

Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications

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Key words: Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications; Globalisation; Free Movement of Professionals.

SUMMARY

The global marketplace for surveying activities is a reality. However, surveying education and qualifications remain within national boundaries. Since 1998, FIG has been working to investigate and develop a procedure whereby the professional qualifications in one country can be recognised in another country. Such recognition takes the form of accepting that professional qualifications gained in one country can be recognised in another country as equivalent to those available in another country and thus used to gain the local professional designation. Such a system of mutual recognition of professional qualifications is approved by the World Trade Organisation and recognised by FIG in its 2002 *Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications* (Publication 27).

This paper outlines the principles which underlies the process of mutual recognition of professional qualifications and charts the external drivers and barriers which affect the development of the process of mutual recognition of professional qualifications, the alternative approaches to achieving the free movement of professionals across national boundaries, and the FIG approach and proposed regulations for implementation at the level of national associations.

This paper represents the final report of Commission 2's Working Party 2.3 on Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Globalisation of markets for professional services is a reality, and professions must respond accordingly. Surveying, as a profession, is fragmented. It retains its national origins, both in terms of education, regulation, marketing and, to a large extent, client base. There is an argument for retaining such a national structure. The majority of surveyors are educated to fulfil the needs of a local/national market, and there are many differences between the needs of different markets across the world. The sheer variety of specialisms, skills, solutions to common problems enriches us as a profession, especially when we come together to share our experiences and to learn from each other. Nevertheless, there are pressures on us to present ourselves as a single, unified, coherent profession, to meet global challenges which threaten our existence as a profession. These include the evolution of our skills in the light of changes within the marketplace for professional services, the marketing of our profession to global consumers and the recruitment of quality students for the future survival of the profession. (Mahoney et al., 2007)

Surveyors have skills which are vital to meeting many of the challenges faced by the world today. There is no human activity which does not involve the use of land, in its broadest sense. Issues such as climate change, poverty, hunger, homelessness, liberalization of (previously closed) markets, energy-efficient buildings and construction processes – and all these can be encapsulated into the term “sustainability” - demand solutions based on the skills which surveyors possess and which must be used to the benefit of everyone if we are to achieve a more equitable and harmonious existence – indeed, if we as a species are to survive at all.

As a profession, we need to respond positively to the range of global challenges and one of the important ways to demonstrate and achieve a truly global profession is by ensuring that our skills are transportable across national boundaries and that the mechanisms are in place to achieve the free movement of professionals with the minimum amount of bureaucratic barriers. Mutual recognition of professional qualifications is just such a system. It has been recognized by both the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and at regional levels by the European Commission and within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations¹ (ASEAN) (Teo, 2006) as an appropriate means of securing the free movement of professionals.

This paper discusses the principles underlying the process of the mutual recognition of professional qualifications and the FIG approach (Section 2). Section 3 outlines the drivers and barriers to successful implementation, some of which are within our own professional

¹ ASEAN comprises Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei Darussalam, Vietnam, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Cambodia.

structures. Section 4 considers alternative approaches and evaluates them in comparison with mutual recognition; and Section 5 outlines the role for professional associations and Section 6 provides the conclusions to the paper.

2. PRINCIPLES OF MUTUAL RECOGNITION

Mutual recognition of professional qualifications is a device for achieving the free movement of professional across national borders. It allows a qualified surveyor who seeks to work in another country to acquire the same title as that held by surveyors who have qualified in that country, without that individual having to re-qualify. Thus it relies on the commonalty of the professional activities involved in different countries and, therefore, it relies on the similarity in both the content and level of professional education and training within the professions, as practices in other countries.

It ignores the processes underlying the professional qualification and does not require changes in the structure or content of professional education or the process of acquiring professional qualifications anywhere. Instead it relies on the fact that the individual has qualified as a professional surveyor, and that such a qualification should be recognized in other countries.

