

The Geological Society

PROFESSIONAL STANDING COMMITTEE

Meeting at Burlington House, at 2.00 pm on Wednesday 31 May 2006

MINUTES

Present: D Shilston (Chair), E Nickless, J Lewis, B Gaskarth, P Tyrologou, P Thorn, R Fortey, M Hart (South West R Grp), B Sansom (South East Grp), R Boning

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

D Manning, H Turner, A Carbray, M De Freitas, P Nathaniel, Central Scotland Grp, Thames Valley Grp, Yorkshire Grp, Northern Grp, Home Counties North Grp

2 **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

These were approved and signed.

3 **MATTERS ARISING**

Item 3 - Society for the Environment

P Nathaniel and P Thorn had not been able to write the article yet, but P Thorn said that it would be possible to do it for the August Geoscientist. The online ballot would run from August to September. P Thorn said that he had been contacted by the Society for the Environment and would send a copy of the letter to R Boning for information. PN, PT PT

4 **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

i CPD

D Selley would present a revision of the CPD webpages to the June F&V meeting.

The data report for the EurGeol CPD records had not been received yet so R Boning had not been able to send out acknowledgements or chase up those who had not submitted their CPD record yet.

ii Construction Skills Certification Scheme

Legal advice had been sought on the potential risk in changing the CGeol regulation. The advice received had been that the change did not present a significant risk provided our application procedures were sufficiently robust. Helen Edmonds would write a paper for the June Council meeting to ask Council to approve the change to the regulation.

Helen had sent an email to B Gaskarth to ask for his opinion on the claims that the current draft of the CSCS application makes regarding what is taught on accredited degree courses. B Gaskarth had not received this email, so R Boning would forward it to him. The next stage would be to widen the application so that it covered the NVQ elements as well as units, as requested by the CSCS panel. BG RB

E Nickless asked for how long a CSCS card was valid. It was thought that the cards are valid for five years, but this would be clarified and, if the CSCS application was successful, this would be made clear to any CGeol applicants who wished to apply for the card. RB

iii Working Group (National Occupational Standards for Surface Mineral Development)

J Lewis reported that two meetings of the Working Group had been held since the last Professional Committee meeting. At the last Working Group meeting the

National Occupational Standard (NOS) had been completed. Although the major companies had expected the NOS to be very technical, the Working Group had thought it should be broader in scope. The NOS had been sent off to the NOS ratification panel by EPIC (the training organisation for the quarry industry who had convened the Working Group). However, J Lewis had not seen the version of the NOS sent off and despite asking for a copy had not received one. It was agreed that D Shilston should write to the NOS panel to say that the Society understood that they had received a submission for a new NOS for Surface Mineral Development and to ask if there would be an opportunity for the Society to be consulted on its content. A copy of the letter would be sent to IMMM. DS

iv SiLC: Specialist in Land Condition

R Boning tabled a short report on the SiLC Professional and Technical Panel meeting on 8 May. At the meeting the SiLC PTP had proposed setting a target of 300-500 registered SiLC over the next few years. The Panel had also discussed developing the SiLC qualification to include a specialist qualification for individuals dealing with interpretation of geoenvironmental data. D Shilston would write to the SiLC secretariat to ask how the Society can help the SiLC PTP to achieve their aims. E Nickless suggested checking that the departmental responsibility for the consultation on brownfield strategy was still with the ODPM; there might only be a short period to respond to the consultation so the Society should be ready to do so. DS RB

E Nickless suggested that, as there seemed to be a trend towards increasing numbers of post-Chartered qualifications, the Society should consider setting up registers of areas of expertise. It was suggested that a working group be set up to consider this. R Boning reported that Nic Bilham was developing the online fellowship directory to include information on Fellows' skills and services offered if they gave permission for public access to this information. R Boning would check what was being planned and would report back. DS RB

v Endorsement of training courses

The endorsement scheme application documents had been revised. A revised version of the endorsement webpage with the new documents had been sent to the Web Manager and so would hopefully be up on the website soon. One application had been received under the new scheme and had been reviewed and was about to be approved. The new documents had been sent to one previously endorsed course organiser and needed to be sent to the others who had previously run endorsed courses. Details of the new scheme had also been sent to Imperial College and the University of Newcastle, but no response had been received yet. Ways to identify gaps in the provision of training courses were discussed. It was agreed to write to the Regional and Specialist Groups and also to put a call in the electronic newsletter. The possibility of the Society organising a course on communicating to the media for scientists was discussed, but it was suggested that other organisations ran such courses and this should be investigated first. RB

