



SIM COUNCIL MEETING
Thursday 2nd, April, 2009
Organization of American States (OAS)
Washington DC, USA

ATTENDENCE LIST

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Humberto Brandi	President, Inmetro
Claire Saundry	Permanent Technical Advisor, NIST
Ignacio Hernandez	PDC Chair, CENAM
Alan Steele	TC Chair
	JCRB Representative, NRC
Katalin Deczky	on behalf of NORAMET Coordinator, NRC
Ruben Verdugo	SURAMET Coordinator, INTN
Jose Dajes	ANDIMET Coordinator, Indecopi
Hernando Florez	CAMET Coordinator, Cenamep
Ed Nemeroff	NCSLI Representative
Oscar Harasic	Executive Secretariat
William Anderson	QSTF Chair

Observers

Catherine Pognat	OAS
Clovis Baptista	OAS
Hector Nava Jaimes	CENAM

DRAFT Agenda:

Introduction and Welcome / Introducción y Bienvenida

2. Verification of Quorum / Verificación de Quórum

3. Approval of Agenda / Aprobación de Agenda

4. OAS FEMCIDI Project / Proyecto OEA FEMCIDI (Catherine Pognat)

5. Approval of the Minutes from previous Council Meeting /

Aprobación de la Acta de la Reunión Anterior del Consejo

6. Matters arising from the Minutes / Asuntos derivados de la Acta

7. Report on 2008 Budget / Informe sobre el Presupuesto de 2008

8. Definition of SIM Activities with the 2009 OAS Project/ Definición de las actividades del SIM con el Proyecto de la OEA 2009

9. Revision of SIM Bylaws / Discusión sobre los estatutos del SIM

10. **SIM Metrology School** / Escuela de Metrología del SIM
11. **General Assembly 2009** / Asamblea General 2009
12. **Report on JCRB Meeting** / Informe sobre la Reunion del JCRB (Alan Steele)
13. **IDB Funding for Central America and the Caribbean** / Apoyo del BID para America Central y Caribe (Oscar Harasic)
14. **Report on SIM-PTB Workshop on NMIs relations with Metrology Users** / Informe del Taller SIM-PTB sobre las relaciones de los NIMs con los usuarios de metrología (Hector Nava Jaimes)
15. Other Business / **Otros Asuntos**

Minutes:

1. Introduction and Welcome / Introducción y Bienvenida

President Humberto Brandi welcomed the Council members at the meeting.

Then, OAS S&T Director Clovis Baptista offered a welcome to SIM Council, emphasizing that there is a strong commitment to metrology in the OAS plan, and this is reflected in his Directorate's plan.

2. Verification of Quorum / Verificación de Quórum

Quorum was verified, 11 out of 12 members of the Council being present at the meeting.

3. Approval of Agenda / Aprobación de Agenda

The Agenda was approved with minor revision to order to accommodate some items.

4. OAS FEMCIDI Project / Proyecto OEA FEMCIDI

Catherine Pognat, from OAS, made a presentation in which she explained the project process within FEMCIDI. She singled out that there are eight priority areas within FEMCIDI, including Science and Technology. She explained that the current strategic plan was extended for a year and that metrology remains a high profile area, consisting of a strongly supported activity for OAS plan. The hemispheric aspect of the SIM project was emphasised as strength of the Project. Catherine also gave some information on the deadlines for project presentation: the draft proposal (full length) is to be submitted to OAS by October 31th. OAS will then review the proposal and make some recommendations. The final proposal incorporating OAS recommendations have to be submitted by December 15th, after which CENPES will review not later than February 15th.

Catherine Pognat commented on the 10% reduction to SIM budget what she explained that was due to budget constraints within FEMCIDI, which last year had a US\$1.3 M deficit, that had to be funded by the reserve fund. Because of that, this year no reserve can be accessible and therefore cuts were made almost across the board. Claire Saundry asked about the comment she received which explained the cut to be due to a lack of report on counterpart funds. Catherine explained, nevertheless, she believes that the cut on SIM budget was not made on this basis, but that CENPES comments were in the direction of recommending a higher profile to the counterpart funding. It can be noticed that a new table has been added to the Execution Plan template where explicit listing of the counterpart contributions must be made, noting that both cash and in-kind contributions are counted. This will help in future with the review process.