Mutual recognition of professional qualifications does, however, require the similarity of professional activities which comprise a “corresponding profession” (within the WTO/EU jargon). Thus, it is necessary to investigate the professional activities which comprise the surveying profession, as practiced by the individual in the country where the professional qualifications were gained (the “home” country) and ensure that they are similar to those practiced by the professional association in the country to which the individual is applying for membership (the “host” country).

It is not the process, which is tested, nor should it be. It is the quality of the outcome of the process, measured against objective national criteria (threshold standards) which determines whether a surveyor has achieved the appropriate professional education and experience in the “home country” to be recognized in the “host country”. (Enemark & Plimmer, 2002: 5)

According to the WTO (1997) and mirrored by the EU, the principle of mutual recognition of professional qualifications requires certain pre-conditions:

- degree-level entry to the profession;
- appropriate regulation of the profession in the “host” country;
- a “corresponding profession” i.e. one where a substantial number of professional activities practiced in the “home” country comprise the profession as practiced in the “host” country;
- an adaptation mechanism to allow a surveyor to make up any deficiencies in the content and scope of the professional education and training of migrants; and
- a willingness on the part of the “host” country and its bodies which award professional qualifications/licenses to accept the principle of mutual recognition, to respect the

quality of professional education and training in other countries, and to trust the professionalism of those qualified surveyors who seek to gain the benefits of the mutual recognition process.

Thus, the process requires a comparability of the profession of “surveying” in different countries, based on the similarity of the professional activities involved. Where there is a significant variation in the nature and content of the professional activities, then there is no corresponding profession and mutual recognition principles cannot be applied. Where there is merely a minor variation in professional activities, then the individual seeking to work in the “host” country can undergo an adaptation mechanism – either a test or a period of supervised work experience – in order to demonstrate competence in this new area of professional work.

It should be remembered that mutual recognition of professional qualifications is not about getting a job. It is clearly advantageous (indeed, some might argue fundamental) for anyone who wishes to acquire the professional qualifications of that country, to gain employment and thereby relevant professional experience of practice in that country. However, the principles of mutual recognition do not relate to gaining employment; they establish the fundamental requirements for gaining the professional qualifications of another country where the profession of surveying is regulated. Nor does it mean that an applicant from one country is automatically accepted as a member of the surveyor profession in another country. It does not, for example, prevent an applicant being required to fulfil other admission requirements, such as adherence to a code of ethics, or holding appropriate Professional Indemnity Insurance cover. Basically, the principles of mutual recognition ensure that an applicant cannot be rejected on the grounds of inadequate qualifications.

The principles are seen as implementing the GATS (Article VI: 4) which seeks to ensure “. . . *that measures relating to qualification requirements and procedures, technical standards and licensing requirements do not constitute unnecessary barriers to trade in services . . .*” and, to this end, the Council for Trade in Services has developed ‘disciplines’ “. . . *to ensure that such requirements are:*

- *based on objective and transparent criteria, such as competence and the ability to supply the service;*
- *not more burdensome than necessary to ensure the quality of the service;*
- *in the case of licensing procedures, not in themselves a restriction on the supply of the service.”* (Honeck, 2000)

2.1 Disciplines

The “disciplines” which WTO has established relate to transparency; licensing requirements; licensing procedures; qualification requirements (defined to include education, examination, practical training, experience and language skills); qualification procedure (which imply the opportunity for an adaptation mechanism to make up for a perceived deficiency in professional qualifications); and technical standards (only legitimate objectives).

Within its endorsement of the principles of mutual recognition, the WTO recognises “bi-lateral mutual recognition agreements” as interim devices to be used until a global system of mutual recognition of qualifications, based on the information above, can impose a series of ‘disciplines’ by legislation which will apply to all professions. Consider their similarity with reciprocity agreements, discussed below in 4.3.

Regulatory disciplines in professional services are significant because they help to ensure greater transparency, predictability and irreversibility of policies both for professional bodies and for their stakeholders. In addition, the concept of mutual recognition has the potential to enhance professional competence across the world, based on the implicit improved communication and mutual understanding between professional associations, about the nature, content, standards and ethical values underpinning the professions as practices across the world.

