

Publications Exchange Working Group

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Terms of Reference

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The Publications Exchange Working Group (PEWG) of the UIS Informatics Commission has been established to tackle the challenges and opportunities for the exchange, accessing, organisation, safe storage and archiving of world-wide published speleological and karstic information into the future; it is believed that this literature has enormous historical and research value. The information has been partly disseminated through journals and books published by international and national bodies and by local caving clubs. Since the 1950s, many of these organisations have made international bilateral arrangements to exchange new publications amongst themselves, usually by post, but in an *ad hoc* pattern that remained unknown internationally. The documents exchanged are commonly housed in speleological libraries of various sizes and physical accessibility. Many are thus stored in relative safety and are available for study, at least to local members. Three main issues now confront this beneficial exchange of information:

- the rising costs of postal delivery;
- the opportunities presented by electronic publication, electronic delivery, electronic storage and digital searching;
- the intention of some Governments for all papers that report publicly-funded research to be freely available under an 'Open Access' policy.

The main aims of this Working Group are to:

- 1 Promote the exchanges of previous and new paper journals and books that will be housed in physical libraries internationally;
- 2 Publicise the extent of this international cooperation to help safeguard the preservation of important speleological information into the distant future, as a widely distributed paper archive;
- 3 Examine the opportunities and problems related to the production, dissemination and long-term storage of information electronically, to improve its international, searchable, 'access' and to produce a distributed digital archive.

The vision is that the Working Group will assist in the networking of over 100 existing speleological libraries internationally that will each hold and catalogue a good selection of published cave and karst literature.

The Working Group was formally established within the UIS Informatics Commission, with close liaison with the UIS Bibliography Commission, at the 16th International Congress of Speleology (ICS) held in Brno, Czech Republic, from 21–28 July 2013. This action followed a meeting in Brno on 25 July about Journal Exchanges that was convened by the British Cave Research Association (BCRA) and attended by 19 Editors, Librarians and other interested people from 12 Countries. That meeting discussed the BCRA experience in re-creating a British Caving Library (BCL) and in re-establishing contact with many overseas organisations with whom exchange agreements had lapsed. This situation has now been corrected, with BCRA currently exchanging journals with about 45 overseas organisations. The 'Publications Exchange' name of this Working Group indicates that books and other material can also be exchanged between speleological organisations. **The second meeting of the PEWG was held on 16 August 2016 in Yorkshire, UK, as part of the 2016 European Speleological Congress, to discuss these ToR at Issue 2.**

Working Group participants and communication

All attendees at the 25 July 2013 and 16 August 2016 meetings of the PEWG, Editors and Librarians of other international speleological organisations known to the Chairman, and other people who have expressed an interest, are asked to regard themselves as part of this Working Group. These people are also asked to forward this document to their other Exchange Partners and invite them to join, by sending a short email to the Chairman.

The main method of communication will be by email, but the Chairman will also consider an offer by the Chairman of the Informatics Commission to use a Mailman mailing list or a UIS web-based forum. The Chairman intends to send emails to the whole Working Group, by using blind copies to most of the email addresses that are listed in the Working Party Contacts list (Appendix 6). People can therefore check which of their colleagues have also received an email. If anyone does not wish to be included in that list, please advise the Chairman so that the name can be removed. To avoid the certainty of unwanted spam, participants' email addresses will not be placed on websites.

There will be two versions of these Terms of Reference and the Appendices. The latest and complete version will be distributed to the Working Group by the Chairman, as email attachments. Another version will be held on the UIS website at <http://www.uisic.uis-speleo.org/publexch/>. This will be publicly available, but will not necessarily be completely up to date, and will not contain email addresses.

Formal meetings for the Working Group will be arranged at future international speleological meetings. These meetings will enable discussions about progress, the dissemination of exchange information, and the actual exchange of back issues of speleological journals and books. The next suitable meeting is:

- The 17th ICS to be held in Sydney, Australia, from 23–30 July 2017.

Achievement of the aims of the Working Group

The aims will be achieved by the preparation and maintenance of various Recommendations and informational spreadsheets that are attached as Appendices to these Terms of Reference. The Appendices currently identified are:

- Appendix 1: Speleological libraries
- Appendix 2: Paper publications and Digital Warnings
- Appendix 3: Postal exchanges
- Appendix 4: Scanning documents for digital archiving (3 pages)
- Appendix 5: Guidelines for the creation, exchange and storage of digital publications (4 pages)
- Appendix 6: Working Party Contacts spreadsheet. File PEWG: Contacts (Pages 1-5)
- Appendix 7: Journal Titles Published spreadsheet. File PEWG: Titles (Pages 1-5)
- Appendix 8: Publications Exchanges Status spreadsheet. File PEWG: Status
 - Sheet Appendix 8.1: Status of exchanges received, excluding from Europe (Pages 1-6)
 - Sheet Appendix 8.2: Status of exchanges received, from Europe only (Pages 1-4)
- Appendix 9: Action Review, listing previous and outstanding actions for the Working Group

Note that all the attached spreadsheets are designed to be printed on A4 paper in Portrait or Landscape format, although this does not apply to the spreadsheets held on the website.

Trevor Faulkner