



# NewsLetter

## October/November

### 2004

Issue no. 4

### IGI & the Planning Process

Hydrogeology is now playing a key role in the decision making process attaching to more and more infrastructural projects and particularly to the location of landfills.



*A modern well planned landfill facility*

Furthermore, the IGI publication 'Geology in Environmental Impact Statements' is now used regularly as the bench-mark against which to rank the geological content of an EIS for a landfill.

A key criterion in the selection of a landfill site is the aquifer status of the underlying overburden and bedrock. Guidelines issued by the EPA, GSI and the DoELG generally restrict the location of landfills to areas with low groundwater potential, areas removed from catchments of water wells and promotes areas of low groundwater vulnerability as being more suitable for landfill development.

The groundwater potential of a particular site or region can sometimes be a subjective matter. Hydrogeologists are now retained by both

promoters and objectors of landfill developments to debate the issue in public arenas such as at planning or EPA oral hearings. This exposure of the profession to the wider public clearly increases its public profile which can only be a good development.

With this higher profile the profession can continue to increase the value attaching to the IGI's contributions to land use policies generally throughout the island.

*Kevin Cullen P.Geo.*

### Forum – an issue for debate

#### THE PART-TIME CONSULTANT

The thorny issue of part-time geologists is one that doesn't seem to have been properly debated. A suitable place for such a debate seems to me to be within the IGI organisation, which has established a Code of Ethics for the geological profession. Nevertheless, the issue is a complex one and the views of both part-time and full-time consultants should be sought.

The experience of the Institution of Geologists in the UK (merged with the Geological Society in 1991) has been over a longer time scale than the IGI and I think that these paragraphs from their 1985 booklet entitled 'A guide to consultancy in geology' are a good starting point in any debate:

10.1 Part-time consulting is undertaken by numerous geologists who are otherwise fully employed in industry, government service, or a university or polytechnic. Sometimes retired geologists may also carry out part-time consultancy work. Certain types of specialist knowledge may only be available through such persons, and they provide a very valuable service.

10.2 Where the consultancy service is carried through, and payment made to, the consultant's full-time employing organisation, difficulties are usually few. Nevertheless the consultant should give special consideration to certain questions and advise his employer accordingly. For example:

a) Is there likely to be any cause for a complaint that the work is considered unfair competition with full-time consultants who depend upon it for their livelihood?

b) Even if the competition is fair, is it in the employer's interests to deprive full-time consultants of some of their work?

c) Are the proposed charges realistic?

d) Can he give the time and attention necessary, considering their other commitments?

e) What are the arrangements for indemnity insurance? If no arrangements exist, what is the risk to the employer?

10.3 Frequently the consultancy service is provided separately from the employing organization as an independent commercial venture. (This is often the case with consultancy carried out in particular by staff of universities and polytechnics.)

10.4 In principle, there can be no objection to such activities. It has long been a tradition for academics to apply their knowledge outside teaching and research, and many very valuable scientific and commercial successes have originated in this way. Furthermore, it would seem that consultancy work of this type by academics is of value in maintaining contact with the applied and commercial aspects of their discipline. Nevertheless, the part-time consultant should take great care to ensure that he does not compete unfairly for work with his full-time competitors.

*Anthony Beese P.Geol.*

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## New Members

Congratulations to EuroGeol Jon Pederson PGeO and EuroGeol Bruno Teillard PGeO on their recent successful membership applications to the IGI. Congratulations also to Billy O'Keefe PGeO, Martin Hamann PGeo and EuroGeol, and to new MIT Roni Hawe, all of whom were approved at our Board meeting of Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>.

