

Report of the Ad-hoc Committee on the Restructuring of IAML
Responses on IAML-L, as at 2013

Jürgen Diet

President of IAML Germany
c/o Bavarian State Library
Music Department
7 June, 2013

“Dear colleagues,

in my opinion, the report of the ad-hoc committee on the restructuring of IAML (see <http://www.iaml.info/organization/committees/restructuring>) contains very good suggestions how to improve the IAML-structure. I have been taking part in IAML-conferences since 2006, and it took me several years to understand what the council session is, what the general assembly is and who is eligible to vote in which session.

As we will organize our conferences with our current three-tier structure at least two more times (in Vienna and in Antwerp), I would like to suggest to use ballot papers for voting in the council sessions and in the general assembly. If every IAML member gets a ballot paper during his/her conference registration and every national representative gets an additional ballot paper (in a different colour), then it is clear who is eligible to vote.

Best regards,
Jürgen”

Judy Tsou

President, Society for American Music
Head, Music Library
Lecturer, School of Music
University of Washington
7 June, 2013

“Dear colleagues,

I second Jürgen's suggestion on differentiating the votes by different colored paper. I have a question on who gets to pick the representative for the institution? Members of the institution themselves, or is the head of the music library/section the default?

I also agree that the change to a two-tier governing body makes a lot of sense and it streamlines our current somewhat antiquated system. Allowing the General Assembly to vote gives delegates the incentive to attend the meeting as well.

I have a couple of other comments on the excellent document. These are from "The Board" section of the document. It says: "It would be better, we agree, simply to allow the names of everyone nominated to appear on the ballot. The likelihood of more than two nominees for President is extremely remote, and the four candidates for Vice President receiving the most votes would simply be elected, as they are anyway. It would be the responsibility of the Board to ensure that the list of candidates reflects the

diversity of the IAML membership in terms of gender, nationality and language, a responsibility that should be written into the Constitution or Rules of Procedure. Obviously a new, less lengthy timetable for the nomination and election process would need to be established."

My comment:

If you allow ALL the names of the nominated to be on the ballot, how can the Board ensure the diversity that is mentioned above? Will it mean that if the slate doesn't have the desired mix, then the Board will add more candidates? Also, I assume that the nominated people will have been contacted and agreed to run before being put on the slate.

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And, "In conducting searches for appointed officers and editors, the search committee should include at least one member from outside the Board, perhaps hosen from the Forum of National Representatives."

My comment:

I propose that members who are not in these groups should also be tapped to serve on search committees; perhaps we should say that "one member of the Board should be included" rather than "should include at least one member from outside the Board." And maybe one member should be chosen from the Forum of National Representatives and the rest of the committee (depending on the size of the search committee), could be chosen from the regular membership. This way, the Board members wouldn't be overly burdened with search committee duties as their other duties expand. Also, may be more importantly, if more regular members are invited to participate in the governance of the society, there will be more buy-in. This kind of search committee structure is common in other academic and library societies.

My two-cents' worth,
Judy"

Maureen Buja

Editor-in-Chief
Fontes Artis Musicae
29 June, 2013

"Since discussion on this has stopped for a while and the annual conference is approaching, I'd like to put in some thoughts on this proposal.

Although I think that the current system is barely limping along, I don't feel that it's been given a chance to work properly, i.e., I don't believe that the Board, historically, has communicated enough with the Council. I don't agree with the proposal for the abolishment the Council. It's as though, after starving the Council of information, the Board then complains the Council hasn't enough strength (or information) to make decisions.

I don't believe the Board has been doing enough to ensure that the Council's decisions are carried out. When the Council votes for the creation of a Committee / WG, etc., we have had the situation more than once where the committee didn't meet, had problems, didn't know what it was doing, had an inactive chair, etc. The Board hasn't contact the Committee/ WG chair to see what the problem was, try to solve the problem, replace the chair, or define the remit of the committee. What has happened is

that Board has dissolved a Committee/WG created by the Council or dismissed an Council appointee with no notification to the Council of its actions.

I am very uneasy with the idea of an 8-person Board replacing the actions of a 50-member Council. I don't think the Board is big enough or representative enough to take on that level of authority within the organization. I have even more problems with the idea that the 50-member Council should be replaced by a 1,757-member General Assembly – if 50 didn't work, 30 times that will work even less well.

According to the Constitution, the 50-member Council consists of:

1. Any branch (national or multi-national) or country having at least ten members enrolled in the Association shall have a delegate on the Council. Countries with fewer than ten members can, with the Council's agreement, be represented on the Council by a national delegate. Delegates shall have the right to vote.
***As of last year, this was every national branch, with the exception of Croatia (too few members) and possibly Australia (non-payment of dues) to a total of 20-21 voting members.
2. The President, the Vice-Presidents and the two immediate Past-Presidents of the Association, as well as the Chairs of the Professional Branches and the Subject Commissions shall be voting members of the Council.
***As of last year, this would be 7 people for the Board and Past-Presidents, 5 Chairs of Professional Branches and 4 Chairs of Subject Commissions to a total of 16 voting members.
3. The Secretary General, the Treasurer, the Chairs of the Joint Commissions and the Committees, as well as the Editor of the Association's journal, shall be members of the Council without the right to vote.
***As of last year, this is a further 13 members.

This, I believe, is a good representation of the membership – and a far better representation than an 8-member Board could be.

Some suggestions to make the current system work as planned.

Make the Council more important to the governance of the organization. Close the Council session to Council members only. Hold it during the meeting proper, rather than starting the day before so that the Council meeting is held when the Council members are present, rather than at the convenience of the Board. Invitations to countries with fewer than 10 members should be made well in advance of the meeting.

