

PRESIDENT'S MID-TERM REPORT

December 2012

Much of my first 'half term' as President has involved some aspect of travel, all of which has gone amazingly well but all of which has been rather time-consuming. In addition, of course, there has also been ongoing routine engagement in various matters of the Society throughout this period, including semi-regular telecom meetings with the Executive Director and/or the senior executive team (President, President-Elect, Senior Vice-President, Executive Director). Overall, a key focus has been on Vision 2020 and our strategic directions. Some highlights of the past six months are provided below.

Vision 2020

- As noted at our Board meeting in June, the key focus with respect to our strategic plan is to move forward with actions that fulfill the intent of our three strategic directions. Part of our next steps was to develop communications with our executive team and our membership. These communications documents were developed over the summer and sent out accordingly.
- After assuming the role of President and getting out my first E-letter, I did get some positive feedback about our strategic directions, particularly the ones on youth and infrastructure. I remain very positive about the three strategic directions being excellent guides for us in moving forward.
- A key message to continue to get out, and we all have a role in this, is to encourage alignment of activities with one or more of our strategic directions. It is by rowing in unison that we will go somewhere! As a member of the leadership team, I encourage all of the Board members and others to continue to reinforce the need to align with the Vision 2020 plan.

Cold Regions Conference and Section/Region visit – Quebec City (Aug. 19 – 23)

- My role at this conference, which was also attended by Andy Herrmann, President of ASCE, was to bring welcoming and closing remarks and to present the Can-Am Amity Award (Reini Schuster from U. of Waterloo).
- The conference was chaired by Guy Dore from U. Laval. The event was well-organized and quite successful. A total of 249 people attended, with 11 countries represented. My understanding is that the financial outcome of this conference was very positive. Although jointly sponsored with ASCE, CSCE had financial responsibility.
- I was disappointed that our Cold Regions Division did not play any role in this conference. The ASCE Cold Regions group was quite active (and evidently so).
- As part of my visit to Quebec City, I met with folks from both the Quebec Region (chair, Tony Begin, and treasurer, Suzanne St. Laurent, who was also involved with the organization of the Cold Regions Conference) and Quebec Section (past-chair, François Labrecque and Sylvain Carrier). Indeed, the Region/Section hosted us with a wonderful dinner at the Le Continental Restaurant Vieux Quebec. I am pleased to note that the Quebec Section is strong.

Hong Kong Branch AGM and Section visit (Vancouver, Vancouver Island) – Hong Kong (Sep. 4 – 8)

- This trip was the outcome of our Board meeting in Niagara last November, whereby it was promised that the President would visit in 2012-13. As it turned out, it was necessary to ‘align’ the trip with the AGM and dinner of the Branch.
- Approximately 40 people attended the Branch AGM, while about 150 people came to the dinner. There were a number of high-ranking dignitaries at the event, including Canada’s trade commissioner representative in Hong Kong. The Branch did a wonderful job of raising the CSCE (and Canadian) flags; indeed, the leadership team is to be commended for the evidently strong connection displayed with Canada. At the AGM, Moe Cheung stepped down as chair (he was the inaugural chair, in place since the Branch formed in 2007) and was replaced by Paul Pang. I have every confidence that Paul will do well in his role as chair; we need to do what we can to support him in his work.
- Some observations: the Hong Kong Section has been reasonably active in its work; there is good student engagement (indeed, two students co-MC’d the AGM dinner and did a great job); there is potential for growth; and I gained a better appreciation for the matter of ‘title’ for more senior members.
- As part of the visit, I also attended a meeting and, later, lunch with HKIE. HKIE is a relatively powerful group in Hong Kong insofar as they serve both a ‘learned society’ role as well as a regulatory role (i.e., licensing engineers for practice). HKIE also arranged a tour of a recently-completed, high-tech office tower (ICC Building); it is among the 10 tallest buildings in the world (118 stories).
- On my return to Canada, I was able to have a very nice four-hour lunch meeting with representatives of both the Vancouver Section (Chelene Wong, chair, and Stanley Chan), Vancouver Island Section (Kevin Baskin, chair), and Rishi Gupta, Vice-Chair of IAC.
- I am very pleased to report an outcome of my visit to the Hong Kong Branch was the arrangements made for a Canadian member of CSCE (Garry Mak) to deliver a technical presentation to the members on November 8. The feedback from this initiative has been very positive.

Infrastructure Summit – Regina (Sept. 12)

- I was able to make arrangements to attend the session at which the FCM and other partners presented the highlights of the infrastructure report card. Guy Felio represented CSCE at this event. FCM made a point of highlighting the \$171B infrastructure deficit for the four items identified in the report card (systems for each of water, wastewater and stormwater, as well as roads).
- I was also able to attend the first NLT on the infrastructure report card, which was held in Saskatoon on Sept. 13. Approximately 40 people attended, including many non-members (e.g., municipal government leaders).