Catherine Pognat then informed that the final step in the project submission project is the analysis by the IACD Management Board, who holds a meeting to give a final approval no later than March 1st, so that projects can begin within a month. Agreement and execution plan are required to obtain the first budget disbursement.

The maximum length of a Project is of four years and US\$500k is the maximum amount per year, but this is not really available and hence requests at this level are not recommended.

Claire Saundry asked about the number of reports/proposals that have to be prepared all due together, eg at the end of December, what meant a lot of double work to be done. Catherine Pognat acknowledged that it could be examined within the OAS offices to ensure that no duplication of reporting effort is required; the follow-up reports tend to be lengthy, and a compressed version is required to enable the CENPES to make their decisions. Claire Saundry noted that we are on target with our new proposal for the SIM Project 2010-2014.

Catherine Pognat noted that the CENPES placed no restrictions on the execution plan, and so Claire Saundry would have full flexibility to deploy the budget received against priorities.

There was some discussion about disbursements and funding transfers. It was noted in particular that there is no mechanism to transfer money between countries, which is against the rules. This is the reason for including the General Assembly host country as a named budget holder in the execution plan, for example. There was news about the mechanisms for returning unused country account funds to the main coordinators, as well as indications that there is great flexibility at OAS on updating the Execution Plan to accommodate events being held.

5. Approval of the Minutes from previous Council Meeting / Aprobación de la Acta de la Reunión Anterior del Consejo

The minutes of the last Council Meeting, held in San Pedro Sula were approved. Some Council members informed they had not received the minutes, even though they were sent by Taynah Souza within one month after the meeting. This is due to the change in some of the Subregion Chairs, and more attention should be paid in this situation to avoid this same problem.

6. Matters arising from the Minutes / Asuntos derivados de la Acta

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

7. Report on 2008 Budget / Informe sobre el Presupuesto de 2008

Claire Saundry reported on the budget, noting that the project year has been extended by one month until May 2008 and that the new project year did begin on April 1 2008.

The new budget was cut by 10%, citing that we did not report the counterpart contributions from the member countries sufficiently. The matter has been explained by Catherine Pognat during her participation at this meeting, when she explained this cut was in fact due to budget restrictions of FEMCIDI.

8. Definition of SIM Activities with the 2009 OAS Project/ Definición de las actividades del SIM con el Proyecto OEA 2009

Claire Saundry showed the draft Project Execution Plan, including the funding set aside to provide the SIM portion of the Metrology School (US\$70k in second disbursement) and the General Assembly (US\$18k to Indecopi/Peru in first disbursement, remainder in second disbursement).

Hernando Florez noted that the Regional meetings should be scheduled throughout the year, matching the timing against the funds disbursements. This idea was supported.

Catherine Pognat confirmed that there is no longer a requirement that the three disbursements be equal, and supported the proposal shown by Claire Saundry.

Ruben Verdugo asked about the 10% reduction in budget and how this would impact the activities. Claire Saundry replied that we were not constrained as to reducing training (which was the case last year), and the slide shows how it was distributed in the draft execution plan – no reduction to legal metrology, US\$30k reduction spread through physical/chemical metrology, communications, training, etc.

9. Revision of SIM Bylaws / Discusión sobre los estatutos del SIM

Claire Saundry informed the Council that even though during the SIM General Assembly in Honduras more time was requested by SIM members so they could review the Bylaws and send their comments, no suggestion has been received so far. She then proposed that the SIM Secretary sends a message to all SIM members and ask for their comments within two weeks, after which an electronic voting will proceed. The Council supported her suggestion and passed on the following resolution:

CR 01/09: The SIM Secretary will circulate the current version to all member states one final time; members will be given two weeks to send their comments, after which they will be request to send a response with their vote to approve (yes/no); no response will be taken as consent.