Appoint a Council Secretary to the Board who would be independent of the Board and who would be responsible for reporting back to the Council of the Board's activities and concerns. The Council Secretary would also run the Council meeting, rather than having the Board run the Council meeting.

Return to the triennial General Assembly. With everyone complaining about the costs of meetings, attending once every 3 years could help control that. GA was changed to an annual meeting so that the GA could approve the miniscule change each year in the budget, mostly the dues, which have been creeping up each year by €1-2; this doesn't provide the GA with large enough overview of the budget to make real decisions.

In the conference as a whole, limit number of sessions to those doing actual business. The IAML annual conference is starting to resemble most national meetings, where there are lots of sessions and lots of papers, but the sad fact is that very little work is actually getting done

by committees at the meeting. If we go back to the GA meeting every 3 years, then the 2 off years would be ideal times for the Committees/ WGs, etc. to meet and actually do business.

All committee / WG chairs should submit bi-yearly reports to show the Board that they are working - if no report, then the Board should enquire, and report to the Council, about the actions of the Committee / WG and to determine if changes needed to be made. Council decisions about the necessity for a Committee or WG need to be taken very seriously and if a Committee or WG isn't fulfilling its remit, the Board should do more than disband the Committee / WG on its own.

Circulate the Board minutes from their March meeting to the Council. The Board reports to Council and their work should not be held as secret. An edited version of the Board minutes, as approved by Council, should be published in Fontes to cover the two annual Board meetings. Currently there are no Board minutes in Fontes.

I'd like more transparency on Board activities. From what I've seen over the past 16 years, the Board isn't always happy with its role of being the executive committee of the Council. In following their actions over the past 16 years, the Board doesn't always follow the directions of Council, they don't report to Council enough of their actions and decisions, and they don't provide Council with enough information to be the ruling Council of the Association.

Instead of getting rid of the Council, let's let the Council do the job that the Constitution created for it."

David Day

Brigham Young University, Provo, UT
8 July, 2013

"I know I am late to this discussion, but I would like to offer some comments. First, thanks to those on the ad hoc committee who offered their sincere vision for a better IAML structure (hereafter referred to as the report). I agree with some of the report's recommendations. Thanks also to Maureen Buja for her comments.

After studying the report and contemplating its potential impact, I believe that abolishing the Council is not the best way forward. I believe that a restructured Council should be preserved to play an essential roll of broad representation and as a means of ensuring innovation and forward looking activities within the organization. These elements are necessary in this era of rapid change for libraries in general. I do not believe the administrative structure proposed by the report can ensure these essential aspects of the organization. I also do not agree that the proposed structure fulfills the Terms of Reference.

The Terms of Reference further state that "The purpose of any proposed restructure is to ensure that IAML has an improved decision-making process, thus making it a more responsive and effective organization. IAML must have a structure and strength of purpose that will support its goals and assist its members to operate effectively on both a national and international level."

The four main arguments of the report for abolishing the Council do point to areas of historical weakness, but I believe it is wrong to blame these weaknesses entirely on the structure of the Council. That said, I do agree that there are changes that should be made to strengthen both the Board and the Council, thereby improving operations within the organization.

I would like to summarize what I understand to be the four arguments for abolishing the Council and question the validity of those arguments in some regards. After that, I will offer a different vision that maintains a smaller Council with some of its executive power transferred to the Board.

Arguments and holes in those arguments

1. The current need for the Board to seek approval from the Council delays administrative processes unnecessarily.

“The need to seek Council approval also draws out other processes unnecessarily, for example electing officers, which currently takes a year from determination of the slate of candidates to announcement of the election results.”

This does not mean the only way to solve these problems is to abolish the Council. For example, there is much that could and should be done to improve the elections process without abolishing the Council. It is not a zero-sum argument (all one or the other).

2. The Council is too large and its meetings are not effective because there are too many observers.

“At the same time, more and more IAML members have been taking advantage of the right granted them under the Rules of Procedure to attend Council meetings as observers (Rule IV, no. 3), while the Council has continued its longstanding tradition of allowing observers to speak as well as listen.”

Here again, it is possible to restructure the Council, and certainly it is possible to rethink its meetings (as Maureen has already suggested) without doing away with it all together.

3. The Council has failed to maintain communications with national branches.

“Third, the line of communication between the national branches and the international leadership has been somewhat tenuous. In theory, the Council should serve this purpose, but in the opinion of some national representatives it has not been doing so very successfully.”

In this case, I think it does not make sense to blame the Council for lack of communications because all of the representatives of national branches are part of the membership of the Council! I believe that by creating a smaller Council and creating a Forum of National Representatives (as recommended by the report) communication issues could be addressed more effectively.

4. By its nature and membership Council is not capable of a supervisory role.

“Fourth, there is insufficient accountability in some areas of IAML activity. Supervisory authority lies largely with the Council, but the Council cannot realistically be expected to supervise anything. The Board can do so only indirectly and informally. This lack of accountability is particularly evident in relation to some committees and working groups.”

I agree that historically and in its current form, the Council has not been very effective in its oversight of some committees and working groups. I do not agree, however, that there is lack of accountability because of the structure of the organization; it is more a history of lack of personal accountability. (I say that as a former member of Council, acknowledging my own shortcomings). Maureen has also pointed out areas where the Board has shown a lack of accountability. This is not fundamentally an organizational problem; it is a matter of unfulfilled personal and collective commitments. I think we would do better to question why this is common and focus on those problems more than abolishing the Council. Much more could be done to mentor the leadership of working groups. This guidance would be more effectively achieved with a Council that oversees working groups. This badly needed

mentoring is beyond the capacity of an eight-member board whose backgrounds may or may not relate to the experience needed to nurture working groups and their officers.

