



International Federation of Endodontic Associations

Headquarters Office: 211 E. Chicago Ave., Ste. 1100, Chicago, IL 60611-2691 USA
312/266-7255 Ext. 3025, Fax 312/266-0387
www.IFEAendo.org

*Seventh Endodontic World Congress, August 22-27, 2007, Vancouver BC,
Canada*

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President's Report - Annual General Meeting 2007

It is my pleasure to present my last report as IFEA President. It hardly seems 16 months since we last met in Honolulu for the 2006 Annual General Meeting! Since then, the IFEA Executive has continued to be very busy and our Canadian colleagues have been even busier with arrangements for the 7th World Endodontic Congress here in Vancouver.

It has been wonderful to see so many people here with the number of participants reaching 1,058 in the last few days. The Organising Committee, under the chairmanship of Dr Fred Weinstein has worked incredibly hard over the last six years to ensure that this Congress would be a great success as well as a most enjoyable time for all participants. Fred has been helped by his Co-Chairs, Dr's Raymond Greenfeld and Barry Chapnick. The Scientific Committee, jointly chaired by Dr's Cal Torneck and Marshall Peikoff, arranged a fantastic and varied scientific programme with 10 Plenary speakers, 32 country representative speakers, 7 Workshop presenters, 4 symposia speakers, 104 poster presenters, 17 oral research paper presenters - a grand total of 174 presentations. What a feast of endodontics and thank you to all the presenters. The Canadian Academy of Endodontists has supported this Congress and we are grateful to Dr Jeff Coil, the current president, and his predecessors for this support from the CAE. On behalf of all members and participants, I sincerely and gratefully thank Fred, Raymond, Barry, Cal, Marshall and Jeff plus all of our Canadian colleagues, their wives, partners and families for their work on the various committees for this Congress – we had always predicted that it would be a fantastic meeting and it has been even better than that!

In last year's report, and via a letter to all members in June 2006, I outlined the discussions regarding the development of a possible "global forum for endodontics" that the IFEA Officers had been having with representatives from the European Society of Endodontics (ESE), the Asian Pacific Endodontic Confederation (APEC), the American Association of Endodontists (AAE), the Canadian Academy of Endodontists and the Asociacion Mexicana de Endodoncia (AME). These discussions continued during the Honolulu AAE Annual Session as well as subsequently via email correspondence. Members may recall that suggestions had been made to try and unify the various major endodontic groups from around the world.

It saddens me to report that these discussions have not been as fruitful as IFEA had hoped. Initially, IFEA supported the concept of developing and opening the lines of communication with our fellow endodontic organisations as our overall aims are very similar – that is, the advancement of endodontics and endodontic education throughout the world or in the specific region represented. IFEA suggested several simple methods for achieving this and we strongly argued that the

President: Paul V. Abbott, Oral Health Center of W.Australia., 17 Monash Ave., Nedlands, WA 6009 AUSTRALIA – 61/893467665, Fax: 61/893467666, email: pvabbott@bigpond.net.au

Past President: Adam Stabholz, 13 Rabbi Benjamin St., Jerusalem, 96306 ISRAEL – 9722/6528778, Fax: 9722/6439219, email: adstab@md2.huji.ac.il

President-Elect: Anthony E. Hoskinson, 7 Chequers Drive, Prestwood, Bucks HP16 9DU UK – 1494/891133, Fax: 1494/868624, email: th@endo.co.uk

Secretary: Joseph D. Maggio, 120 Oakbrook Ctr. Mall #714, Oak Brook, IL 60523 USA – 630/654-3331, Fax: 630/954-2910, email: IFEAscretary@aol.com

Treasurer: Jean-Yves Cochet, 153 Bd Haussmann, Paris 75008, FRANCE, Phone 33 142563770, Fax 33 142563771, email: jycochet@hotmail.com

establishment of a new international organisation was fraught with danger for the existing organisations, and in particular for IFEA. We pointed out that there was no need for, and no logical reason to have, another international group when IFEA already existed and represented 27 nations worldwide and it had over 20 years experience of doing so. IFEA did outline that it was willing to be review its By-Laws and operational methods to see if changes could be made to enable us to incorporate some of the ideas being proposed.

The IFEA Officers subsequently did review our By-Laws and our position with respect to the proposals and we advised that it would not be possible to meet the various demands that the other participants in the discussions were imposing. In particular, the proposed time frame (three months) for changing our By-Laws was impossible to meet under our existing By-Laws, and any such changes would have to be considered very carefully by all of our members before we could proceed. In essence, this required an Annual General Meeting with adequate notice of any proposed changes being given to all members so they could be carefully considered and discussed at the "local level". As the next scheduled AGM was not until now (August 2007), IFEA advised the other participants that we were not able and not willing to continue along the lines being proposed and that we believed further and more detailed discussions and considerations were required. We particularly emphasised that we viewed the discussions to date as being threatening towards IFEA and its existence, and that this was unhealthy for the profession at large.

