



Constitution Committee report 2016

Richard Chesser (Chair)
Barbara Dobbs Mackenzie (ex officio, President)
Roger Flury (ex officio, immediate Past President)
Pia Shekhter (ex officio, Secretary General)
Catherine Massip
Barbara Wiermann
Geraldine Ostrove (to June 2015)
Bonna Boettcher (from March 2016)

The first point to report is a huge vote of thanks and appreciation to Gerry Ostrove, who stood down as the US representative of the Constitution Committee after the New York congress in 2015 after many years of faithful service. Countless times we have been grateful to Gerry for her contributions to discussions relating to the business and governance of the association, and have always benefited from her long professional experience, common sense and wise words. We will miss her, but hope very much that she will keep in touch with all her friends and colleagues made over the years.

Sad though we were to see Gerry go, we were delighted that that Bonna Boettcher accepted the Board's invitation to fill that vacancy, which she did in March this year. This was very timely, since the Committee's immediate task was formally to consider the changes to the Constitution and Rules of Procedure proposed by the Ad Hoc Committee on Organizational Structure (Level 2). Although most of the Committee were familiar with the genesis of these draft documents, since they were also members of the Ad Hoc Committee, nonetheless now we had to change hats and consider the provisions from a different perspective, and in a very short period of time so that the texts could be circulated to members at large for their consideration. In our deliberations we considered the apportionment of text between the two documents, trying to ensure that there was consistency about what type of information appeared in each; that the intentions could be expressed with sufficient clarity in all of the official languages; that there were no obvious omissions; that the provisions were precise and detailed when need be, or in other places allowed an appropriate element of discretion. Overall, of course, we wanted to ensure that the various bodies of the association formed a clear structure, with their memberships and inter-relations clearly articulated. It is hoped that the resulting documents will meet with members' approval when voted on in Rome. We have certainly done the best job that we could, and I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to my fellow committee members for the conscientiousness with which they have approached this task.

The Chair of the Committee was also able to advise the Board on certain features of the vice-presidential election process, when it was useful to note that under Article V.6 of the Constitution the Board has the discretion to make decisions unless specifically limited from doing so.