INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF THE PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION OF CULTURAL PROPERTY

AG5/5
(Original French)

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
5th Session
Venice, April 14th, 15th, 16th & 17th, 1969.

POLICY FOR THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CENTRE
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Abstract

The peculiar character of the Centre is examined, its main activities defined and consideration given as to how these might be fostered and what this would involve as regards structure. Conclusions are reached regarding the augmentation of the staff establishment and the enquiry has been found of value in considering housing and the distribution of activities in the new headquarters of S. Michele.

Basic Considerations

A rational policy for the Centre must be based on the recognition and development of the peculiar possibilities offered by its nature as an organisation. These determine its character and derive from the following structural features.

(a) - The Centre is an independent intergovernmental organisation and as such it is expected to have regular relations with the official departments and institutions of member states, the united nations and its specialised agencies and to offer its services in cooperating with them and coordinating their activities as required.

(b) - The Centre is at the same time a specialised organisation in the sense that it has at its disposal the permanent services of specialists enabling it to keep closely in touch with problems in the various fields of its competence, with the ultimate aim of applying its resources to the best advantage for the conservation of cultural property on a world scale.

(c) - The Centre is an institution of moderate size and means created to consider quality before quantity. The simplicity of its functioning, i.e. freedom from rigid and complex administrative requirements, makes it possible for the Centre to take versatile and rapid action in situations requiring immediate attention and to maintain close contact whenever required.
(d) - The Centre maintains close relations with ICOM, ICOMOS and IIC and with all other non-governmental organisations which have their own experts in various fields of conservation. Regular contact with experts ensures that adequate attention is given to all facets of its programme and this consolidates the work of the Centre, compensating at the same time for any limitations that might result from its inter-governmental status.

The best use of the instrument constituted by the Centre consists in exploiting its inherent possibilities as defined in the Statutes, the combination of which differentiates the Centre from all the other institutions with similar aims.

These varying fields of activity are logically linked together to constitute an organic whole involving, briefly,

1) - gathering, study and diffusing information
2) - publications
3) - participating actively in designing and carrying through training programmes
4) - promoting research
5) - organising missions and specialised assistance.

These five items will now be considered with respect to the function of the Centre and of the structure necessary for their realization and development.

1) - Gathering, Study and Diffusing Information

Study - Processing - Diffusion

Study is the basis and prerequisite for all the activities of the Centre. Information is gathered in the Library and Documentation services, processed in the files and thus made ready to supply the various needs.

This makes it possible for the Secretariat to keep up to date with the situation in all sectors and all countries and to answer the various requests for information addressed to the staff. The documentation includes card systems of experts, specialized institutions, information on products and on technical equipment, producers and distributors, etc.

Naturally, the library is regularly used for consultation by visitors and, in particular, by the students attending courses organised by the Centre and by its supporting institutions in Rome.
The Xerox and duplicating services are essential in diffusing information whether in reply to specific questions or in manifolding technical and other reports from the Centre archive.

Structure necessary for the functioning of the Information and Documentation Section:

- Librarian
- Documentalist
- Participation of typists
- Participation of the scientific staff for research, analyses and classification of documents
- Occasional participation from outside experts
- Occasional support in translation work

2) - Publications

As regards publications, two structures have been established:

(a) - The series "Works and Publications" common to the Centre and the ICOM Committee for Conservation. The publishing has been entrusted to a French firm (Eyrolles) who have recently made an agreement with a British firm (Allen and Unwin) for diffusion in English-speaking countries. There is now a serious need for an Editorial Board with consultants to read the manuscripts that are submitted in various languages and to help in proof reading and in translating technical works.

(b) - The International Committee for Coordination of Publications on Conservation established on the initiative of the Centre and ICOM in order to coordinate efforts of a larger group, namely of the Centre, ICOM, ICOMOS and IIC in the field of publication. This particular Committee is able to cast its net over a wide area and will be progressively developed. An application to a foundation for financial assistance may result in making it possible to reinforce the structure, e.g., by appointing an editor and developing a regular programme in the field of translations. The work of this Committee will be closely integrated with the Centre.

3) - Participation in Training Programmes

The General Assembly has already established the principle, in 1967, that the Centre should contribute to the training of specialists by relying on national institutions, and giving support to their development and the internationalization of their training activities. Only such an arrangement can provide adequate teaching and working facilities.
The scientific staff of the Centre can only exceptionally do teaching itself, as it has to devote itself by priority to studying the situation, establishing programmes and controlling their execution.