We also advised them that our experience as an international organisation for over 20 years has led us to believe that most of the proposed aims for the new group were unrealistic, largely unachievable and certainly unaffordable financially. Those that did not fit these criteria were already being done by IFEA – such as regular scientific meetings and promoting education and research. Unfortunately, the other participating organisations did not accept our advice and they have decided to proceed with their proposals which disappointed us immensely.

The other participants also promised IFEA that we would still be included in the discussions and that we would be kept informed of developments. However, to date, we have not received any further contact from this group and so I am unable to report what is currently happening although I believe they are progressing with their ideas. Since initially writing this report last week, we have been advised through other sources that a draft constitution and draft by-laws have been written and presented to the AAE Executive, the CAE Executive, the APEC Executive and soon to the ESE Annual General Assembly – but nothing has been given to IFEA! As mentioned above, IFEA has been extremely disappointed by this and we feel that the actions taken to proceed have significantly violated one of the proposed aims for this new organisation, namely that of promoting fellowship and goodwill throughout the world.

As I have reported previously to all member societies (copies of my reports and letters are on our website and have been distributed today to participants of this Congress), the above developments could have very serious consequences for IFEA as any such new group would be in direct "competition" with IFEA for membership, participation, sponsorship, finances, etc, etc. Hence, I urge you all to discuss this with your own national association/society executives and to provide us with your views of the situation. Several countries have already done this and I have been very heartened and pleased by the support we have received from our members. Please continue to support us in this regard and be wary of any approaches regarding an alternative international group being established. We will discuss this further today in the General Business section of this meeting.

On a happier note, the IFEA website continues to develop and is now our major means of communication with our member countries. My thanks go to our IFEA Secretary, Dr Joe Maggio who has worked tirelessly to develop and maintain the website. I encourage representatives of all

member societies to go to the website and explore its contents – make www.IFEAendo.org one of your favourite sites now! New material will be added as it is supplied to Dr Maggio and it is essential that all member societies contribute so the website becomes a source of news, information, reports, forthcoming events, etc. Please support the website and spread the word amongst your own society members with encouragement for them to visit it. We are also extremely grateful to Sybron Endo for their continued support with the website.

Finally, I wish to record my sincere thanks to all members of the IFEA Executive with whom I work closely on all matters. We have a great and very cohesive team with Tony Hoskinson as President-Elect, Joe Maggio as Secretary, Jean-Yves Cochet as Treasurer and Adam Stabholz as Immediate Past President. The real workhorse of IFEA Executives in the past has been the Secretary and this year has been no exception – I would like to single out Joe Maggio for a special mention and for a special thank you from all the other members of Executive for all the great work he does for IFEA. Joe, without you, IFEA would not be in such a strong and organised position. I would also like to thank the Regent Directors and the Country Representatives from each of our member societies – your role is extremely important as you are the link back to our members. Please continue to communicate with both us and your own national society/association. I also wish to single out Tony Hoskinson for a special “thank you”. Tony’s voice of reason and his diplomacy will no doubt serve us well as he takes over the helm of IFEA after today’s meeting.

One of IFEA’s objectives, as listed in our By-Laws, is to “*cultivate and foster international professional endodontic relationships*”. I believe we do achieve this as a Federation but it is probably more noticeable on an individual basis. The annual meetings and our Congresses bring people together so friendships can be made and maintained. I have certainly made many, many friends by being involved with IFEA over the last 14 years since I first represented Australia at the AGM in Hawaii in 1994. I have appreciated the opportunities to meet many new friends and to travel to many new places. I am extremely honoured to have been selected to serve this organisation as an officer and in particular it has been one of the highlights of my career to have been considered worthy enough to serve as your President for the last three years. I thank you for providing me with this opportunity and I thank you for your support of IFEA.

In conclusion, the past year has been busy but enjoyable. Thank you to my wife, Jacky, for her support and her involvement in what I do; thank you to all our members for their continuing support and a special thank you to the individuals who keep IFEA functioning so well. Thank you again to our Congress organisers for a fantastic meeting and I look forward to seeing you all again at our next Annual General Meeting back here in Vancouver in 2008.

Yours sincerely,



Prof. Paul V. Abbott
President, IFEA