2.2 The FIG Approach

The FIG Policy Statement on Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications is contained in the FIG publication (Enemark & Plimmer, 2002) and is available on the FIG website (www.fig.net); thus:

“The International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) recognises the importance of free movement of surveyors in a global marketplace. The mutual recognition of professional qualifications provides a means whereby professional qualifications held by individual surveyors can be recognised by individual professional organisations as comparable to those acquired by their own national surveyors.

FIG will promote the principle of mutual recognition of professional qualifications by:

- *Encouraging communication between professional organisations to ensure a better understanding of how surveyors acquire their professional qualifications in different countries;*
- *Developing with professional organisations a methodology for implementing mutual recognition for surveyors;*
- *Supporting professional organisations where difficulties are identified in achieving mutual recognition, and encouraging debate at national government level in order to remove such difficulties; and*
- *Working with external organisations (such as the WTO) in order to achieve mutual recognition in both principle and practice of professional qualifications for surveyors world-wide.”* (FIG, 2002: 15)

As a policy statement, it was adopted by the FIG Council at its meeting in Seoul, 2001 and endorsed by the FIG General Assembly at the FIG XXII Congress in Washington DC in 2002.

However, the statement itself needs implementation and this takes commitment and effort on the part, not only of FIG but also on the part of national associations which have very specific

responsibilities outlined within the statement. There are, however, conflicting external drivers and barriers to implementation.

3. EXTERNAL DRIVERS AND BARRIERS

There are a number of identifiable drivers and barriers to consider in relation to achieving the process of mutual recognition.

3.1 Drivers

Some of the 'Drivers' have already been mentioned – globalization (including the global marketplace for surveying activities); the global problems facing the world which surveyors are ideally placed to provide solutions; more specific pressures include regional legislation, such as that currently under negotiation within the European Union, and the recommendations of the WTO.

The necessary structures to implement a process of mutual recognition of professional qualifications already exists. There is a well-structured system of university-based professional education and a process of licensing arrangements or a range of professional bodies which administer the process of professional qualifications and practicing standards. In addition, professional associations are increasingly recognising the demands of their members to develop and implement processes whereby mutual recognition can achieve the free movement of professionals necessary to respond to the increasingly global marketplace for surveying services.

Looking more long-term, there is a need to develop an attractive and modern profession which responds to the demands of potential young recruits and there is evidence that one of the characteristics of such a profession is the opportunity to work anywhere in the world that is one of the expectations of the youth of today, and reflects the increasingly migratory nature of the global population. (McGrath, 2006) The process of mutual recognition can contribute to ensuring that surveying has an added attraction for future professionals.

3.2 Barriers

The barriers to achieving successful implementation of a mutual recognition of professional qualifications for surveyors are not insurmountable, but they are disparate and therefore may not be easily overcome. Some are more apparent than real and to some extent, they are within our own control.

Crucially issues of education, professional competencies and processes of achieving professional status across the world remain to a large extent focused on national or local needs and are poorly understood outside of their spheres of influence. National professional associations seem to focus more on dealing with local issues of qualification rather than addressing such issues within a global arena; and academic institutions appear to respond to the needs of local or national employers and do not seem to educate for the global

marketplace. Educational establishments have a significant role to play in preparing for a global profession by increasing awareness of international issues and how they affect other jurisdictions and by encouraging their students to think and develop globally.

Within professional associations, it seems that there are bureaucratic difficulties which demonstrate that the principle of globalization for professional services takes second place to procedural practices – there is, frankly, evidence of limited enthusiasm for a globalization of surveying services, whether or not based on the principle of mutual recognition. This culture of, at best, being reactive rather than pro-active must change if surveyors are to be seen as a global resource, capable of responding to the global challenge by apply their professional expertise to the global issues.

