**Minutes of the WCTRS**



**General Assembly**

**Held 13:30-15:10 on Tuesday 12 July 2016**

**at Tongji University, Shanghai**

**1. Welcome and Introduction – WCTRS President Yoshitsugu Hayashi (YH)**

President Hayashi welcomed everyone to the General Assembly, saying he was pleased to see so many people in attendance (approximately 200). He explained the main purpose for the General Assembly was to allow members the opportunity to receive reports on various activities, to ask questions and to have input into the direction of the Society.

**2. Minutes of the General Assembly held 17 July 2013, Rio de Janeiro (YH)**

YH referred to the Minutes of the last GA meeting which can be accessed in the Member Area of the WCTRS website. No comments were noted and the Minutes were approved without amendment.

**3. Report on the Society’s professional activities 2013 to 2016 (YH)**

YH presented a brief outline of the some of the major changes and differences which had taken place since the last conference, in particular on the scientific side, which included the following:

* The successful tender from Elsevier for the new Conference Management System (CMS)
* Enhanced level of academic publications with 24 partner journals as opposed to only two official journals three years ago
* The increase in Special Interest Groups (SIGs) from 15 to 30
* The increase in individual memberships, and the new membership category of Supporting Organisational Member (SOM), aimed at practitioners and private companies
* International liaison and the developing relationships with organisations such as TRB, CODATU and SLOCAT, where mutual participation is becoming more common
* The WCTRS-Y initiative started in 2013 and which had twice the number of participants in 2016
* Website and publicity with newsletters now being produced twice per year and improved Facebook pages etc

**4. Report on the Innovations in Scientific Matters – Manfred Boltze (MB)**

MB who had been the Chair of the SCC for the last three years, welcomed members to the General Assembly, saying it was a pleasure to be able to introduce further details of some of the works carried out by scientific committee members of the Society.

***Conference Management System (CMS).*** MB said a number of colleagues had commented that it was significantly different compared with previous conferences, and he highlighted some of the major innovations which had taken place over the last three years. He explained that organising the conference was quite a complicated issue, with more than 1,000 full papers covering 8 topic areas and 39 session tracks, including oral and poster sessions to review. In the past, each conference had had an individual CMS system, but a decision was made last time to develop a consistent and continuous system for use with all future conferences, and in order to do this, the Society needed a professional partner. Tenders were sought, and it was decided to collaborate with Elsevier for a CMS system which covered not only the IT side, but also the provision of comprehensive services to prepare for the conference, including a full bespoke conference website and help with marketing. MB offered thanks to the Elsevier team for their support toward the conference, adding that although there had been a few issues with the system, he believed the majority of these would be eliminated before the next round.

***Special Interest Groups SIGs.***  MB said it had been recognised from previous conferences that sessions tracks taken care of by SIGs, tended to be more successful than those without this back-up, so there is now a clearer allocation of SIGs to session tracks, with allocated teams to help prepare. Up to 2013, there were 15 well working SIGs and in the last three years, 15 more had been formed with around 300 members working actively within the groups. He explained there was also more continuous activity and liaison occurring between conferences, and asked delegates to take a chance to find and join a SIG in order to help maintain networks.

***Publications.*** MB explained the increasing importance of publications for members, and that in order to support this, the Society had looked beyond its two official journals, and had identified more than 20 other partner journals willing to consider potential Special Issues. He confirmed that in the past, Selected Proceedings were published more or less freely by the hosts of each conference. However, a decision had been made to put this on a more permanent and continuous basis by publishing in Elsevier Transport Procedia, and now, all reviewed papers graded A B or C would be eligible for this. He suggested there may be conflicts between opportunities to publish, but at the end of the day, it would be up to each individual author to decide. MB also referred to another possible opportunity, which is the potential for contributing to a Book Series WCTRS is currently discussing in association with Elsevier.