Alternative Recommendation

As an alternative recommendation for the restructuring of IAML, I suggest reconstituting a smaller Council that consists of the chairs of all the professional branches and commissions. This new Council could also include limited rotating representatives from national branches that offer profiles of diversity in size and geography. There should also be a representative of the largest membership group, those without a national branch! These rotating representatives should number no more than four or five total. Chairs of working groups and sub-committees need not be members. Members of the Board would not be members of the Council. Chairs of other standing committees and the editor of *Fontes* could be maintained as non-voting members of this new Council. The exact membership of the new Council could be studied and fine-tuned over time as necessary. The idea is to limit its size (one of the complaints of the report) by removing most of the representatives of national branches, the Board, and chairs of working groups and sub-committees.

An improved membership of the Council would consist of about 14 to 15 voting members and 6 non-voting members.

Chairs from 5 professional branches (possibly 6 if a branch for national libraries is created).
Chairs from 4 subject commissions (chairs of sub-commissions would not be members).
Up to 4 representatives from national branches representing a diversity of geography and size.
One rotating representative from the membership without a national branch.
Chairs of 5 standing committees (non-voting).
The editor of *Fontes* (non-voting).

This creates a body of about 20. I think it is the right size for diversity of perspective and small enough to manage communications and oversight.

I agree with Maureen's suggestion that there be a secretary of the Council that is a non-voting member of the Board.

Working groups and the various standing committees should not have general executive powers. They have specific assigned tasks that should be overseen by the Council (working groups) and the Board (standing committees). I recommend a system of shared executive powers and oversight. I believe that a system of checks and balances is healthy in any organization. The exact division of powers might require some study and input from the general membership. My own preliminary recommendation would divide oversight as follows:

Council:

- Studies proposals for working groups and approves or rejects them.
- Studies areas where working groups are needed and seeks participants.
- Appoints and mentors officers of working groups. Ensures that working groups have clearly defined objectives and that yearly progress toward those objectives is maintained.
- Appoints task forces to study and report on topics, movements, and technologies impacting music librarianship and "IAML's Principal Aims."
(http://www.iaml.info/organization/what_is_iaml/principal_aims)
- Oversees the planning and content of sessions for each professional branch or commission and its corresponding working groups or task forces.
- Formulates appropriate proposals for the General Assembly
- Meets four times each year (once in person at the conference and three times via video conference)

Board:

- Oversees the activities of the standing committees and other permanent commitments of the organization.
- Evaluates the need for and proposals for potential future standing committees.
- By means of a nominating committee, oversees IAML elections.
- Oversees preparation of proposals to the General Assembly in matters that impact the organization as a whole, including budgets, dues, and the constitution.
- Meets twice each year (once in person at the conference and once via video conference)

What I favor most about this bi-chamber approach to governance is a separation of responsibilities. It enables the Council to focus on research and activities that keep IAML on the forefront of trends and opportunities in a way that enables the organization to achieve its “Principle Aims.” The Council becomes the organ of innovation and activities that brings fresh perspectives into the organization. The Board governs permanent commitments of the organization and its finances.

I feel strongly that an eight-member board is not capable of fulfilling both of these roles. Just as the report complains that the current Council is not capable of oversight, I believe the Board, which already has major responsibilities, is not capable of promoting creativity within the organization. To abolish the Council would rob the organization of an essential means of forward-looking development. Also, if there is no Council to oversee the creation and work of working groups, an eight-member board is highly susceptible to bias and favoritism. In fact, I will venture to say bias and favoritism are certain in such a small and exclusive body governing the entire organization.

Forum of National Representatives

I like the idea of the national representative constituting an advisory forum as suggested by the report. Their recommendations for the structure and role of this forum could be a positive way to maintain their voice and influence in the organization. And, as I recommend, there would be rotating national representatives to the Council.

The General Assembly

I do not see the logic in disbanding the Council mostly on grounds that it is too large and diverse to be effective, only to transfer some of this executive power to a General Assembly that is vaguely defined. There is lack of clarity on who should be allowed to vote for institutions and how and if those votes represent the actual institution or only the personal views of the member voting for that institution. There are many more institutional members than personal members. The influence of the General Assembly would, in practical terms, be unbalanced, because only conference attendees would be likely to vote. Voting at conferences could not provide adequate representation if chairs of branches and commissions formulate items to vote on during the course of a conference. The General Assembly should not be expected to vote on matters that are better managed by a well-defined Council. The General Assembly should be limited to voting on broader issues such as dues and constitutional amendments.

Meetings

In my opinion, the recommendations of the report imply a vision for IAML that is primarily an organization that does conferences. The suggestion that the leadership of professional branches and commissions should be relegated to the relatively insignificant task of organizing one conference session each year would be a tragic waste of talent. Along with Maureen, I reject this vision for IAML. IAML should be an organization that creates and sustains products and services that support the international community of music libraries and librarians. In support of this vision, I recommend a bi-annual full conference and alternating bi-annual working conference limited to all of the officers and

the editorial board of *Fontes*. The working conferences would not need to last an entire week. The working conferences could provide an opportunity for the Council and the Board to meet and interact more closely. This model would also improve the current weakness of the General Assembly meeting only every three years. In a bi-annual rotation, the General Assembly would meet and vote every two years.

I do not agree with the argument offered in the report that abolishing the Council would create an administrative structure more like other similar organizations. IAML is not like other organizations. Its greatest contributions are found in its projects and services, not organizing annual conferences.

David Day”

Michael Fingerhut

Former Editor of the IAML Newsletter
Bibliomus, Paris
8 July, 2013

“Hello everyone,

Maureen's and David's comments highlight, in my mind, two of the problems of the way IAML has been functioning to date: one is the size (and number) of its "substructures" (on which I won't add), the other one being the periodicity of the decision-making, which may cause sometime a two-year lapse from the time a proposal is made to its implementation. This is clearly problematic in a faster-paced world (add to it heavy procedures and lack of regular check-points on actions, and the whole thing collapses).