We remain a fragmented profession and, while that has certain advantages, it also leaves us vulnerable to being misunderstood, unrepresented and overlooked within the world policy-making arena. It also means that there are few opportunities for us to learn from the experiences of colleagues. As part of this issue, in at least some parts of the world, we are sidelined as far as national and international policy is concerned, being perceived as a lobby group rather than as policy makers. As Holger Magel said when he addressed an audience at the RICS Christmas lecture in London, in 2004, it is vitally important that surveyors engage with politicians, both to influence policy and to demonstrate how the surveyor profession can help resolve the issues which nations face. While some surveyors (either individually or through their national associations) are able to achieve this level of influence at the political and policy-making level, most are not. The success of the ASEAN negotiations demonstrates how effective political influence can be in achieving the free movement of professionals.

One of the problems is that there is no external driver forcing cohesion on the surveying profession. The profession faces a range of critical and urgent questions (Mahoney et al., 2007), one of which is the apparent mis-presentation of our skills within UN documentation which categorise the range of occupational and activity-based data often used to appoint appropriate people or organisations to undertake work. Two of these documents which show how surveyors and their professional skills are represented to the international community are two UN documents - The International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) last updated in 1988, and the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC Rev. 3) the current version being published in 1990. Neither of these shows the full range of surveying activities, particularly given the rapid development of technology with the surveying profession. Within these documents, “surveyors” are shown as having a fragmented and disparate range of activities with no cohesion, focus or single identity. Indeed, ‘surveying’ is not identified as a single profession, the full range of twenty first century surveyors’ activities are not currently described in the existing text, nor are surveyors identified as have the appropriate skills to deal with other relevant activities listed.

This is a serious omission which has huge implications for how the international community perceives (or fails to perceive) us. These documents are both in the process of being revised and it is vital for the survival of the profession that the expertise of the surveying profession is appropriately presented. Failure to achieve this will result in the surveying profession being

seen as increasingly irrelevant to the issues facing society; our expertise will be overlooked at an international level and, unless it is protected within national legislation, surveying work could be awarded to professions with inappropriate expertise, our role as influencers of policy eroded and the risks of significant and damaging errors hugely increased.

The most obvious barrier to the free movement of professionals is language, and this does not merely mean the spoken (or the written) word, but also the 'language' which governs our behaviour, our values and norms – in short our respective national cultures, which comprise a series of unwritten and often unconscious set of values and norms which underpin our perception of reaction to interpersonal relationships. Failure to understand and observe cultural norms can result in confusion, hurt and, at worse, perceived insult. There is evidence that culture divides us, both as individuals (as the products of our nations' upbringing) and also as surveyors (as the products of our professional specialisms).

In order to ensure the survival of our profession within a global market place, the process of mutual recognition of professional qualifications must also be underpinned by a recognition of our cultural similarities as well as our cultural differences in order to understand and accept that surveyors in different countries have different perceptions, as to the nature of professional practice and routes to qualifications, but that there is, within the surveying profession, a unifying culture which includes and defines us all. We must all move away from our parochial outlook and focus on those professional aspects which unite us and we must do this now, if we are to survive as a profession.

4. ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

Mutual recognition has not been the only model adopted to achieving global professions. Attempts have been made to harmonise the professional education and training of professionals as a means to demonstrating a common level of professional qualification; international certification has been considered; and reciprocity agreements popular. These are now compared with mutual recognition.

4.1 Harmonisation

Harmonisation involves achieving common professional education in every country, by ensuring that the same rules apply in each country, thereby setting a common standard for professional education. Prior to the introduction of the General Directive on the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications in the EU, attempts had already been made to harmonise the professional education for certain professions, and this allowed such professions as architects, general medical practitioners and veterinary surgeons to have their own sectoral directive as a basis for free movement. However, the harmonisation procedure is both difficult and time-consuming. The Architects' Directive took 17 years to agree before being adopted in 1985, and the Directive for Engineers, which had been under discussion since 1969, was abandoned in favour of the General Directive (which took effect in the UK in 1991), which set out merely principles to be adopted, rather than detailed profession-specific requirements.

