

Fred Baynes was educated in the UK where he obtained a BSc in geology from Bristol University, an MSc in engineering geology from Imperial College and a PhD from Newcastle University relating to research on weathered rocks.

After working for a site investigation contractor in the UK for a couple of years, he immigrated to Australia in 1980, where he has worked as an engineering geologist for contractors, consultants and utilities.

For the last 20 years, Fred has been an independent consultant-engineering geologist with a continuing love of fieldwork and is now based in Central Victoria, Australia. He provides advice to major projects in the civil, mining and oil and gas sectors throughout the world. The advice provided invariably centres around "getting the geology right" and developing effective engineering geological models of all sorts to facilitate project delivery.

He is a member of the Australian Geomechanics Society, a Fellow of the Geological Society of London; a Chartered Professional Geologist and a Chartered Professional Engineer. He regularly teaches engineering geology and geology for engineers to both undergraduates and practitioners and has developed and delivered a variety of professional development courses. He has been actively involved in the IAEG since 2002 and had the honour of serving as President between 2006 and 2010.

In 2006 at the IAEG congress in Nottingham (UK), UK, I was elected president of the IAEG and assumed office in January 2007. During the course of my presidency, I found that the collective wisdom of the executive committee and the council was invaluable in guiding the IAEG through a period when declining membership, the increasing age of members and a general lack of engagement by members in the endeavours of the Association meant that some difficult decisions had to be made.

During these years the executive committee consisted of Niek Rengers (the immediate past president), Michel Deveughèle and Sébastien Dupray (secretaries general), Pierre Pothérat (treasurer), Philip Paige- Green (vice president for Africa), Faquan Wu (vice president for Asia), Alan Moon (vice president for Australasia), Scott Burns (vice president for North America), Francisco Nogueira De Jorge (vice president for South America), and Carlos Delgado and Daniel Morfeldt (vice presidents for Europe).

Throughout my term of office, I travelled extensively and met with IAEG members from around the world, which gave me valuable insights into the needs of our members. I also met with the past president, the secretary general and the treasurer once a year in Paris, in addition to the annual meetings of the executive committee and council held in the USA in 2007 (when Sébastien Dupray took over

as secretary general), Spain in 2008, China in 2009 and New Zealand in 2010. In addition to the IAEG meetings I was fortunate to travel to Korea in 2008 to attend the 6th Asian regional conference and to South African in 2009 to attend the "Problem soils" seminar and to give talks in Johannesburg, Durban and Capetown. I also visited Brazil to attend the 12th Congresso Brasileiro de Geologia de Engenharia (CBGE) regional congress.

Before becoming president in 2007, I had previously held the office of vice president for Australia since 2002. During those earlier years, I had reviewed the workings of the IAEG commissions and concluded that they were not especially productive. However, I was of the opinion that the IAEG commissions were the 'technical engines' of the Association and provided feedstock for the bulletin and meetings. Consequently, during my presidency I worked to increase the number of commissions, as the graph shows. Unfortunately, despite the fact that many more commissions were created, they remained unproductive, mainly because IAEG members had difficulty allocating time to such activities.

In 2009, I made a presidential decision, in collaboration with the editor Brian Hawkins, to remove the French abstract from the IAEG bulletin. Our intention was to include an English abstract, and an abstract in a language chosen by the author, in the electronic version of the paper instead. This change was debated at length by the executive committee and my decision was overturned by council in Chengdu (China) later that year.

Each year of my presidency I attended meetings of FedIGS and became increasingly concerned that the developing organization was not serving the interests of the ordinary members. This view was also held by the Presidents of the ISSMGE and the ISRM and together we decided that a smaller, less powerful, FedIGS was needed. Our proposal was put forward and agreed during an extraordinary meeting of FedIGS in March 2010.

In my last year of presidency I attempted to develop a consensus within my executive regarding the changes that were needed to modernize the IAEG and how we might improve the management of our Association and the timely, cost effective delivery of services to the members. A "modernization plan" was developed and handed-over for consideration by the incoming executive committee during our congress in Auckland (New Zealand) in 2010.

*Fred Baynes*