From my experience in other projects -- esp. in Europeana -- I have seen how they "agilely" adapt to modern means of communications, decreasing the number of face-to-face (smaller) meetings and replacing them by virtual (Skype or the like) more frequent meetings: email exchanges are used to prepare such meetings and carry out the followups, but the fact there *are* scheduled meetings -- in some workgroups I have been a member of, every few weeks -- ensures commitment (or else you drop out): Mind you, I don't advocate replacing face-to-face meetings by virtual ones - as I believe the former have a very important role too - but to change the balance and the frequency.

I believe such a principle could be adopted (with an adequate frequency and agenda) not only for workgroups and committees *during* the year (i.e., between conferences) but also for the Council, so as to provide them with more dynamic means of supervision and decision-making. The General Assembly would then not have to be burdened with some sessions better scheduled during the year. And so it could be shortened too. This may also have a side-effect of decreasing travel budget both to the yearly conference and in between conferences.

Best regards,
Michael”

David Day

Brigham Young University, Provo, UT
8 July, 2013

“Thanks Michael,

Excellent comments. I revise my proposal to include more virtual meetings for both the Board and the Council. Of course the same would apply to working groups and sub-committees.

David”

Jorge García

Spanish national branch, Chair
8 July, 2013

“I agree, Michael’s proposal sounds very reasonable and easy to implement.

Best
Jorge García”

Maria Calderisi

IAML President 1986-1989
9 July, 2013

“Thank you Maureen, David and Michael! I was so relieved to read you all, expressing so many of my own reservations which I had not expressed because I thought I would sound like a long-outdated 78rpm recording. I especially like the idea of improving rather than abolishing. A leaner, tighter administrative structure and, above all, consistent communication between meetings is what IAML needs.

I regret that I shall not be in Vienna to hear the continuing discussions on this subject, so much of which will sound so familiar having sat through many such over the years. Mostly though, I regret not seeing old friends and the chance to make new ones. Have a wonderfully fruitful and enjoyable conference everybody!

Maria (past, past, past, etc. president)”

John Roberts

Chair of the Ad-hoc Committee on the Restructuring of IAML
President of IAML 2001-2004
10 July, 2013

“Dear Colleagues,

In light of the recent postings regarding the Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Restructuring of IAML, I would like to offer a few comments, not in my capacity as chair of that committee but as one longtime member of IAML:

(1) I would urge every member of the Council and every other concerned IAML member carefully to read the report itself, if you have not already done so. It deserves to be evaluated directly rather than solely through comments that may not fully or accurately reflect its analysis of current problems or its proposals for administrative reform.

(2) It has been suggested that a comparatively small Board cannot manage the affairs of an organization such as IAML. This contention seems to me at variance with the experience of many of us who have been active in other organizations that function effectively with a two-tier administrative structure. I think, for example, of IAML's new US branch, the Music Library Association, which works well under the sole leadership of a 10-member Board, despite having a larger membership than IAML as a whole, a far more elaborate network of subordinate bodies, and a far more complicated budget.

(3) The many discussions of recent years about the future of IAML suggested to me that there is a widespread desire, particularly among younger members, for a more participatory decision-making process than we presently have. Yet the alternative plans offered by Maureen Buja and David Day would seem to move us in the opposite direction, Maureen's by excluding observers from Council meetings and holding a General Assembly only every three years and David's by greatly reducing the role of national representatives in the Council and having a General Assembly every two years.

(4) I agree that we need to make more and smarter use of technology to improve communication within IAML, and there is nothing in the committee's report that is incompatible with that objective. But we also need to be cognizant of the limitations of current technology, for example in video conferencing involving a large group of people located in many different countries with varying technological resources at their disposal. There is also the larger question of whether major decisions should be taken for the organization without an opportunity for a face-to-face exchange of views, which at best can happen only once a year.

I hope that this dialogue will continue on IAML-L and that we will arrive in Vienna ready for a reasoned, frank, and open-minded discussion.

John”

David Day

Brigham Young University, Provo, UT

15 July 2013

“Sorry for the length of this message. I am sure all involved would prefer to read (or delete) my comments in place of a protracted speech at Council (if I should be permitted to speak). There is a short summary at the end, if you prefer to skip ahead.

I echo John Roberts' invitation for everyone to read the report and make their own conclusions. The implementation of its recommendations could have substantial long-term impact on the organization for better or worse, however you see it. By the same token, I hope everyone, especially voting members of the Council, will also directly consider my response and the comments of others, in order to avoid any potential misrepresentation of anyone's position.

I continue to study the report, and in that process feel that I have a greater appreciation for its desired aims. At the same time, I have growing concerns for the proposed restructuring and role of the General Assembly. In the process of expressing these specific concerns, I will also offer an alternative approach to achieve a more participatory environment.

Problems with the proposed General Assembly

I believe it is fair to make a summary assessment that the report aims to create a stronger administrative structure and promote greater participation by:

1. Abolishing the Council and transferring most of its executive powers to the Board.
2. Expanding the role of the General Assembly and granting some of the previous powers of the Council to the general membership through that process.

I can appreciate the theoretical operations of such a structure, but I see four practical problems in relation to the proposed role of the General Assembly.