MB referred to the slide showing the extensive list of other innovations over the last three years, thanking colleagues for all their support and the opportunity to work with them. He offered best wishes to the new Chair of the Scientific Committee for a successful term and further development of the Society and future conferences.

**5. Report on Transport Policy – Roger Vickerman (RV)**

As retiring Editor in Chief of Transport Policy, RV provided information on the way the journal had developed over the last six years, explaining that by the end of the year the number of papers submitted to the journal will have trebled. He said although this was a big problem for the editors and reviewers, they had managed to bring down the first decision time over the period. He went on to say that it was no good producing papers and printing quickly if no one read them, and then referred to one particular paper that had been downloaded 19,000 times and cited over 300 times, plus highlighting other statistics which were a good indication of impact focus, and which reflected the quality of some of the papers coming through.

RV said they had now switched from the old EES to the new Evise systembut while this had led to improvements, there were issues for editors having to work in both systems and clearing the backlog has been a problem. He then finished his update by offering thanks to the editors, Greg Marsden, Susan Shaheen, Yoram Shiftan and Ashish Verma, expressing the hope that the journal would continue to develop in a positive way.

**6. Report on Case Studies in Transport Policy – Rosario Macario (RM)**

RM started her update by confirming she would not be competing with RV for statistics, but simply referred to Case Studies, the new journal of the society which started in 2013, and which had now reached the important milestone of achieving four issues per year. She said this caused a marked change in the relationship with Elsevier and created an additional source of finance for the Society. RM said there was a high demand for Special Issues generally, and care had to be taken to control the difference between regular and special issues. Positive feedback had been received regarding the journal and RM thanked the reviewers supporting the journal as well as Elsevier colleagues working with her, and everyone else who helped achieve performance.

**7. Report on Administrative and Financial matters – Yves Crozet (YC), Tony May (ADM) and Antonio Musso (AM)**

ADM addressed the assembly saying there was a very slight change in the agenda, in that administration and financial matters were the role of the past president, and started by offering congratulations to YH, MB, RV and RM for the major advances achieved over the last three years. He then went on to remind members that the Secretariat moved from Lyon in January 2015 after YC made it clear he would like to hand the responsibility over, and took the opportunity to express thanks to YC who had had the role of Secretary General for several years, and also to Jean-Noel Mabiala the previous and very hard working secretary.

**WCTRS Website.** Referring to the slides, ADM introduced the new secretary, Jennie Stones, and confirmed the new Society website address [www.wctrs-society.com](http://www.wctrs-society.com) which was established in March 2015 and is under continuous development, in order to be as effective and useful as possible for members. He ran through the various parts of the website, explaining there were pages on each conference, including information on bids for 2022, SIGs, Young Researchers, Prizes, Newsletters and Journals etc and we have almost completed the process of uploading all conference proceedings back to Rotterdam (1977). ADM confirmed there were specific areas for public, members, and committee members and this included a search facility where members can find others with similar interests, or in particular geographical areas, (providing they have said they are happy to share their information). Members were asked to regularly check the personal information we hold on them is accurate and if their contact information changes at any time, to let us know.

**Membership statistics.** ADM referred to the figures mentioned earlier by YH, confirming that membership for the three year period to just before the conference was around 950, and that there are now around 1300, largely as a result of conference registrations. He said around 260 of those registered were renewals from previous years, but this still left several hundred people who had not yet renewed, and confirmed that during August and September, we would be contacting them to encourage them to do so, otherwise their details would be removed from the database. ADM asked members if they knew of any colleagues in this category, to encourage them to renew as soon as possible.

