

ICA – International Council on Archives: a future perspective

by Hans Evyind Naess - Chair ICA/SBL

At the 2004 General Assembly in Vienna the ICA (www.ica.org, ica@ica.org) constitution was altered in order to make the organization a more democratic tool for all its members. Since then there have been at work groups that have come forward with proposals aiming at making the whole organisation more dynamic and more visible. This is due to the needs for increased cooperation between members all over the world. It is also crucial to make ICA the sole professional body that can give professional advice for improved archival government all over the world, not at least e-government. At the recent AGM (Annual General Meeting) in Abu Dhabi in November 2005, it became even clearer that ICA shall need better funding if member activities through sections and branches shall increase and have visible practical consequences. A Task force within ICA has put forward proposals for an improved revenue structure that can guarantee better resources for the whole organisation, a system that will make it possible with annual transfer of resources to the sections. This is important if sections like SBL, the section for Business and Labor archives (www.ica.org/body.php?pbodycode=SBL&plangue=eng), shall have an opportunity to arrange open meetings for members around the world. SBL lately has suggested that there shall be best practises guidelines for the archival work within businesses, especially corporations and larger companies. Such guidelines are needed to ensure that there shall be both present and future access to information from the largest players in the private sphere of society. Such openness is important both within the governmental and the private sector of society as a gurantee for trust between the people and the government and corporations. Good records management is of great importance to any real democracy.

The Business section at its meeting in New Orleans in the early autumn 2005 has in cooperation with the Society of American Archivists (SAA) (www.archivists.org) set up a working group that will come forward with suggestions for a best practises benchmarking project. This issue will be on the SBL/SAA cooperation agenda at the SAA meeting in Washington in Juy/August in 2006.

To be able to pursue cooperation activities on a larger scale SBL is dependent on a worldwide membership. The SBL members¹ (BOX 1) will always be the core of the section

¹ Hans Evyind Naess (Chair, Norway), Becky Haglund Tousey (Secretary, USA), Elizabeth W. Adkins (USA), Didier Bondue (France), Karl-Peter Ellerbrock (Germany) Christian R. Jansen (Denmark), Ashok Kapoor (India), Victor Kamto Kenmegne (Cameroon), Matti Lakio (Finland), Göran Larsson (Swede), Alessandro Lombardo (Italy), Jane E. Nokes (Canada), Francesca Pino (Italy), Lesley Richmond (Scotland, UK), Deborah Skaggs (USA), Bruce Smith (Australia), Alison Turton (UK), Kenneth Wirth (USA), Eliam Y.Z. Kamanga (Malawi).

and the members shall have the democratic opportunity to decide the aims and strategies for the section . The members also secure a minimum funding necessary for activities. The forms needed for signing up as members can be found under the ICA web site (ica@ica.org). SBL hope that many Italian archival institutions and corporations and companies will join ICA and SBL in 2006.