1. As I argued in my previous comments, the General Assembly is too vaguely defined as a voting body. It is not clear who represents institutional members and it is quite certain that in practical terms many institutional members would not be represented. The report, as well, acknowledges this problem, but does not offer a specific solution.
2. In practical terms, only members (personal or institutional) who are attending the conference and present at the assembly are represented. It would be difficult to provide a live, remote voting mechanism due to international time zones and because many proposals could be formulated during the course of the conference or by the discussions of the General Assembly itself. In this regard, expanding the General Assembly limits participation. If I were a young librarian at the start of my career, I would feel little or no incentive to become a member of an organization where I could not vote on key issues, because I could not attend the conferences (more on this issue below). If we open the door to comparison of other organizations, the notion of a General Assembly is perhaps the most unusual and antiquated. Voting is more effectively accomplished through electronic ballots available to the entire membership, regardless of their ability to attend the conference. Perhaps it is time to consider phasing out, rather than expanding, this component of the IAML structure. It could be replaced by any number of “open mic” or “hot topics” options popular in other organizations.
3. Actual discussions in the General Assembly tend to be dominated by older, more established, and vocal members. The discussions tend to go in circles without any real consensus or net increase in understanding. I think these problems are inherent in such a large gathering. I think this is an ineffective means to encourage participation, especially among the younger membership, who are mostly absent and who are inclined to be silent in large meetings.
4. The report maintains that the Board, with its new executive powers, would screen all proposals for working groups.

“The Board should likewise take a more direct role in the formation and monitoring of working groups. It might, for instance, be stipulated that any proposal for creating a new working group must be accompanied by letters of support and reviewed and approved by the Board well in advance of its submission to the General Assembly; that would prevent ill-considered proposals from being taken straight from conference sessions to the General Assembly.”

I find this stipulation deeply troubling, especially in relation to the concerns of bias and favoritism that I mentioned in my previous comments. In my opinion, it is inadequate to attempt to assure the chairs of branches and commissions they will still have a voice at the General Assembly, but only as far as the Board permits through its advanced screening. In my mind, this stipulation also creates the same kind of decision-making delay that the report argued against so strongly in its justification to abolish the Council. Say a group of mutual interest develops an excellent idea for a new working group during the course of sessions at a conference. A proposal is formulated with the participation of the

appropriate chair of the oversight branch or commission. Yet, this working group cannot be proposed to the General Assembly until the next year, because it must be screened and approved by the Board. I can see how some would favor this longer process of preparation and scrutiny. I believe, however, it is counter-productive to the desire of a more participatory organization. It is also contrary to the growing need for more agile and responsive leadership.

A better approach to building participation

I favor the structure that I previously proposed, whereby a newly constituted and smaller Council has independent power to oversee the working groups and subcommittees of the branches and commissions. I believe this structure would do more to promote a broader participation among the general membership, especially younger members. I believe this model will provide stronger more effective oversight of these important components of the IAML organization. Also, the evaluation and approval process for working groups can continue throughout the year, rather than being tied to Board screening and/or a vote in the General Assembly.

In the structure I propose, the officers of the branches and commissions should be elected as part of the general election. The proposed nominating committee should organize the slate of candidates along with those for the Board. The entire membership should be permitted to vote for each of these officers. This, from the start, will expand participation far beyond the current practice of electing officers during a session of the branch or commission at the conference.

There may be some fundamentally different philosophical positions at play. One side favors strong, central control of power in the Board. This eight-member body must effectively authorize all elements of the organization. Any project that is associated with the good name of IAML will only be permitted if it meets the approval of this Board, which by definition and size is limited in background and expertise. I think this position is indicative of the recommendations of the report. I think it would become the reality because the proposed role of the General Assembly would not be effective in practical terms. That leaves the Board with a very broad span of control.

A differing philosophical approach and the model that I suggest is more open. In many regards, it is a more progressive break from the past IAML structure than what is proposed in the report. I am not arguing for preservation of the *status quo*. The newly constituted Council would be given very different expectations. The new Council would be charged with the responsibility of promoting innovation. It would accomplish this essential rejuvenating process through its broad expertise and close, constant oversight of its collective working groups and subcommittees. I know use of the term “sandbox” may evoke ridicule from some. It suggests a philosophy that space should be allowed for testing ideas, even if some of those ideas fail. If using the term will help draw attention to the aims of the model I am proposing, *tant mieux*. Many traditional organizations comparable to IAML may be content with just a board of directors as the primary means of governance. But, it can be argued that organizations like ours are all losing influence (and membership). Part of this declining influence may stem from a hesitancy to encourage creativity and inability to adapt to rapid change. Organizations and businesses that allow space for experimentation tend to thrive.

I do not like to compare IAML to MLA, but that door has been opened and I will make a few observations. IAML and MLA (and possibly many other national branches) are very different. I believe that looking closely at some of these differences can help us better understand how to achieve greater participation and grow our membership.

National meetings will naturally attract a larger participation of younger librarians striving to get established in their careers. This is due largely to the higher costs associated with an international, week-long meeting and the corresponding practice of sending one senior representative to the conference. The membership of IAML may always trend toward more established librarians from larger institutions (public, academic, and national). This tendency will have a side effect that the

membership has less direct incentive to participate actively on a committee or project. I notice with interest that younger, less well-established librarians vie and compete intensely for positions on committees in MLA. For the advancement and stability of their careers, they need to show concrete evidence of their contributions. I think this need is less urgent among those in senior positions. They are also overwhelmed with administrative responsibilities at their home institutions and may hold time consuming positions of leadership in other professional organizations. These factors may be part of the cause for the failure of many committees and working groups to achieve sustained progress.

I think the reality of this situation can be addressed in a number of ways. John Wagstaff once suggested that senior librarians skip a IAML conference occasionally and let a junior librarian from their institution come in their place. We should all actively campaign within our own local institutions for funding for students and junior staff. If, however, we accept the fact that we may always have fewer younger attendees, then we need to provide ways for them to participate without coming to every conference. It is in this context that I feel a newly defined Council would play a positive role. My recommendation for a biannual rotation of shorter working and full conferences might also help in this regard.

