

NOTES
of the Meeting between CLGE – RICS, Tuesday 6th of May 2003, 13.00.

RICS Parliament Square.

Attendees

Facilitator

Martin Coulson – RICS CLGE delegate MC

CLGE

Klaus Rurup – President of CLGE KR

Dr. Otmar Schuster - President of GE OS

Mrs Gerda Schennach – Sec Gen CLGE GS

Vaclav Slaboch – Czech Republic delegate VS

RICS

Peter Fall – President of RICS PF

Robert Mahoney – RICS Geomatics RB

Philippe Malaquin – RICS France PM

Alastair Barr – RICS International AB

James Kavanagh – RICS Faculties JK

Notes of the meeting

13.00, Preliminaries:

PF welcomed the CLGE delegation to Great George Street and proposed that due to the full agenda, the meeting should start during lunch.

- 1. Education**
- 2. RICS International Strategy**
- 3. Development of links between CLGE-RICS**
- 4. Future development of the profession**

1. Education

PF started the agenda item by mentioning the current Bac+5 debate and UK specific issues. He believed that RICS was moving inexorably towards a MSc entry-level requirement for membership. PF also spoke of the current RICS Educational strategy and its success in helping to raise standards of prospective candidates for membership. Close to 4,500 new entrants enrolled on RICS accredited courses this year. PF also spoke about the growing demand from employers for more highly qualified personnel and how many employers essentially train new graduates. This is in keeping with the continual professional development (CPD) and future life long learning (LLL) ethos of RICS membership policy. It is also essential to include business and management skills hence the requirement for all newly qualified Chartered Surveyors to complete a certificate in business studies within 5 years of qualification. Chartered Surveyors are required to fulfil at least 20 hours of CPD each year, this can be monitored online.

PF then spoke about LLL and the need to develop learning goals within a structured programme.

VS asked how they prove their competency?

OS added that this was in some way against the ideas of the 'liberal professions' of mainland Europe who have a very high level of educational entry requirements and allow competition to moderate the profession. Examinations were seen as the primary way of proving competence, in some cases re-certification. VC added that it was a good idea to renew qualifications.

PF stated that within the code of ethics of RICS, members are required to be fully competent within an area of practice before attempting any work within that area. Failure to do so will result in possible expungement from RICS and no defense against legal charges of negligence. RICS Practices notes, guidance and information papers provide a professional practice framework for members to work to the highest levels of competence. So an ongoing form of professional monitoring was in place for RICS members.

MC mentioned current EU rulings and licensing issues. OS stated that in principle he had no objections to CPD and LLL but that RICS should recognise the different relationship of Geometre Expert (GE) with their clients and even their own staff within a practice. OS also spoke on proposed and/or needed changes to legislation regarding retirement ages and how difficult it was to influence policy.

PF said that in the UK competition was the main influencing factor, if a member was out of date in his professional knowledge, he would lose business.

There then followed a discussion on EU licensing regulations, EU regulations and the differences in markets. OS mentioned the Bologna agreement.

GS asked how many FRICS there were? PF responded, 15-20 000. MC spoke about the historic route to FRICS membership and how RICS is currently reviewing the entry requirement for this level of membership. MC also spoke on the large section of the UK population who now attend tertiary education and how this has led to the destruction of educational elitism in the country.

The meeting agreed that there were differences in perception between the UK and mainland Europe regarding professional education but that it was important to discuss the issues affecting professions.

MC summed up by saying that the UK did not have the same licensing structure as most of the EU and that the particular professional duties of the surveyor in those countries such as the relationship between the state and the licensing system do not apply in the UK. The UK was self-regulatory, there was a strong legal onus on the professional to work within certain parameters and that CPD (LLL) was an essential part of that. He also added the 'protection/duty to the public good' element contained within the RICS royal charter was of primary importance within the RICS ethical framework.

2. RICS International policy/ 3. Development of links

PF started by speaking of the RICS National Associations (NA's) and their independent status. The members in these countries decide what is best for

themselves. RICS has been accrediting courses for instance in countries outside the UK for more than 50 years; this long experience proves that it is impossible to impose UK type standards on other countries but that we have to look at comparable standards. PF also stated that the membership of all NA's was predominately indigenous in nature.

KR stated that he believed that it was better to have broad professional knowledge rather than the specialised nature of much of the UK educational output but could see how the market would prefer to be able to have a specialist rather than a generalist for certain types of contracts. KR also mentioned 'mutual recognition' concepts and the differences between the UK and mainland EU mentality when addressing them.

PF spoke of EU standards versus Global standards and how surveying is a global profession and we should respond to the needs of the global marketplace. Mutual recognition was an important aspect of true globalisation of the profession and the UK would never seek to or succeed in imposing a UK standard worldwide. Although it should be noted that the RICS qualification is an internationally recognised qualification and that this is an area where CLGE – RICS could collaborate. PF also mentioned the mechanics of how the NA's work with RICS HQ and the vital contribution of the RICS Europe office based in Brussels in directing this relationship. KR then spoke about core competencies and the recent CLGE-FIG publication.