EIC Board meeting and Section/Region visit – Toronto (Sept. 15 – 16)

- The CSCE President is a member of the EIC Board.
- Two key items of discussion: EIC is going through the same process as we are to re-register as a not-for-profit organization; while we have differences over the

matter of EIC Fellowships, we did make some progress to achieve what is desired by CSCE (and this has been communicated to Lloyd Waugh, Chair of H&A).

- As part of my visit to Toronto, I was able to participate in an ahhoc meeting of the Ontario Region, which was organized by the VP Ontario, James Garland. Section representatives from both the Toronto Section (Nigel Parker, YP rep and webmaster) and London Section (Tom Mara, chair) were present.

CGS Board meeting/conference and Section visit – Winnipeg (Sept. 29 – Oct. 1)

- CSCE is invited to participate at the CGS Board meeting in a non-voting capacity.
- The meeting provided a good opportunity for me to observe where we have similarities and where we have differences.
- CGS is also dealing with the issue of re-registering as a not-for-profit organization.
- Richard Bathurst from RMC will take over January 1 as the next CGS President (two-year term), replacing Bryan Watts.
- CGS has relatively few student members (~70). Their student membership fee was reduced from \$70 to \$45, which is sufficient to cover the variable costs associated with the memberships.
- I brought welcoming remarks to the opening of the CGS annual conference. Approximately 350 people were registered for the conference.
- As part of my visit to Winnipeg, I was able to meet with the chair, Shawn Clark, and vice-chair, Tricia Stadnyk, of the Manitoba Section over lunch. It was a great meeting, and I believe it was useful in providing support to their work in helping to get the Section back on its feet.

ASCE annual conference and meeting – Montreal (Oct. 17 - 20)

- I attended the ASCE annual conference and meeting, which was held outside of the USA for only the second time in the organization's history. I brought greetings from CSCE at the opening ceremonies.
- The event afforded me some opportunity to meet with a number of members of the ASCE senior leadership team, including outgoing President Andy Herrmann, incoming President Greg DiLoreto, President-Elect Andy Over, Executive Director Pat Natale, and many others.
- As with us, a key focus of ASCE is on the need for attention to the critical state of the nation's infrastructure.
- I was also able to spend most of an afternoon with our Executive Director, Doug Salloum, at our office in Montreal. Together, we also met on two occasions with Joyce Comparato, AVP, Director Organizational and Employee Development with AECOM with respect to a potential corporate relationship.
- While in Montreal, I was also able to meet with President-Elect Yves Cadotte and Jean-Pierre Pilon, chair of the 2013 annual conference.

China trip – Tianjin, Wuhan and Beijing (Oct. 31 – Nov. 11)

- The trip to China was multi-faceted and included visits to various places in three cities, namely Tianjin, Wuhan and Beijing.

- The trip was coordinated by Todd Chan, VP International and member of IAC, and Jeanne Huang, Special Envoy to China. Todd and Jeanne did a great job at ensuring that the CSCE members were well taken care of throughout the trip.
- Aside from Todd, Jeanne and myself, CSCE members on the trip included Ron Droste, chair of IAC, and Ed McBean.
- In Tianjin, we participated in an international water forum held at Tianjin University, which was attended by about 50 people.
- In Wuhan, we attended the annual conference of the Chinese Hydraulic Engineering Society (CHES), with some 500 or more delegates in attendance. I was invited to bring greetings at the opening ceremonies. As well, Ed and I gave presentations at the international session of the conference.
- In Beijing, we held meetings with officials from the South-North water diversion project office, and with the China Association for International Exchange of Personnel. We are hopeful that there may be opportunities for CSCE members to be involved in China through either of these organizations. IAC is following up on these potential opportunities.
- We also held a short meeting with the General Secretary of CHES, Li Zantang. CSCE is a co-organizer of the 2014 CHES conference, which will be held in Tianjin.
- More details on the China trip can be found in the November 2012 issue of the President's E-letter.

Other items:

- During my visits with Section representatives in Vancouver and Toronto, and also in Saskatoon, I have learned about some frustration with how we are now signing up student members. I have discussed this matter with our Executive Director. I suggest that we review the situation with input from the student chapters. Perhaps the issue can be resolved with some modest 'tweaking'.
- The Vancouver Section has raised the matter of the Section getting some financial support to attend the annual conference. While I heard the suggestion, I also advised them that the Sections are in many ways in a better position to take care of such financial matters. The Vancouver Island chair was in agreement with my position on this (in part because he has a reasonable understanding of our financial operations at a national level).
- At each of my meetings with Sections/Regions, I have reminded the leadership team of our Vision 2020 plan and three strategic directions and the need to engage in activities that support the plan/directions. I have also reviewed the simple 'operational model' that I developed in my role as Senior VP a couple of years ago. The model is particularly useful to those that are struggling to maintain regular programming.