I refer back to my previous comments, in which I argued for an organization whose primary focus is on projects and services, rather than organizing conferences.

I envision an environment where working groups and subcommittees have narrowly defined specific tasks that are short-lived (two to six years maximum). As noted in the report, let's do away with these never-ending working groups that don't produce anything. With a smaller Council in place that has a specific charge to approve and oversee these groups they can work together to identify and involve younger members (and potential new members). They should function together as a group that constantly evaluates how IAML can best move forward with new technologies, training, and services. They should organize working groups and subcommittees with a specifically named membership, so that participants other than the officers can receive credit for their contributions. I believe this would go a long ways toward establishing a perpetual base of new and engaged members.

I have full confidence that a Council of about 20 members (consisting of the chairs of the professional branches and subject commissions, rotating national representatives, non-voting chairs of standing committees, and the editor of *Fontes*) is more than capable of determining the appropriateness and value of working groups and subcommittees. They are not collectively going to bring shame to IAML by promoting ill-considered projects.

I feel very strongly that an eight-member Board cannot foster this desired environment, especially one that feels the need to screen every proposal for a working group. The Board would not be able to identify and engage the non-conference-attending membership as effectively as a newly constituted Council with a wider network of contacts. The Board has a very important role in my alternative proposal. They still receive all of the executive powers suggested in the report (except veto power over the new Council and its sub-structures, whose limits would be clearly defined). The Board should have executive governance for the longstanding committees and R projects. That is more than enough work and control for eight people.

I question the assertion that a small Board is perfectly capable of overseeing all aspects of a large organization. I have never been a Board member, but I hear accounts of Board meetings with massive agendas where in practicality many agenda items are glossed over due to lack of time. I see great advantage in a bi-chamber division of different, mutually supportive activities.

I will preempt the probable argument that two separate authorities would lead to division within the organization. There should not be conflict if their span of control relates to separate, clearly defined activities. The question of finances is mute because IAML has traditionally not funded activities of the branches, commissions, and their sub-structures. I actually would hope for a very positive, mutually supportive environment. For example, the Board may look to the expertise and intellectual resources

of the new Council to promote research or studies aimed at improving the performance of the standing committees and projects it oversees. There is real advantage in access to independent, outside consultation, rather than one Board of eight members trying to investigate and solve all of the organization's problems and at the same time explore ways to move forward. Through its process of constant evaluation of its working groups and subcommittees, the Council might formulate recommendations to the Board in relation to future permanent projects that it could embrace or reject. As I mentioned in my previous comments, I envision a biannual meeting of the two governing bodies during the shorter working conferences. These joint meetings would be an opportunity to share ideas and, if necessary, resolve any emerging problems. Together they might also formulate appropriate ballot measures that the entire membership could vote on electronically.

Summary

After careful study of the Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Restructuring of IAML, I concur with some of its recommendations and suggest alternatives to others.

I concur with the following:

1. Disband the Council in its current form
2. Transfer some of the former Council's executive powers to the Board, especially in matters that relate to the permanent operations, standing committees, liaisons, and finances of IAML.
3. Create a Forum of National Representatives

I disagree with the following:

1. Expand the role of the General Assembly
2. Give the Board screening or veto power over the working groups and subcommittees of the professional branches and subject commissions.

I suggest the following alternatives

1. Reconstitute a new Council of the Chairs of the Professional Branches and Subject Commissions (supplemented with rotating national representatives and non-voting chairs of standing committees and the editor of *Fontes*) that is specifically charged to foster innovation within IAML through its creation, approval, and oversight of working groups and subcommittees. The new Council will also be charged to engage the younger membership and to seek new members whose expertise could contribute to specific tasks of working groups and subcommittees. The new Council can elect its own Chair and a secretary to serve as a non-voting member of the Board. The officers of the branches and commissions will be elected as part of the general election of officers and through electronic ballots; the entire membership will be permitted to vote for each position.
2. Disband the General Assembly as a voting body and replace it with electronic voting and an alternative non-binding open forum for the general membership.
3. Consider a biannual rotation of shorter working conferences and full conferences.
4. Require the Board, the new Council and all standing committees, working groups, and subcommittees to meet online frequently throughout the year."

Michael Fingerhut

Former Editor of the IAML Newsletter
Bibliomus, Paris
15 July, 2013

"Thanks to David for his proposal. If I may briefly comment on his analysis and comments:

Actual discussions in the General Assembly tend to be dominated by older, more established, and vocal members.

On this mailing list too, and in particular in this very discussion regarding this crucial issue (of reorganization), whence my partially successful attempt at sitting on my hands. One of the reasons I stepped back from one activity and declined another one was my belief that younger people should step in and take active roles. On the other hand, I don't think one should throw the baby (well, its counterpart on the timeline) with the water; rather, a much more balanced representation of innovation and experience should be encouraged by various active means, which may raise some hard questions.

Disband the General Assembly as a voting body

I don't know where (in which country) IAML is incorporated, but some kinds of not-for-profit organization incorporated in France have the legal obligation to hold a general assembly while others don't. So this may be an external factor governing the (re)organization of IAML.

Other professional organizations I currently belong to - ACM, IEEE - are much larger and don't have GAs at all (nor do their member societies) but usually a board of governors (some current and past officials and a majority of elected members) and an executive committee. [See here](#) how the IEEE CS is governed.

So it may well be that the proposal should be to disband the General Assembly and the Council, strongly increase the representativity in the Board by adding a number of positions anyone could be a candidate for (maybe impose an age limit on some of them, so that to avoid having all of them taken by senior institutional representatives) and create a lean and efficient Executive Committee.

For the advancement and stability of [young professionals'] careers, they need to show concrete evidence of their contributions.