There followed a discussion on mutual recognition of qualifications within an EU scenario. OS added that he thought the RICS model to be more market orientated than the current national licensing systems, allowing a greater degree of freedom of movement for RICS members. OS also mentioned the current disagreements within the EU between the state and the Liberal Professions. OS mentioned how the EU licensed surveyors saw themselves as generalists and how the 'appearance' of RICS type specialists made them nervous. PF said that many Chartered Surveyors are employees of big international practices and sometimes clients prefer to use a practice they know, even if in another country. RICS has had overseas members for many years and the development of NA's was a response to their requests rather than any attempt to dominate the EU market. Indeed, most NA's co-exist very well with the existing national survey institutions. PF then gave a brief update on a recent visit to Sri Lanka and how the NA situation has developed there. PF also reiterated that he believed that RICS and CLGE should try to work to bring together (at least to dialogue) the NA's and existing national survey institutions.

MC said that another fear was the introduction of an RICS endorsed low level of qualification and a confusion of the client-base. Although he added that the earlier comments on RICS moving to a MSc entry level negates this accusation.

GS mentioned quality systems and the definition of the term 'surveyor'. She also mentioned the strong regional and cultural context in which many EU surveyors work. MC mentioned the recent CLGE statutes papers and how there was little mention of CPD or a code of conduct.

OS returned to the issue of regulation within the EU and how after licensing a surveyor is deemed 'to be expert on all areas of the surveying business'. PF added his thoughts on professional negligence issues and how in the UK surveyors are liable

under law for any professional negligence. Chartered Surveyors must also carry appropriate professional indemnity insurance.

PF then returned to the international strategy. He put the current strategy into a historical context by briefly reviewing the low level of service received by RICS International members for many decades until Agenda for Change. He also stressed how CPD and training were the core function of NA's rather than social networking although this does play a part. He agreed that it was vital that NA's work more closely with existing national survey institutions.

VS added some specific Czech examples of how RICS Czech Republic was set up without informing any indigenous surveyors. This probably had something to do with the nature of the NA's members work (ie commercial property) but he added that it was unprofessional to set up an organisation in a country without speaking to any of the actual Czech surveyors. MC recognised the fact that the sudden appearance of the various NA's could have caused alarm amongst existing national survey institutions and that perhaps in hindsight more communications between bodies should have taken place. However RICS is not predatory and does not see itself as taking over in any way. In many ways the areas of practice are very different, RICS EU members probably rarely engage in local work and tend to work in an international context. KR added his thoughts on this subject, that yes it was alarming and that yes, the RICS model could seem to circumvent mutual recognition issues. PF mentioned the current issues within Spain regarding practicing non-nationals.

KR added that it was important for RICS and CLGE to try to develop closer links to help avoid any future confusion and help to form the future for the profession together. JK mentioned that the UK industry liaison group was now reformed and would be meeting the following day. This grouping is an essential part of CLGE strategy. PF spoke of helping to develop the relationship between the RICS NA's and the existing national survey institutions.

The meeting was interrupted by a fire alarm and evacuation procedure

MC spoke of his thoughts on the shrinking market for traditional geomatics applications and how the industry really needs to focus its attention on:

- School leavers
- Technical surveyors
- Graduate conversion (currently geomatics courses lose at least 50% of grads to other professions)
- Local company liaison

JK mentioned the success of geomatics.org.uk and the recent upturn in graduates coming onto geomatics BSc courses.

KR added that it was necessary to make the profession open and interesting for all comers.

PF then spoke on current RICS issues such as the evolution of FRICS. OS added that CLGE could learn a lot from RICS and that sharing information was the key.

It was agreed that the final communiqué should include a line on developing the relationship between RICS NA's and the existing national survey institutions.

3. The future

MC opened the discussion by mentioning the EU style regulatory approach to the market and how due to UK political conditions RICS tries to influence policy from the outset. RICS tries to shape its own market. The CLGE delegates had visited the Policy Unit during an earlier tour of RICS HQ and had spoken with several policy officers and economists. OS responded by talking of the barriers and regulations in place in the rest of the EU and that these have two constituent parts, chiefly market versus the government. Private practice has to fight against very large and powerful government departments such as the Cadastral offices; OS mentioned the Bavarian model where government is dominant. MC mentioned that in the UK, we often have to push government to get involved for example the Home Sellers packs.

PF mentioned the policy unit in Brussels and the links to UN-Habitat through the recent Global Alliance on Building Sustainability (GABS initiative <http://www.rics-foundation.org/sustainability/gabs.html>) PF also underlined the RICS philosophy of trying to influence policy rather than dictate. RICS has been trying to influence UK government policy since 1868; hence our location here in Westminster but it takes a very long time to build a profile. He summed up the discussion by suggesting the following points:

- CLGE must work with the NA's
- Closer working with the Brussels office of RICS Europe
- It is imperative that the profession presents a coherent voice to national governments and the EU

The meeting discussion then turned to the formulation of a brief communiqué.

See below.