-restorers verify the final applicability of projects in the field of practice.

The TREN project "*Transfer Research to End-Users for Improving Conservation and Preservation of Cultural Heritage*" is to carry out an analysis or overview of previous and proposed EU projects to see which way they can be improved with regard to their application in the field. Mr. Andreas Tilche, from the Environment Unity DG-Research, would like to select

prototypes from amongst the projects which have been financed till now. Three conservation techniques and three control systems have been chosen by the TREN project, to verify if they meet the needs of professionals either working as public employees or working as freelances. The CHARISMA project "*Cultural Heritage Research Infrastructures: Synergy for a Multidisciplinary Approach to Conservation/Restoration*" concerns the EU funded mobile laboratory which will carry out analysis and diagnostics on site where a project falls within CHARISMA's term of reference. The project allows access to the conservation archives of important European collections.

Participation in the Advisory Committee, provides E.C.C.O with the opportunity to follow closely the activities of the most prestigious European projects in the field of scientific research for conservation-restoration, having, in this way, a chance to capture the most advanced news in their development (for both restoration techniques and in terms of diagnostics).

The dissemination of information among the conservator-restorers about the opportunity to access the archives of Louvre, National Gallery, British Museum, Prado, etc., or the instruments of MOLAB (the mobile laboratory for scientific analysis), will allow E.C.C.O. to enable its members to take an important advantage: when a request for access to the above mentioned archives or to MOLAB activities is approved, all travel expenses and subsistence for the consultation of archives or all travel and use of analytical instruments of MOLAB will be funded by CHARISMA. The only requirement for the user will be to recognise the support of the European Commission in eventual publications.

#### **Web page**

Thanks to the work of Rui Bordalo and Suvi Leukumaavaara, E.C.C.O. has a new web page up and running and invite all to use it, keep in touch and contribute to the discussion Forum which can be located at <http://www.ecco-eu.org>.

Date: 30<sup>th</sup> April 2008

Susan Corr, E.C.C.O. General Secretary