In University-like structures, I think it is done not only by attending working groups, but by presenting "papers" (and even better, have them published in proceedings of some sorts. If so, why not allow "distant presentation" of papers at conferences for those who can't attend?

4. Require the Board, the new Council and all standing committees, working groups, and subcommittees to meet online frequently throughout the year.

... and provide timely online reports of their activities...

Michael”

Pamela Thompson

IAML President 1999-2001
16 July 2013

“Dear All,

I intended to resist commenting on the report in any detail, as debate would be more productive face to face. But, as I can't be at the first Council meeting as an observer, I would like to send some comments, probably at far too great a length for an e-mail. Apologies in advance.

I was a Board member for 12 years (Treasurer, President and Past-President) so have no illusions about the need to speed processes or the importance of communication and wider participation. It is all too easy to underestimate the amount of work Board members have to undertake and to feel that much can be done electronically or by video-conference. In practice, different time zones and work

commitments render those complicated and more time-consuming than “normal” meetings at least twice per year. It is completely different for organisations within Europe or within the USA, for example, to “meet” virtually. If you have participants in New Zealand, Canada, Japan and France finding convenient times is almost impossible. But, there should be no excuse, with the technology now at our disposal, for not communicating in better and more timely fashion, both on the Board and with members at large. It is beginning to happen, but far more could be done, and far more could be communicated and debated online, **IF, IF**, members (on the Board or not) can be willing or can find time to do that. The current debate is symptomatic: so far there has been little comment from the membership on the report, even though many will not be at the Vienna conference and will have no other chance to give their views.

It is almost inevitable that the Board should sometimes be perceived as a clique, making secret decisions. That is only reinforced if little emerges from meetings between conferences and from conferences themselves. It's easy to forget how many members cannot be at conferences and learn nothing of what occurred until *Fontes* arrives many months later. I do not feel that Board minutes should be available to all (there is a valid place for private and open debate), but a quick update of some major decisions and plans could appear on the website quickly, notified to members via the list. My main concern about the abolition of the Council would be that the Board could be perceived as even more of a clique, which it really is not; it's a group of elected or appointed members giving up their time for the good of the association. Whether a group of just eight people can undertake all the work needed is questionable. With a small Board, with or without a Council, it is hard to see how a wide-enough cross-section of views **and** the increased workload which may be necessary could be achieved. Board meetings are not jolly get-togethers; they involve enormous preparation and intense concentration and debate, and are vital. If more communication of activities is needed, that can be done, but perhaps not by just 8 people.

It is obvious that the committee's report could not cover all issues in the short time they had, and John Roberts is right to say that the report does not preclude further debate, reform and indeed other radical changes. However, it is hard to view the Board and its role in isolation when there are so many different structures “beneath” and “alongside” the Board, not just the Council, but also all the committees, branches, commissions and working groups and national branches. Until an improved structure and clearer definition of roles and responsibilities for all those is determined, the existence or otherwise of the Council cannot be easily or fairly decided. They are inter-dependent, but as currently constituted can all appear ineffective or outmoded, as can the relationships between them. It remains a mystery and a source of concern and embarrassment to me why so little emerges during the year from any of IAML's bodies. With a website we should have a vibrant online arena in which all parts of the association could be involved and kept informed. As it is, there is little to engage members, and it is easy for them to feel either excluded or indifferent. This may change with new appointments for work on the website, but it will depend on far more activity from a much wider range of members, many of whom have national IAML responsibilities as well as ever-increasing workloads in their main jobs. It's a very big challenge.

So far as our structures are concerned (and as the Ad Hoc Committee suggests), it is hard not to feel that they need radical reform. Do we still have the right commissions, branches and committees for enormously changed times? A glance at the conference programme reveals so many papers which might fit anywhere in the programme. What defines a Bibliography Commission? What defines a Research Libraries Branch? What is their work? So many institutions have libraries, archives, audio-visual, teaching and research roles which can't be separated. Should we not examine what is now useful and appropriate, overhaul those structures and produce new remits for them? Of course, that can be done, but is it right to abolish a Council (not necessarily a Council as currently constituted) without considering whether a reformed Council could have a necessary or useful role? We should also remember that many Council members obtain funding on the basis that they need to be at Council meetings (though holding them on Sundays increases costs for them). I agree that an advisory body of national representatives could have a useful function, but am somewhat doubtful they would feel they had a convincing role if they were excluded from decision-making, a role they currently have on

the Council. But, if the Council remains and if national representatives still have a place on it, there does need to be a much more formal organisation of who national representatives are, how they are kept informed and how they participate. For most members it is their national branch which works for them, their links to the international body often being tenuous. We reduce national branches' decision-making roles at our peril. After all, it is mainly they who pay for the Association. This could all mean even more work for the Board, but might equally assist them in reaching recommendations, and could even inspire new thinking and vision.

When the decision to hold annual General Assemblies was taken, I was much involved. It was certainly not simply a case of it being more convenient for budgetary reasons. It was far more to ensure more frequent possibilities for the involvement of more members. It is the case that this has resulted in far too much repetition in meetings at conferences, not least because the agendas for each end up being much the same. This does not necessarily have to be. Let's liven them up! But, a General Assembly can never actually reflect the views of the whole Association. More and more members find difficulty in obtaining funding to attend and an increasing number pay for their own attendance. Much is dependent on location. Very often only the wealthiest institutions can afford to pay for conference attendance (and how many are wealthy these days?). It would be a pity if conference attendance becomes possible only for those lucky enough to have conference attendance budgets and time off to attend. That may always have been the case to a large extent, but a meeting in your own country makes attendance far more possible. If we reduce the frequency of meetings, fewer overall participate. Many will say that less frequent meetings would assist, as there would be less cost to the Association and to members. In fact, annual meetings give more people the opportunity to attend, as they may find funding for a location near them, but not for more distant locations. The majority of members have always been excluded from most decision-making at meetings. That can probably only be addressed by more electronic voting, but for that to be meaningful there would have to be far more online activity and information to and from all members, whether in particular posts or not. But, fundamentally, people only get involved in international IAML work when they've been at an international conference.