The intention is to bring this longstanding project to a conclusion as soon as possible, noting that the approval by electronic mail is allowed due to the Resolution GA 04/08 from the last General Assembly held in San Pedro Sula.

10. SIM Metrology School / Escuela de Metrología del SIM

Alan Steele and William Anderson provided an update on the School, including the outcomes from the Technical Committee special meeting held in Rio de Janeiro in February.

Alan Steele also informed the Council that he had met Afrimets President, who got quite receptive with the possibility of having some Afrimets members participating at the SIM Metrology School.

Some other details about the proposal were discussed among the Council. Since Taynah Souza informed that if the support from ABC is approved they would afford both travel expenses and per diem, the Council agreed that it would be better if SIM could also afford both expenses items. The following resolution was approved by the Council:

CR 02/09: SIM will submit a proposal to the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) to seek for funds to hold the SIM Metrology School. To follow the same procedures taken by ABC, exceptionally for this particular occasion, SIM funds can be used to pay for both per diem and travel expenses of those participants supported by SIM.

Prof. Humberto Brandi also proposed to the Council that the venue of the SIM Metrology School could be Petropolis, a small town in the state of Rio de Janeiro, which is half an hour from Inmetro's laboratories and one hour from the main capital, Rio de Janeiro. Both the costs would be smaller and time saved for being nearer Inmetro. The Council supported the proposal and approved the following Resolution:

CR 03/09: The venue of the SIM Metrology School will be the city of Petropolis in Rio de Janeiro/Brazil.

Ed Nemeroff requested a letter from SIM informing the outline of the SIM Metrology School in order to ask for financial support from NCSLI and other possible sponsors.

11. General Assembly 2009 / Asamblea General 2009

Jose Dajes reported on the planning for the GA, informing the Council that Lima is the target city, with options for Cuzco as well. The originally scheduled week in September is a direct conflict with the next JCRB meeting (Kazan, Russia). Also to be scheduled around is the BIPM Directors' Meeting and the MRA 10th Anniversary Meeting in early October, plus the IMEKO General Assembly in first week of September (Lisbon, Portugal) and the ILAC meeting (Vancouver) in mid-October. After discussing about some possible alternatives, the Council decided to set the week of October 25-30 for the SIM General Assembly and related events, which will include a Council Meeting in the evening of Sunday October 25; GA will be Monday/Tuesday; other events will include QSTF, TC/PDC, Chemical Metrology WG, and a possible follow-up meeting on Metrology's Impact arising from the recent CENAM event.

Discussion on exhibits was held; it is a normal part of the GA now and Jose Dajes will work with Ed Nemeroff on support/logistics.

Discussion of special activities to celebrate 30th Anniversary was held; Hector Nava Jaimes was confirmed as Chair of this event; photos and history will be collected and used to build a special presentation; outreach to past presidents and emeritus members will be conducted.

12. Report on JCRB Meeting / Informe sobre la Reunion del JCRB (Alan Steele)

Alan Steele gave a verbal report. William Anderson will send the presentation he made at this occasion to Taynah Souza who will circulate it in conjunction with Alan Steele's unofficial meeting notes to Council. Alan Steele will forward the official minutes to the Council once they are available. He remarked that SIM has been showing a very good leadership at BIPM.

William Anderson made some comments on the QSTF meeting which was held in the beginning of the week.

13. IDB Funding for Central America and the Caribbean / Apoyo del BID para America Central y Caribe

Pedro Saenz, from the Inter-American Development Bank, joined the meeting for this agenda item. He works in the unit of Science and Technology at IDB and has been a close collaborator with OAS over the past two years to develop the proposal for supporting the Central American group. The project is now underway; IDB has a new organization; metrology has not been a focus area for IDB, so the joint effort with OAS has been essential to change this situation. There are three elements to the study: diagnostic to be constructed upon existing data and literature; strategy to be discussed with the centers, and hopefully Ministers (CENAM and NIST are already engaged; KRISS has agreed to supply information and lessons learned) to determine program elements; idea is to have complementary knowledge, workers, equipment, expertise in a way that seems viable to the partners themselves (noting that past top-down experiments have not always been successful). IDB, along with any other interested financial institutions, will then try to support activities that are identified by the project. There is an ICT (information and communications technology) component, eg for videoconferencing. There is an intention to explore a similar sort of effort in the Caribbean (Francisco Cabrera could not join us today), but that is only at the very earliest concept stage. The study will likely give the countries the opportunity to apply for loans to acquire equipment and new facilities to enable the creation of the metrology infrastructure appropriate to their economy.

