



Sydney 2010 UNITY - People and Practice



Many ISV members are familiar with the International Federation of Surveyors – FIG (Fédération Internationale des Géomètres). The striking, red logo and foreign acronym immediately brings to mind the profession’s global connections and our role, literally, in the world of surveying.

For some, FIG conjures up images of a wealth of world-class presentations, dealing with issues that impact on the profession, or chewing the fat with industry leaders, boffins and other surveying professionals over coffee. For others, FIG evokes happy memories of

the 1994 FIG International Congress held in Melbourne and of new friends made around the world.

Of those without detailed knowledge of FIG and its operations, some express an abstract pleasure in being part of the broader community of surveyors and knowing that endeavours to advance the profession are being co-ordinated in such a forum.

But what is FIG all about anyway?

From the website (www.FIG.net), FIG notes its foundation in 1878 in Paris. It describes being a federation of national associations; the only international body that represents all surveying disciplines. It is a UN-recognised non-government organisation (NGO) and aims to ensure that the disciplines of surveying, and all who practise them, meet the needs of the markets and communities that they serve. It realises its aim by:

- promoting the practice of the profession
- encouraging the development of professional standards
- supporting international collaboration for the progress of surveying in all fields and applications.

FIG outlines its activities as: “governed by a plan of work which is regularly reviewed against a longer-term strategic plan. The current plan of work focuses on the surveyor’s response to social, economic, technological and environmental change and the particular needs of countries in economic transition. FIG also recognises that markets for surveyors’ services are constantly changing. The plan accordingly

lays emphasis on strengthening professional institutions; promoting professional development; and encouraging surveyors to acquire new skills and techniques so that they may be properly equipped to meet the needs of society and the environment.”

FIG’s technical work is led by ten commissions:

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| Commission 1 | – Professional Practice |
| Commission 2 | – Professional Education |
| Commission 3 | – Spatial Information Management |
| Commission 4 | – Hydrography |
| Commission 5 | – Positioning and Measurement |
| Commission 6 | – Engineering Surveys |
| Commission 7 | – Cadastre and Land Management |
| Commission 8 | – Spatial Planning and Development |
| Commission 9 | – Valuation and the Management of Real Estate |
| Commission 10 | – Construction Economics and Management |

The commissions prepare and conduct the programme for FIG’s international congresses, held every four years, and annual working weeks, held in the intervening years.

But FIG offers so much more to practising surveyors. For instance, FIG congresses provide unique opportunities to step out of the daily rigours of delivering projects and managing a business. Exposure to a hot bed of new ideas, cutting edge technology and innovative practices may just give you useful insights that improve your business and professional life. And sharing experiences with other professionals over a quiet beer is good for the soul.

The scope of FIG working groups and the mix of professionals from across the industry means that every surveyor - from students to graduates, LSs and company principals - can derive significant benefits and invaluable experiences from attending an FIG Congress.

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Patron
Professor David de Kretser, AO,
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