So much is a matter of time and energy. Members now have much bigger workloads and fewer staff, so IAML work is relegated to less and less free time. It takes much determination and commitment to find time. But, if we want a successful and dynamic association, we make time somehow because we believe in the importance of IAML. And because the experiences and contacts we make in that work enrich us enormously.

This is all commentary, which does little to aid conclusions and proposes no solutions. I suppose that overall I am disappointed that we have looked at the structures of IAML from only an administrative point of view. Should the structures not do far more than simply organise voting, organise conferences, administer the work of IAML groups, and oversee budgets? These are necessary tasks, but for me just as important (far more important?) are having a vision for the Association, planning its work with strategic and action plans, and ensuring that we have the best means of interacting, communicating and making opportunities for as many members as possible to participate and contribute. This may not have been within the Ad Hoc Committee's remit, but I do feel that to consider structures in isolation without considering in detail what the membership as a whole needs and would like may be unwise. We need to engage more people for the future and give more members a structure through which they can work profitably. Can all those things be achieved by a small Board? Could we create a Council which would be willing to be properly and continuously involved throughout the year? Could a large General Assembly alone take all that forward? Others are putting forward detailed proposals which must merit discussion. I have simply picked up a few points.

So, what now? The report is on the Council's agenda. Will they vote on it? Will the General Assembly vote on it? Would it not be good to publish in advance the agenda for the General Assembly – even if items have to be added later to take account of Council decisions? How much time can possibly be found for debate and discussion? Those who have commented to date are all old IAML hands/heads with good English. Please, IAML members – and especially those of you who can't be in Vienna, say what you think! And apologies that this is all in English and of such a very unreasonable length.....

Pam Thompson”

Judy Tsou

President, Society for American Music

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Head, Music Library

Lecturer, School of Music

University of Washington

16 July 2013

“Pam,

Thanks for a well-reasoned piece. I think your point about not abolishing the Council because of conference attendance support is a valid one. We certainly don't want to diminish attendance at conferences as it feeds on the vitality of the Association. If we DO retain the Council, then its role should be re-defined so that they are not the ultimate decision makers. This will enable the Board make decisions in a timely fashion. I do differ from your opinion that Board minutes should be kept secret. As a democratic institution with elected officials, we need to have transparency to avoid appearance of cliquishness and elitism. I understand that sometimes there are sensitive issues that should not be shared. In those instances, the Board could go into “executive sessions,” whereby the minutes for that segment of the Board meeting would not be shared. MLA, the US Branch of IAML, works this way, as do other Societies for which I am familiar.

My two-cents’

Judy”

Barbara Wiermann

Hochschule für Musik und Theater

"Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy" Leipzig

Bibliothek

17 July 2013

“Dear all,

although not being a native English speaker, and not having years and years of experience in IAML I would like to send a few comments:

1) I would like to recall the mandate of the ad-hoc committee:

It was “charged with investigating possible changes to the structure of the organisation, focusing specifically on the administrative structure of IAML (Board,

Council and General Assembly).” The Terms of Reference further state that “The

purpose of any proposed restructure is to ensure that IAML has an improved decision-

making process, thus making it a more responsive and effective organisation. IAML

must have a structure and strength of purpose that will support its

goals and assist its members to operate effectively on both a national and international level.”

I think it's good to first focus on the structure. When we have finished this, we can go in more details: What commissions and committees are needed in our days etc.? This can be done with a wide participation of the GA. But we cannot rebuilt everything at once.

2) A main question discussed on IAML-1 was, whether we need a three tier or a two tier structure
Or whether we need a Council and in which form. (Of course, this is the main point of the report too)

In my opinion, strengthening the board, accelerates decisions as it is needed in our times.

Arguments against abolishing the council on iaml-1 were (in my words)
a) --Young people, who cannot come to the conference, feel excluded, if they cannot vote in the GA --

I think, if anybody attends the conference and there are two council sessions where he or she as a normal member only can attend as a observer and cannot vote on main issues, he or she would feel even more excluded. It seems a little bit of "second class membership".

b) -- Being member of a council makes it easier to get funding --
I am not sure about funding in other countries. As I can see it, you get funding first for giving a paper. Beyond that, it should not make a difference whether you are a member of a commission, committee, working group or the suggested Forum of National Representatives (most of the Council members are going to attend this suggested Forum, and I cannot imagine anybody deciding about funding, checking first whether the applicant has voting rights or not). Besides in the meeting of National Representatives in Montreal the possibility of Posters with national developments were discussed (also for funding reasons)

c) -- the GA is too vaguely defined --
It should be no difficulty to check, who is member of the GA. When voting we do it always in Germany and we have mostly institutional members.

3) Furthermore new roles for the Council were suggested
In my opinion it's important that the Board is informed and gets an idea of the diversity of Music librarianship in the world. To promote this, the Forum of National representaties was suggested.
Beyond that, it seems important to me to have innovative spirit and responsibilities in the hands of one body (the Board). It seems to me, that only like this new ideas can be pursued consequently. For this reason I do not like a second body, but small efficient groups with concrete tasks (working groups, where anybody can engage in their special fields and interests).
And please keep in mind that IAML is not a solitaire. For many central developments in (music) librarianship we need to interact with other (library / music) associations and bodies, which makes efficient action even more complicated.

I am looking forward to meeting many of you in Vienna continuing the discussion face-to face.
Have a save trip!
Barbara”