J Lewis asked if it would be possible to link the website events list with the CPD recording scheme, so that a Fellow who attended a CPD event listed on the website could easily get the details entered into their CPD record. R Boning would investigate if this would be possible. RB

The possibility of making CPD compulsory for CGeols was discussed. It was agreed that first we needed to be more successful in promoting what CPD is and why it is important. If compulsory CPD for CGeols was introduced, then inevitably it would lead to some being struck off for non-compliance, as happened with the European Geologists.

vi Registration of geotechnical professionals

D Shilston reported that there had been a misunderstanding between himself and John Perry, where John Perry had thought that he was waiting for a response from D Shilston before proceeding. D Shilston had confirmed that Council was supportive of the proposed scheme, but needed more information on the details before it could give final approval. A meeting with all the partners in the registration scheme had been set up to take matters further. DS

vii Engineering Geology Training Guide

D Shilston reported that the Engineering Group wished to make radical changes to the Training Guide, rather than the minor changes requested by the Training Guide Groupette. As an interim measure D Shilston proposed that the original Training Guide be put on the website as a pdf file. It was thought that there might also be draft Training Guides for contaminated land and hydrogeology. It was agreed that, if copies could be found, all should be put on the website with an accompanying explanation to say that all were work in progress and to invite comments. R Allington had sent a helpful email on the subject of the Training Guide and this would be circulated to the Committee. RB

5 CHARTERSHIP STRATEGY

D Shilston reported that J Lewis had agreed to lead a group to consider the chartership strategy. D Shilston and J Lewis would discuss setting up the group after the meeting. At present two sectors where there is low interest in the CGeol title are the oil and gas industry and the British Geological Survey. A new director had been appointed at the BGS and it would be important to build a strong relationship with the BGS in future. JL

6 ACCREDITATION PANEL

i Minutes of the meeting held 21 March 2006

The minutes were noted.

ii MSc accreditation

The email from B Gaskarth had been circulated. The cyber topic had supported the accreditation of MSc courses going ahead. Although NERC reviews MSc courses, it considers the scientific content of courses, whereas the Society would look at the professional output of a course. M Hart reminded the Committee of the value of MRes courses, which have an intensive taught component and then a slightly longer research component than taught MScs. The proposal to accredit MSc courses was approved. B Gaskarth would prepare a paper to put the proposal to Council. BG

7 REGIONAL GROUP CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE

i Report of 26 May meeting

The report from D Manning was noted.

8 FELLOWSHIP AND VALIDATION COMMITTEE

There had not been a meeting since the last Professional Committee meeting. Mike De Freitas had taken over as Chair of F&V from Dick Selley. A meeting between Mike, Dick, D Shilston and R Boning was being arranged.

9 COUNCIL MATTERS

i Report of 22 March Council meeting

D Shilston reported that, now the Society was secure in its accommodation, work was going ahead with the refurbishment of Burlington House. The exterior refurbishment was being funded by the government and the refurbishment of the

Society's interior would be paid for by the Society itself. There were plans for a digital communication centre, providing electronic access to the Society's back catalogue of published material, which would be based in the library with material accessible on the internet. Plans for the bicentenary celebrations were progressing well. GeoScienceWorld, the journal aggregate of which the Society is the only non-US partner, was performing well.

10 **EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF GEOLOGISTS**

i Report of EFG Council meeting 19-21 May

The report from R Allington was tabled. E Nickless thought that the Society should liaise with the EFG and IGI to see if their CPD schemes could be more closely aligned.

11 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

i IAEG 2006

This would be held on 6-10 September in Nottingham.

ii Careers Day

The draft programme had been circulated. The aim had been to try and have a better balance of speakers in terms of age and gender. It was asked if it would be possible to repeat some of the morning speakers in the afternoon, for the students who had a long way to travel to the event who might miss the morning talks. D Shilston would investigate this. DS

iii Eurocode – Soil and Rock description

An email from Adrian Collings was tabled. The site investigation industry was concerned that following the publication by the BSI of European Standards dealing with soil and rock description, the BSI had listed BS5930:1999 as partially superseded without the intended National Annex being identified as being appropriate for use in the UK. A working party was being set up to address this concern. D Shilston would discuss this with John Perry, Chair of the Engineering Group. DS

12 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

29 September 2006 (NB The date agreed at the meeting had to be changed to this date subsequently – apologies.)

5 December 2006

7 March 2007

All to be preceded by Regional Groups Co-ordination Committee meetings in the morning.