Ignacio Hernandez asked about Belize and Pedro Saenz explained that the country is identified as part of the Caribbean, part of CARICOM.

Humberto Brandi asked if the focus is on scientific metrology, or whether legal metrology would also be included within the scope of the project. Oscar Harasic noted that it is mainly intended for scientific and industrial metrology for Central America; there was a note that the needs of the Caribbean would be identified separately, since they may be quite related to legal metrology. Mr Saenz indicated that there is a cooperation agreement in place with Korea in the area of science and technology; they are helping fund the project and are interested to see whether the Korean government model would work.

Ed Nemeroff offered to share the existing NCSLI questionnaire used for a US needs assessment, and which he personally adapted for use in four or five other contexts.

Hernando Florez, representative of Central American NMIs at this Council meeting, pointed out that there is a great difference between the needs that would be identified by the laboratory personnel and the message that would be delivered by the titular/administrative/governmental head of the NMI. Oscar Harasic then indicated that they are working to identify stakeholders on a country-by-country basis, including NMIs, trade associations and business. Ed Nemeroff indicated that a site visit as a follow-up to the written survey was essential to ensure that the information gathered was highly focused; they trained university students as interns for a study like this in Croatia. Humberto Brandi recommended a sector based approach. Pedro Saenz indicated that they were still formulating the approach and methodology; they have been informed by at least one participant country that there is sufficient diagnostics collected and therefore another survey would not be welcome; accessing this information does not seem to be particularly transparent, however, and IDB is seeking help in finding it to use in preliminary analysis.

14. Report on SIM-PTB Workshop on NMIs relations with Metrology Users / Informe del Taller SIM-PTB sobre las relaciones de los NIMs con los usuarios de metrología (Hector Nava Jaimes)

Hector Nava Jaimes made a presentation summarizing this successful event, which was a joint initiative SIM-PTB. He highlighted some of the joint impacts achieved by NMI-Industrial partnerships, especially where

NMIs reached out directly and pro-actively approaching companies to raise awareness, detect needs, participate in planning and training programs. Hernando Florez participated, and echoed the successful nature of the event in his comments. Taynah Souza also participated, and agreed that the broad spectrum of industry and applications made the event more meaningful. Oscar Harasic pointed out that there was great value in helping smaller NMIs to obtain an industrial driver that can be used to open the eyes of their governments on the practical and economic value of strategic investments in scientific and industrial metrology; the success of the Mexican MESURA program was a very positive roadmap on how to proceed, and was much more than a simple awareness seminar.

Humberto Brandi supported the initiative, emphasizing this kind of actions is very important as they try to show the intimate relation between metrology and industry.

15. Other Business / Otros Asuntos

Ed Nemeroff noted that there is an offer by Radiant Research, the manufacturer of widely used energy meters for legal metrology calibration, to donate a system to SIM. This item has a commercial value of US\$18k, and could be used as a training aid for the SIM Metrology School as well as for comparisons and proficiency testing in the region. The Council was very appreciative of this offer, and accepted Ed's willingness to act on SIM's behalf with the company. Ignacio Hernandez will be the local logistics contact.

Dianne Lalla-Rodrigues discussed the willingness to publish an article for the NCSLI Metrologist magazine on the topic of the SIM 30th Anniversary; she will work with Hector Nava Jaimes on this action.

