

1 Foreword

The IERS Annual Report for 2004 closely follows the same scheme as the Report for 2003, reflecting the overall structure of the Service. However, the reader will find that the IERS established two new Working Groups (WG on Site Survey and Co-location and WG on Combination) that started their important work in 2004 and whose activities are described in subsection 3.7.

The IERS Combination Pilot Project that was launched at the IERS Retreat in 2003 (for details see IERS Annual Report for 2003, section 4.1) unfortunately proceeded somewhat slower than originally planned and expected. However, some progress has been made whose results were discussed at the IERS Workshop on the Combination Pilot Project (Napa, December 2004). Section 4 is devoted to this important meeting.

The year 2004 was also a year in which several changes in the composition of the IERS Directing Board were made – they are reflected in Appendix 2. Several colleagues, whose terms in DB expired, were replaced by newcomers. Among them, the change of the DB Chair, effective since the beginning of 2005, took place. My four-year term as chairman, as well as my extended term as IAU Representative, expired by the end of 2004. I was replaced in the position of IAU Representative by Nicole Capitaine (Observatoire de Paris), and the new members of the DB elected in December 2004 as the new Chair Chopo Ma (NASA GSFC). I am sure that both of these choices were excellent; I congratulate Nicole and Chopo to their new positions, and I wish them (and the other DB members, too) much success in their future work.

I would like to use this occasion to thank all outgoing DB members for their efforts in coordinating the complex work of the IERS, and, last but not least, to the personnel of the Central Bureau in Frankfurt a.M., headed by Bernd Richter, for their perfect work in assuring all administrative tasks of the whole Service.

This list of novelties is not meant to be complete – should you want to learn more about the rich IERS activities and products in 2004, please open the Report and read the sections that follow.

Jan Vondrák, past Chair of the IERS DB