Harmonisation within the EU means that, for example, an architect qualified in any of the Member States is able to perform that professional function in any other Member State, without having to undergo any further professional education or training. Should an architect (or any other professional to whom a sectoral (harmonisation) directive applies) decide to apply for membership of the professional organisation in another Member State, that applicant cannot be rejected on the grounds of inadequate qualification.

Unlike harmonisation, mutual recognition means that the same rules do not apply everywhere. Mutual recognition means accepting the standards which are the norm in other countries, based on mutual trust and the principle of the comparability of professional education. Thus, each country retains its own process of professional education. Thus, mutual recognition has the advantages of respecting and retaining existing professional education and avoiding lengthy and difficult negotiations aimed at achieving a degree of commonality which, it can be argued, is inappropriate in professional education. (Gronow & Plimmer, 1992).

4.2 International Certification

International certification has been introduced within Europe as a means of ensuring that individual professionals demonstrate a common level of professional knowledge across a range of relevant subject areas. Thus, they involve the establishment of a whole raft of educational programmes suitable for professionals from a range of national backgrounds who are required to study and pass examinations.

International certification has the advantage of ensuring that common curricula and common standards are seen to be met by individuals. However, it must be questioned as to how attractive such a process is to professionally qualified individuals who have already undergone a rigorous and challenging programme of professional education in order to achieve professional status in their own country. Indeed, The European Group of Valuers' Associations (TEGoVA) has withdrawn its certification system in favour of a more flexible "Recognition of Valuation Practice" model, based on similar principles to those of mutual recognition, and endorsed by TEGoVA. (RICS, 2005)

4.3 Reciprocity Agreements

Reciprocity agreements are useful for achieving transfers of members between a limited number (normally two) professional associations located in different countries, based on both a clear need from their membership for reciprocity and the similarity of both the professional activities and the professional education and training which underpins qualification.

Experience of reciprocity agreements indicates that they work very well. Dialogue normally involves an exchange of information which precedes an investigation undertaken by both professional associations to establish the nature and level of professional education and the process for achieving qualification. The agreement requires either party to inform the other of any changes in the process and the agreement may be terminated by notice. The effect of the

reciprocity agreements is similar to that of the mutual recognition process, in that members from one professional association gain membership of the other professional association when they move and can be recognized as complying with the definitions of “bi-lateral mutual recognition agreements” approved by the WTO (refer Section 2, above).

One of the advantages of reciprocity agreements is that they tend to be driven by the membership who perceive a demand for cross-border migration. Because they are normally preceded by an exchange of relevant information, they are extremely useful in informing their correspondents about the nature and process of their professional education and training and routes to qualification. The drawback to reciprocity agreements is their selective coverage, so as devices for achieving a global profession, their effectiveness is limited.

5. PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

There is a major role for professional associations to play in ensuring that process of mutual recognition works effectively and efficiently for both their existing and potential members. A statement on the implementation of the FIG principles has been developed (Plimmer, 2006) which demonstrates how professional associations can establish a procedure for dealing with applications for membership under these principles.

5.1 Investigation

There are four matters which the professional organisation in the ‘host’ country must investigate prior to accepting the application of an individual for entry into the profession:

1. the surveying profession in the ‘host’ country must be a ‘corresponding profession’ i.e. a profession the pursuit of which in ‘home’ country includes a substantial number of professional activities comprised in the profession in the ‘host’ country;
2. the applicant must hold a professional qualification awarded after the a period of professional education and training which gives access to the surveying profession in the ‘home’ country; and
3. the duration of the professional education and training of the applicant is of a comparable number of years to that required in the ‘home’ country of a non-migrant applicant; and
4. the matters covered by the professional education and training of the applicant are substantially the same as those covered by the professional qualifications required of non-migrant applicants.

It is anticipated that where national associations agree to implement the principles of mutual recognition, there is already a high level of understanding regarding the nature of the profession of surveying undertaken in each jurisdiction.

