

EDITOR'S ARTICLE

An International Association and an International Newsletter?

SOME time ago, I was asked by a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of the *Journal of Structural Geology* whether I would consider starting an International Association of Structural/Tectonic Geologists. I thought about this, but did nothing until another member of the EAB made the same suggestion more recently. This prompted me to think about the possibilities of forming an Association with a Newsletter, to put some initial ideas together, and to seek some preliminary reactions. I asked for views on (a) having an International Newsletter published as a short end-section of the *Journal of Structural Geology*, (b) forming an International Association of some kind, and (c) arranging with Pergamon Press that members of the Association might subscribe to *JSG* at a reduced personal rate.

From the responses so far, there appears to be strong support for creating an *informal* International Association, but fewer people in favour of a *formal* Association (i.e. with membership fees, an elected committee and officers, and for the purpose of organizing international conferences). Most have commented that a Newsletter bringing together information from the many regional and national groups would be valuable, and that its publication in *JSG* (so long as it did not compete with the science) would provide the best and most economical way of reaching the widespread international community.

I should like to thank all those who have commented and advised me so far, especially those who have offered support by agreeing to form an advisory *Backing Committee*. These comments have allowed me to refine the initial ideas into three proposals, outlined below. These are simply *initial proposals* which I should like to launch for world-wide consideration, and will be subject to your responses and suggestions.

Please photocopy this article and the following form and circulate to as many colleagues as possible, so that these proposals can reach the widest possible audience and are not just restricted to subscribers to *JSG*.

PROPOSAL 1: AN INTERNATIONAL NEWSLETTER IN THE JOURNAL

As the first step towards an International Association, I propose a short final newsletter section in the *Journal of Structural Geology*, initially twice per year. Readers will already be familiar with the annual Diary (see Volume 12, Number 7), which attempts to bring together summary details on all forthcoming conferences in structural geology and tectonics. The News-

letter will be able to expand this idea by providing fuller details of meetings, and much more.

I hope to have three main sources of material for the Newsletter section. First, all secretaries or representatives of national tectonic groups are invited to contribute information on their group, on a regular basis. In time, we may be able to establish a set of 'National Correspondents'. Secondly, individuals are welcome to contribute details of conferences or cooperative projects planned, and other items such as short reports and comments. Thirdly, news on the progress of the International Association will be reported regularly (see Proposal 2). Any item which serves to inform readers about structural geology and tectonics, world-wide, will be considered suitable for the Newsletter.

I am willing to act as editor for the Newsletter during its initial 'setting up' period, but with a view to finding a separate Newsletter Editor in the longer term. The Newsletter will be designed and edited to be a short informative end-section of *JSG* with separate pagination, and will therefore not compete with the main scientific contents. The Publisher, Pergamon Press, will provide a number of reprint copies of each Newsletter for distribution to secretaries of the contributing national groups, and to countries where *JSG* is not widely available. However, a large amount of separate mailing is not envisaged, because of the administrative and secretarial costs (see below).

I should be pleased to receive items for the first Newsletter, right away. Please pass this invitation to representatives of your group, or country, and ask them to write to me.

PROPOSAL 2: THE ASSOCIATION

I should like to initiate an informal "*International Association of Structural/Tectonic Geologists*" (abbreviated *IASTG*), with two principal purposes:

- To encourage international communication among structural/tectonic geologists.
- To create an international *Directory* of structural and tectonic geologists.

I propose the following initial procedures.

(1) Membership of the *IASTG* will be open to all interested individuals, for no membership fee. Enrolment will be one-off, rather than annually, on the following form (also available from me).

(2) I shall handle the enrolment of members, initially, and create a membership data base.

(3) Members will have the option for their names, addresses, telephone and fax numbers, and research interests to go into a printed *Membership Directory*. This will be made available to members for purchase, at a price to cover costs.

(4) The IASTG will be informal, initially, with no bureaucracy or formal committee of officers. The panel below have agreed to be a *Backing Committee* to all the proposals in this article, and to maintain a supervision of what follows, including finances. This should allay fears that it is a one-person venture.

(5) According to the views of enrolling members (see form), the IASTG may apply to become an Affiliated Organization to the *International Union of Geological Sciences* (IUGS).

(6) IASTG communication will be through the Newsletter in the *Journal of Structural Geology* (see proposal 1). Details on numbers of members, sponsors and progress of the Directory will appear in forthcoming Newsletters.

PROPOSAL 3: AN INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION SUBSCRIPTION FOR JSG

Members of the new International Association of Structural/Tectonic Geologists will be eligible to take out a subscription to the *Journal of Structural Geology* at a special reduced IASTG Member rate. This will apply, world-wide, and will not depend on the number of members per country. Enrolling members will be sent full details on how to take out the IASTG Member subscription when they receive their membership receipt. This is a special rate for named individuals only, and is, of course, subsidized by the regular institutional subscriptions.

Those who already subscribe at member rates through the Geological Society of London, the Geological Society of America, or the Geological Society of Japan, are advised to retain their current subscriptions, as these are

expected to remain slightly lower than the new world-wide IASTG rate at present.

FINANCING THE IASTG AND NEWSLETTER

For many reasons, I believe there should be no fee to individuals for IASTG membership. A fee, however small, would debar a large section of potential world membership, and discourage many others. Moreover, collecting annual fees in all sorts of currencies would be an arduous and costly administrative task which I could not take on.

By producing the Newsletter in the *Journal*, we shall be able to avoid the kinds of costs normally associated with producing and mailing newsletters. Pergamon Press are willing to cover the initial expenses of putting the three proposals above into action. However, some capital will be needed soon to cover secretarial costs of setting up and maintaining the IASTG membership register, producing the Directory, and handling correspondence associated with the Association and its Newsletter. I should therefore like to establish an *IASTG Fund*, and appeal for sponsorship from national groups and societies, and also from industry.

At the time of completing this article, several regional groups have already agreed to making one-off donations to help to establish the IASTG. I hope that this article will prompt more sponsorship, particularly from industrial corporations which employ structural/tectonic geologists. Please contact me as soon as possible, if you or your organization are able to provide some sponsorship. Sponsors will be acknowledged in the Newsletter.

I look forward to receiving your response on the following form, and welcome comments and suggestions on any of the matters raised in this article.

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8 September 1990

BACKING COMMITTEE

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