



## ED REPORT | JOHANNESBURG 2013 | COUNCIL | 2011-2014

### Overview

There are several reasons for having a permanent Secretariat for FIT, first of all there is a need for an administrative hub to ensure a “central” base for the administrative activities, secondly the Secretariat is also there to provide strategic advice for the EC and Council. .

The aim of the report is to give Council an overview of activities in the Secretariat, since the last Council meeting in Oslo in March 2013 .

### Administration

Support for President, Council and EC is as important as ever. First of all it means preparing agendas for EC-meetings and ensuring the follow-up. With the high frequency of EC meetings the number of decisions to implement have evidently increased. Requests from the inbox are sent on to the President/EC as appropriate with a recommendation for action or supporting documentation. The President and the Secretariat regularly discuss ongoing business and the actions required to deal with day-to-day questions.

2014 is a Congress year which shows on the timesheet with an ever increasing number of hours as the SC comes closer. The federation works in cycles of three years. At least 18 months before the next Congress preparations start. The secretariat has been working closely both with the BDU conference secretariat (Norma Kessler and Wolfgang Baur ) for practical issues (venue, hotels, etc) and with the programme committee for the selection of proposals for the conference. The involvement of the secretariat has ensured a high level of information on the progress of preparations and has made planning, if not easy, then smooth.

### Statistics

A total of about 10,000 mails went through the inbox/outbox in 2012, and this figure was equally high for 2013. Communication is maybe the most important issue for the federation. Mass mailings on different issues, newsletters, FIT Flash, FIT INFO and Translatio are all sent out through the Secretariat, sometimes also for FIT Europe. Yet, there seems to be an ever increasing wish for more information and a need for cascading of information from Council to Regional Centres to members and vice-versa . Over the last couple of years a number of initiatives have been implemented in order to involve members in the life of the federation and make communication more interactive. The poster competition and the competition for postcards/posters for the anniversary is one example.

It goes without saying that a virtual secretariat mainly communicates electronically both for invoicing and distribution of e-newsletters (FIT INFO). In 2013 eight issues of FIT INFO were sent out. SurveyMonkey was also used to open the discussion about the Organizational Development initiative

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to all members. We are still in the experimenting phase for setting up surveys and involving members this way, so it has been valuable to receive feedback on how to adapt it for the future. The tool is quite intuitive although it does take some time to set up bilingual questions and lists of addresses. In the next stage reminders have to be sent out, addresses corrected and updated and results finally computed. Not all members are familiar with using the tool and the secretariat is pleased to provide guidance. Pdfs with the survey questions are provided when member associations need to consult with other members or their board. However, if they chose to answer directly in the pdf the answer is not computed automatically with the rest of the answers and statistics end up being incomplete. Sending out links to the survey will make it impossible to send targeted reminders. The tool is valuable to get direct feedback from members and although the response rate is far from 100% it is substantially higher than if documents were sent out. Recently the Education and Professional Training Committee sent out a survey, closing at the end of March, with a number of open-ended questions. The results will be distributed to Council when the Committee has finalised its report. Since mid-February 2012, Denis Bousquet is in charge of updating the FIT calendar. The calendar depends on the input received and is far from comprehensive. It seems that other calendars are struggling with the same problems, furthermore the calendar requires several clicks and there is no RSS feed. The number of events for translators – especially in academics – is very large and they are distributed through different channels.

#### Time:

Below is a table showing time management in the secretariat with figures for 2011, 2012 and 2013 (not all details are included, so it does not sum up)

	2011	2012	2013
Congress	15%	1%	10%
Support for EC/Council/President/Sec.Gen Incl co-ordination of committees in 2012	15%	27%	20%
Membership (incl. inbox)	31%	32%	25%
Financials incl. invoicing	16%	9%	12%
Administration	2%	5%	7%

The secretariat is a virtual service to Council, members and the general public and can be undertaken from any location with a good internet connection. Although the secretariat is virtual, the underlying administration still has to be transparent and “documented” as well as provide a storage where documents can be saved, searched and retrieved. The current system is based on my computer and interaction between Council members in yahoo groups. It is my ambition to look into a more viable solution on the other side of Congress.

Since the Council meeting in Oslo FIT no longer has an address in Basel and only uses the “mailbox” in Paris. Paper mail sent by the bank goes to the address there and they scan and send an email.

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Old editions of Babel, Translatio/Translatio Bibliography and old proceedings from past Congresses) have been transferred to the library of the Faculty of Translation in Geneva. The next step of digitalizing old records from EC and Council meetings and transfer them to a Cloud-based archive or an external harddisk has not yet been implemented. First of all the funding has to be ensured, then existing records must be categorised and archived and then handed to a provider for digitizing, this is all a major project which cannot be undertaken in a Congress year and may even run over several years, also for budgetary reasons.

### Looking forward

For the next twelve months I see the following priorities:

- Support for present and coming President, Council and EC
- Congress in Berlin 2014
- Review of the administrative system for FIT

### Conclusion

The conclusion for this year does not differ much from the previous years: the activities of the Secretariat span from simple, administrative tasks such as updating contacts to strategic thinking and advice for FIT. In between there are many mundane tasks requiring a large proportion of the time allocated.

I see the secretariat as a support for the EC/Council team. I take this opportunity to thank you for great co-operation.

Basel, 18 March 2014

**Jeannette Ørsted**