The Centre shall normally act at the level of advanced training and specialisation, leaving basic training to national and regional initiative (cf. Report by P. Coremans on Training at the General Conference of ICOM in 1965 and the Long Term Programme accepted by the General Conference of ICOM in 1967). Priority will be given to the training of monitors, i.e. specialists able to teach or direct a workshop, as these should constitute the necessary basis for any further development of training.

Training can and should be organised both as individual "stages" (the probationer system) and as class lectures and demonstrations, according to the requirements primarily of quality. The immediate aim must be to establish reputable standards in a series of pilot projects.

Structures to develop relative to Training Programmes

The Centre will have to examine systematically the various possibilities of making agreements with national institutions that are able to collaborate in training so that it can direct individuals or groups to the institutions best adapted for their purposes and follow them during their "stage".

The function and characteristics of the Centre's Laboratory will have to be studied in consultation with the cooperating institutions in order to build up adequate complementary services.

Elaboration of training programmes - individual and collective - and their control will absorb a great part of the time of the scientific staff. Considering also its other activities, the staff will clearly have to be augmented in the not too distant future.

The first monitors to be acceptable as such - if necessary after special training - will no doubt be from institutions on which the Centre will lean for its training programmes. To these will be added assistants chosen from among old students from preceding years. Together they will form an auxiliary teaching force that can be called upon for occasional services.

The training programme will include the progressive realization of a special kind of documentation devoted e.g. to tools, products, reconstruction of ancient technical processes, conservation and restoration procedures, etc.
4) - **Promoting Research**

This can be done notably in the following ways:

a) - by giving **research contracts** to specialists or institutions for a definite programme,
b) - by **fostering contact and collaboration** between specialists having common interests, suggesting they deal with neglected subjects and by supporting well-elaborated research programmes and **meetings of specialists**. This way of promoting research has already been successfully applied in collaboration of the Centre with the ICOM Committee for Conservation and with the Committees of ICOMOS.

As a matter of fact, these committees enable working groups to be set up to establish programmes of study which may be supported by the Centre whenever considered desirable.

**Necessary Structure concerned with Research**

**Liaison facilities.**

i.e. Institutional links with ICOM, ICOMOS and IIC should be encouraged and progressively elaborated in order to improve continuously the conditions of collaboration.

It is clear as already emphasised, that the scientific staff will have to keep up to date with development of research in all fields in order to perfect the programmes of the Centre particularly in regard to seminars and publications.

5) - **Missions and Specialised Assistance**

Member countries have a right by priority to special services from the Centre and the Centre should not limit itself to answering questions. It should keep itself informed concerning problems and make use of its international information to make constructive proposals not only from its own resources, but also by negotiation with those of other countries. For instance, by underwriting missions of experts, regional seminars, meetings or exchange of specialists, fellowships, etc.

A special fund for emergency missions has already been allocated and being self-replenishing is always available for use in case of sudden catastrophe.

**Necessary Structure relating to Missions**

**Liaison facilities.**

Here again it is a question of having sufficient scientific staff and
well organised system of information. The various kinds of inter-
vention should then be decided every two years according to the budget 
and the agreements made with the interested countries.

Conclusion

1) - The policy outlined herein has all its roots in the ten years of 
activity of the Centre. Its clear enunciation has been considered 
desirable at this time not only so that development can be planned 
logically, but so that the potentialities of the Centre may be appreciated 
by a wider public.

2) - The scientific staff has the vast responsibility of assembling and 
studying facts, of organising and controlling schedules of work and 
of replying to technical enquiries. It must be added to as the work 
grows in volume and must keep itself as far as possible free from purely 
administrative tasks.

3) - In considering the future developments of the Centre, it is essential 
to avoid any tendency towards a possible lack of harmony between 
its various fields of activity. This is especially so in the case of the 
cultural and the scientific aspects of our problem. These must march 
together. This applies not only to internal activities, but also to the 
various activities carried out jointly with non-governmental organisations 
and with national institutions.

4) - The administrative structure of the Centre should be re-examined and 
the personnel augmented as the budget increases and work expands, 
maintaining a just balance between scientific activities and those that are 
purely administrative in character.