Dianne Lalla-Rodrigues and Ed Nemeroff discussed the situation with paying for SIM booth space at the NCSLI meeting; for the 2009 conference, we are being given the booth at no cost, although the NCSLI has initiated a policy of charging its liaison members and wants to treat all partners equally. This action is left in Ed's hands to continue the dialog with the NCSLI BoD. Dianne Lala-Rodrigues has asked who will participate at NCSLI; Claire Saundry is sending Joy Foster to help with the booth on NIST funding, to handle logistics. NIST will pay the contract costs for the SIM booth (setup, table, curtains, etc.) and NIST paid for the new SIM booth design, production, and shipping.

Dianne Lalla-Rodrigues reported that she has been invited to be one of the "People Who Make a Difference" in an upcoming issue of NCSLI Metrologist.

Ruben Verdugo reported that at the next COPANT assembly, May 2009 in Dominican Republic, it is likely that the Director of INN (Chile) will assume the Presidency of COPANT; he proposed that discussions on joint funding applications, eg to OAS, take place. Claire Saundry noted that seeking funding is a worthy activity, but we are at risk within OAS if a separate metrology project is submitted. Oscar Harasic indicated that previous COPANT funded projects came under a different OAS directorate, which is reviewed by a different group of the CENPES, and as such it was not in a conflict situation with SIM; Catherine Pognat would be able to advise from the FEMCIDI perspective; Oscar Harasic will seek a contact name within the Commerce side of OAS to provide advice. Humberto Brandi was planning to attend the COPANT meeting, but now has a conflict due to a meeting in Paraguay; he asked if anyone else was planning to attend but nobody has made a commitment.

Claire Saundry reported a request from Angela Samuel of APMP about a similar desire to ensure that APEC proposals with a metrology or measurement theme should be coordinated with both SIM and APMP. She recommended that SIM should be in a position to endorse such proposals, rather than finding out about them after they have been submitted. Claire Saundry encourages these submissions, but emphasized the advantages of having a regional support.

Alan Steele raised the TC topic of SIM funding for participation in CIPM Consultative Committee and Working Group events, noting that there were a few historical examples where partial support was offered in the past and that there were also several examples where full funding came from the NMIs themselves. The TC asked for clear guidance from Council, perhaps a policy or a procedure on what funding, if any, would be deemed appropriate. Dianne Lalla-Rodrigues noted that travel simply to attend a meeting is not part of the charter, and that a training event would normally be required; she noted that there should not be an automatic or blanket approval. Claire Saundry noted that nations that are signatory to the Convention of the Metre have their

own obligations to the treaty or the MRA, and as such their expenses should not be considered a legitimate SIM expense. If somebody requests funding for this as a special training event, perhaps we should consider it on a case-by-case basis. This was also the opinion from Alan Steele, who pointed out that LATU paid for the participation of Claudia Santos at the CCM and its working groups. William Anderson indicated that Gabriella de la Guardia's travel to the JCRB Quality Forum was paid by SIM since it was viewed as a training and development opportunity for a potential future leader of the QSTF. Claire Saundry indicated that the new country-by-country counterpart reporting requirements for our OAS project facilitate and encourage us to report exactly this type of activity; in the latest execution plan, the total counterpart is very close to US\$2M.

CR 04/09: SIM funding will not be granted for participation in CIPM Consultative Committee or Working Group meetings. Special requests for support to participate in international meetings as a learning and development opportunity may be submitted and will be considered on a case-by-case basis, being granted only where the Council deems that the objective is in line with the SIM priorities.

Humberto Brandi spoke about the recent BioFuels meeting in Brussels, jointly organized by NIST, INMETRO, and the European Commission. In particular, there were many new aspects where metrological experience is limited – such as life cycle assessment. There are many challenges to face, and new thinking will be required.

Ruben Verdugo announced the Chilean government recently extended their funding project for force; this will be included in their country report so that it can be captured in our OAS reports.

Humberto Brandi congratulated the new members from the SIM Region elected CIPM: Willie May and Hector Nava Jaimes.

Humberto Brandi thanked Oscar Harasic for the hospitality of OAS in receiving the Council Members and also for NIST's invitation for lunch. He also thanked all Council Members for their participation.

The Next Council Meeting is set to Sunday July 26th at NCSLI in San Antonio, TX

Having no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Council Resolutions

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