Therefore, the establishment of a ‘corresponding profession’ within each country should be a matter which can be agreed early on in the process, so that professional organisations and their applicant members are clear as to which professional qualifications awarded in specified countries can benefit under the provisions of mutual recognition. The establishment of (2), (3) and (4) above should be a matter of fact evident on receipt of the application form.

The failure of a migrant to demonstrate either (1) or (2) above will render invalid an application to use the rights and privileges available under any agreement for the mutual recognition of professional qualifications. The failure of a migrant to demonstrate (3) and (4) above will not render invalid an application to join the profession in the ‘host’ country, but will result in the imposition of an appropriate adaptation mechanism (refer below).

It is, therefore, for the professional association in the ‘host’ country to establish whether the surveying profession in the “home” country is a “corresponding profession” and whether in each individual case, the matters covered by the professional education and training of the applicant differ substantially from those covered by the professional qualification required of non-migrant applicants.

5.2 Corresponding Profession

A “corresponding profession” (i.e. a profession the pursuit of which in another country includes a substantial number of professional activities comprised in the profession in the “host” country), requires that a professional organisation should be able to list the professional activities which comprise the surveying profession in that country. It is for the professional association to decide whether the absence of one or more professional competencies in the “corresponding profession” could be remedied by an adaptation mechanism. Thus, while it may be acceptable to make up deficiencies in a relatively minor or specialist surveying competence in a ‘host’ country, it may not be acceptable to make up a deficiency in a competence which is fundamental to the surveying profession in a ‘host’ country. Such matters are for the professional associations responsible for implementing the principles of mutual recognition to decide.

5.3 Adaptation Mechanism

Where the duration of the professional education and training of the applicant or the nature the matters covered by that individual’s professional education and training differ substantially from those covered by the professional qualification required of non-migrant applicants, then the “host” country can require the applicant to make up that deficiency, either by undertaking an adaptation mechanism. The EU model suggests either an adaptation period of work-based supervised experience and/or an aptitude test. Such adaptation mechanisms for making up deficiencies in qualification may also be appropriate where the nature of the surveying activities in the “home” country comprise one or several additional professional competencies than those required in the ‘host’ country.

For this purpose, an adaptation period is a period of professional practice under the supervision of a qualified member of the profession in the “host” country. The applicant may be required to undergo further training during that period. The performance of the applicant is the subject of an assessment and this can include a period of formal and assessed study. The detailed requirements of an adaptation period are determined having regard to the circumstances of each individual and it is implicit that the professional practice must cover the professional activities which have not been included in the individual’s previous professional education and training.

Similarly, an aptitude test is limited to the deficiencies in the professional knowledge of the applicant and has the aim of assessing the individual’s ability to pursue the profession of “surveying” in the “host” country. The test must also take into account the fact that the applicant is a qualified professional in another country and should be based on subjects which are:

- essential for the pursuit of “surveying” in the “host” country;
- covered by the professional qualification required of non-migrant professionals; and
- not already included in the applicant’s formal qualifications.

It should be remembered that those applicants are qualified professionals in their own countries and that the process of implementing mutual recognition should not involve testing or challenging the applicant’s professional competence or status in the “home” country. Having established that applicants are entitled to benefit under the rights available under the mutual recognition agreement, it is for the professional association in the “host” country to operate the provisions of mutual recognition in such a way that applicants are able to demonstrate that they have (or have not) adapted their professional skills to a different professional environment.

5.4 Preliminary Interview

If the application form provides all the relevant information which demonstrates that the individual holds the professional qualification required in another country for access to the profession of “surveying”, the professional organisation of the “host” country must accept that application form with no further requirements of the applicant. If the applicant does not comply with the conditions above, the application must be rejected. If there is any doubt that applicant is appropriately qualified (as discussed above) it is suggested that a preliminary interview should be held to establish whether the matters covered by the professional education and training of the applicant differ substantially from those covered by the “host” country’s own national applicants, and whether the regulated profession in the “home” Member State is indeed a “corresponding profession”. Where there is a substantial difference between the matters covered by the professional education and training of the applicant and those required of a local applicant or where the surveying profession in the “home” country is not a “corresponding profession”, the interview will need to identify those professional activities which have not been included in the applicant’s previous professional education and training and which must be included in the adaptation mechanism.