**Finance.** ADM confirmed that funds had been transferred in Euros to Leeds in 2015, and that the Society currently had approximately £140K, of which £15K is in an interest bearing account. He explained that although there had been some currently fluctuations recently, we have been protected to some degree as most of our income is in US dollars while expenditure is in pounds sterling. He referred to the simplified version of the income and expenditure slide, adding that full details could be provided if needed and ran through some of the main areas. ADM explained that the budget was approved by the Steering Committee in February and runs from the current year to the end of 2019, and that the simple financial test is that the balance at the end of the year prior to the conference, must at least cover the whole expenditure in the conference year. He said our projected balance of £120K against running costs of around £55K were well within this figure, and then invited AM to cover the audit report.

**Audit Report.** AM confirmed he had conducted an audit on the actual financial situation for the year to 30 June 2016, and projections for the three year period 2016 to 2019. He confirmed that the audit had been performed in accordance with common auditing standards which required examination of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial statements and the evaluation of significant estimates, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. As a result, he was happy to confirm that in his opinion, the financial statements were presented fairly in all material respects and thanked JS and ADM for answering any questions on the main figures.

**8. Nomination and election of President (ADM)**

ADM explained this was the first and very important opportunity for members to make a decision on the future of the Society, because one of the tasks every three years is to appoint the incoming President, and after that, to appoint the Steering Committee. Before asking for a show of hands, he explained that although the President is elected for a three year term from one conference to the next, there is provision to continue for a second term providing the STC and current President feel it is appropriate. This was considered in more detail at the STC in January 2015 when it was unanimously agreed to recommend President Hayashi for a second term.

ADM asked for a show of hands in favour of the recommendation, and the motion was carried that Yoshi Hayashi would continue as President for a second term up to 2019.

**9. Future Plans (YH)**

YH accepted the nomination thanking ADM, the Steering Committee and members for allowing him a continuation of the previous period. In terms of future plans, YH said he was aware of the need to involve more practitioners and organisations to ensure best use was made of research available, and referred to the Supporting Organisational Membership for those in the private sector. He also outlined the intention to introduce another category of organisational membership for universities and other similar research institutions, adding that further details on this would be available soon.

YH referred briefly to other plans for the future, which included:

* Strengthening links with ITF and similar organisations, as well as Ministry of Transport in each government to raise the profile of transport research and ensure it is recognised at the level it should be
* Strengthening the Society by linking with similar organisations and working more closely with them e.g. holding side conferences where appropriate with NGOs such as SLoCAT
* Increasing the number of SIGs and SIG members by inviting proposals for new SIGs
* Enhancing collaboration with the World Bank through the good offices of José Irigoyen

**10. Nomination and election of Steering Committee (YH)**

President Hayashi referred to the slide outlining his proposals for the forthcoming term. He then offered thanks to MB who had led the Scientific Committee strongly over the last three years, to ADM who was stepping down from his Secretary General role, to the journal editors, and in particular RV who was stepping down from his role as EiC of JRTP, to AM in his role as auditor, and all other committee members, STOs and TAs who had done an excellent job.

YH asked for a show of hands to show approval for the list of members and each individual role, and the nominations were accepted. Specific appointments approved included:

Chair of Scientific Committee - Lorant Tavasszy

Secretary General - Greg Marsden

Editor in Chief JRTP - Tae Oum

Editor in Chief CSTP - Rosário Macário

**11. Membership fees for 2019-2022 and administrative matters (GM)**

GM addressed the meeting confirming there was only one item to deal with which was membership fees for 2019-2022. He referred to the current level of fees, which were $150 for general members, $90 for members from developing countries and $60 for students, all for a three year period. GM explained that as a non profit making Society, WCTRS needed to establish viability in order to organise the conference, and needed provision to be able to increase the fees if there is a financial issue it had to respond to. He then put forward the proposal that the General Assembly give the Steering Committee flexibility to increase fees for 2019-2022 by up to 20% if financial pressures required them to do so. There were no questions from the floor and the motion was carried.

**12. Any other business**

YH said there was just one item to raise which was the proposal that the Steering Committee may appoint up to three additional members to join during the next period should specific new roles require it, and this was agreed.

YH thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions in the General Assembly and closed the meeting.