

3.2 Central Bureau

The IERS Central Bureau (CB), hosted and funded by Bundesamt für Kartographie und Geodäsie (BKG), organized and documented two IERS Directing Board (DB) meetings: No. 35, April 20, 2002, Observatoire de Paris, Paris, France; No. 36, November 22, 2002, Bavarian Academy of Sciences, Munich, Germany. Between these meetings the CB coordinated the work of the DB.

The CB contributed to the discussion of the role of IERS in the new IAG structure and in the framework of the IAG Project “Integrated Global Geodetic Observing System (IGGOS)”. New possibilities of funding were searched through the Sixth Framework Programme of the European Community for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration activities for the period 2002 to 2006. The CB prepared in the name of all European partners of the IERS an Expression of Interest for a *Network of Excellence* related to the thematic area Space with its two components Galileo and GMES. EU received far more proposals (171) than anticipated. As most of the proposals for a NoE, the IERS proposal EPISTAGE has been declined because the applications were targeting rather in the direction of “cooperation” than of “integration” as expected by the EU. The CB compiled a list of IERS Associate Members, which was approved by the DB (see section 2.3).

In 2002, the CB organized two Workshops in cooperation with other IERS components:

- IERS Workshop on the Implementation of the New IAU Resolutions, Observatoire de Paris, Paris, France, 18–19 April 2002;
- IERS Workshop on Combination Research and Global Geophysical Fluids, Bavarian Academy of Sciences, Munich, Germany, 18–21 November 2002.

About 80 participants took part in each of these workshops. The Proceedings have been published or are in preparation as IERS Technical Notes (see below). The CB participated also in the organisation of a splinter meeting of the Combination Research Centres held during the EGS General Assembly in Nice in April 2002.

The CB presented the activities of IERS with oral and poster presentations at the EGS General Assembly in Nice, the AGU Spring Meeting in Washington and the WEGENER General Assembly in Athens.

IERS components maintain individually about 20 separate web sites. The central IERS site <www.iers.org>, established by the CB, gives access to all other sites, offers information on the structure of the IERS, its products and publications and provides contact addresses as well as general facts on Earth rotation studies. It contains also electronic versions of IERS publications, a list of meet-

ings related to the work of the IERS, and a large link list for IERS, Earth rotation in general and related fields. Throughout 2002 the web site was regularly enlarged and updated. All changes are documented in a “What was new” page.

IERS Technical Note (TN) No. 29, containing the Proceedings of the Paris Workshop (see above), appeared as an online version in July and in printed form in November 2002. It was edited by the CB together with the members of the Workshop’s Organizing Committee, mainly with Nicole Capitaine. Work started on TN 30, which will contain the Proceedings of the Munich Workshop.

The IERS Annual Report 2000, prepared as an online version in 2001, was printed in May 2002. The CB edited and published also the IERS Annual Report 2001 in online and printed form. It appeared in November (online) and December 2002. Besides the reports of the IERS components, it contains information on the IERS compiled by the CB. Funds for printing the Technical Note and the Annual Report were provided by BKG and by FAGS.

During the year 2002, 17 IERS Messages (Nos. 20 – 37) were edited and distributed by the CB. They contain news from the IERS and from related services as well as announcements of conferences.

The CB continued to maintain its address database of IERS users. There were about 2000 users in 2002 with valid addresses who subscribed to IERS publications for e-mail and regular mail distribution. A considerable number of new users were added. Address and subscription information has regularly been updated.

In March 2002 the IERS database project started at the CB. A scientific position for this project is funded for 3 years by the German Ministry of Education and Sciences within the “Geotechnologien-Programm”. The goal of the project is to build a dynamic and database-driven information system to coordinate the data and information flow between all institutions within the IERS. Therefore, all relevant IERS data and products should be archived at the CB. The metadata information of all products should be modelled within a database to allow the users to search for specific data with respect to space, time and contents. As a first step the results of a product review done by the IERS Analysis Coordinator have been compiled and put into new Web pages of the IERS products. Their structure – now more concise and uniform – can be regarded as a starting point for the data modelling for the IERS database. In parallel, the concept for the new database system has been developed. All components of the system, the database management system as well as the methods to access and display the data through a Web based interface, are based on open source software. First applications have been implemented to evaluate the efficiency of the proposed concept with respect to its software components.

Bernd Richter, Wolfgang R. Dick, Wolfgang Schwegmann