5.5 Further Consideration

It is fundamental to the successful operation of the free movement across technical barriers that those individual applicants who seek to gain qualifications under an agreement for the mutual recognition of professional qualifications do not benefit from more advantageous treatment nor suffer worse treatment than that required of applicants whose qualifications were obtained in the “host” country. Thus, if a professional association requires additional assurances regarding, for example, good character, solvency or other demonstrations of good standing from its own national applicants, then such assurances should be sought from (and provided by) all other applicants. Professional associations in the “home” country should agree to provide such assurances if requested in order to facilitate the process of mutual recognition of professional qualifications.

Thus, it is for professional associations to communicate and exchange relevant information with similar professional associations in other countries to and ensure that there is a clear understanding of all relevant aspects of the necessary professional competencies (including ethics), routes and pre-requisites to qualifications. Direct communication should be established which allows for an exchange of all relevant information, including the processes and information requirements necessary for implementation of mutual recognition procedures. Such organisations should also agree to work together to ensure an efficient and effective system of mutual recognition and to co-operate to encourage other relevant organisations to support them in this endeavour.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Mutual recognition relies on the willingness of countries to respect the principle of free movement across technical barriers and is based on mutual trust, the comparability of the level of university studies and the similarity in nature and competencies embodied within the profession of surveyors, within the countries which agree to adopt and implement its principles. The goal of the free movement of surveyors to respond to our global clients and their needs is of supreme importance, given the value of the resource which is at the heart of our expertise. We all have a responsibility to ensure that our profession is equipped to deal with the global problems and this means a global profession. There may be other ways of achieving a global profession, but mutual recognition of professional qualifications builds on our existing structures without requiring us to create a single leviathan organisation, or to lose our diversity of skills; or that competent professionals re-qualify. The FIG policy is simple in principle and it is practical, having been tested at the level of professional associations.. It is both achievable and realistic and, as a process, its acceptance at government level has been demonstrated.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In 1998, at the Brighton Congress, FIG established a Task Force to investigate Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications as a response to the globalization of surveying services and the pressures to provide a framework for the free movement of surveyors. Stig

Enemark chaired the Task Force and I was asked by Tom Kennie to undertake the role of Secretary. In 2000, funding was secured from CLGE and a Seminar held in Delft, at which delegates from 20 countries provided data about how surveyors became qualified within their countries. A joint CLGE/FIG publication *Enhancing Professional Competence of Surveyors in Europe* was published in 2001, based in part on the outcome of that seminar.

In 2002, in Washington DC, FIG published *Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications* (publication 27), which detailed an FIG concept of and framework for the implementation of a process of mutual recognition of professional qualifications based on the work of the Task Force. In addition, it contained accounts of regional case studies, provided by Donald A Buhler, John Parker, Ken Lester and Teo CheeHai.

Also at the Washington Congress, a Working Group (2.3) was formed with the broad aim of improving the knowledge and available information about relevant aspects of professional education in order to implement the process of mutual recognition of professional qualifications, and of developing guidelines for implementing FIG policy in this area. Officially, this Working Group came to an end at the Munich Congress, but it is only now, with the achievement of a regional agreement at government level, based on the FIG model, as demonstrated by Teo CheeHai, that the ambitions of the Working Group can be said to be both achieved and successful.

The work on Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications has spanned the FIG Presidential terms of Robert W Foster (who also contributed the Preface to publication 27), Holger Magel, and Stig Enemark, and the Commission 2 Presidencies of Kirsi Virrantaus, Pedro Cavero and Béla Márkus. As the UK delegate to Commission 2, I have also benefited enormously from the support of my fellow UK delegates and particularly that provided by the head of our delegation, Iain Greenway.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

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