The IGI welcomes new members. For further information on application and validation

procedures please contact the secretary, IGI, Department of Geology, UCD, Belfield, Dublin 4, Tel. +353 1 7162085 or see the IGI website - [www.igi.ie](http://www.igi.ie)

## The National Committee for Geology and The Geosciences Committee



The Royal Irish Academy has established the Royal Irish Academy Committee of the Geosciences (informally known as the Geosciences Committee) to represent all areas of geoscience, with a term of office of four years from June 2004. It replaces the National Committees for Geology, and for Geodesy and Geophysics. These two national committees set up an *ad hoc* committee in autumn 2003 to discuss the formation of the new Geosciences Committee. The members of this *ad hoc* committee were: Mr David Ball, Mr Garth Earls, Dr Peadar McArdle and Dr Julian Menuge (all representing the National Committee for Geology); Dr Chris Bean, Dr Peter Lynch, Prof. John McCloskey and Dr Peter Readman (all representing the National Committee for Geodesy and Geophysics) and Professor Pat Shannon representing both national committees. It was chaired initially by Prof. Jim Slevin, Science Secretary of the Academy, and later by Dr Peadar McArdle, with Dr Julian Menuge acting as Secretary.

The *ad hoc* committee established Terms of Reference for the Geosciences Committee, including the following aims:

- advise the Academy on formulation of policy at national, European and international levels;
- contribute to areas of strategic importance, especially research priorities, at national, European and international levels;

- address, in a proactive manner, issues of public concern relevant to its expertise;
- foster excellence in the Geosciences throughout the island of Ireland;
- promote co-operation with other subject areas and be represented on the Board of Science of the Academy;
- sustain and exploit linkages with relevant international unions;
- promote and support education in the Geosciences.

The *ad hoc* committee also agreed that the new Geosciences Committee should be directly elected by geoscientists, by e-mail, with the possibility of additional co-opted members. Following a broad appeal to register, an electorate of over 200 was established and the first election held on 4th May 2004; additional members were then co-opted so as to allow the widest possible representation of technical areas and sectors of employment, and for regional and gender balance. The electoral mechanism replaces the system of nomination by geoscience organisations and so there is no longer a direct representative of the IGI on the Geosciences Committee.

The Geosciences Committee has met three times (up to 4th October 2004) and has decided to focus its energies through the following working groups:

- 1) Priority areas and funding for geoscience research (Chair: Prof. Pat Shannon)
- 2) Promotion of geoscience education in schools (Chair: Dr Ian Sanders)
- 3) Geoscience outreach to the general public (Chair: Dr Matthew Parkes)
- 4) Issues of current concern in the geosciences (Chair: Mr David Ball); this committee will react to issues as they emerge.

The committee has endorsed a proposal from Mr Des Burke to produce a new TV series on Irish geology.

Any correspondence for the attention of the Geosciences Committee can be sent to [geosciences@ria.ie](mailto:geosciences@ria.ie). Electronic bulletins reporting the committee's progress will be issued from time to time to all those on the electoral register, and to geoscientific associations in Ireland. Bulletins and other documents relating to the committee will be archived on its web site:

<http://www.ria.ie/committees/geosciences/index.html>.

The Geosciences Committee comprises Dr Chris Bean (Chair), Prof. Pat Shannon (Vice-Chair), Dr Julian Menuge (Secretary), Mr David Ball, Mr Mick Cory, Dr Catherine Coxon, Dr Eve Daly, Mr Garth Earls, Ms Rebecca Gageby (Programme Manager), Prof. John Gamble, Dr Deirdre Lewis, Dr Peadar McArdle, Mr Eoin Moran, Dr Aodhagán Ó Rodaighe (Representative of Irish Committee on Climate Change), Dr Matthew Parkes and Dr Ian Sanders.

*Julian Menuge P.Geo. Secretary, Geosciences Committee*

## December - January Event Guide

### Tuesday December 7<sup>th</sup>

IAH Lecture by Cormac O Suilleabhain and Laurence Gill on *The attenuation capacity of subsoils receiving domestic wastewater effluent*. Further details from Donal Daly 01-678 2811 or Kevin Cullen 01-294 1717. Geological Survey of Ireland 6.30pm (to be confirmed)

### Wednesday December 15<sup>th</sup>

IGA AGM and Presidential Address, Room G01, Department of Geology, University College, Dublin at 8.00pm. (**NOT in TCD as incorrectly stated in IGA Newsletter Issue 7**)

### Wednesday December 15<sup>th</sup>

BGS Lecture by John Arthurs (FieldExperience Company) on *Buried Treasure - Economic Geology*. Ulster Museum, Belfast at 7.30pm Refreshments from 7.00pm in the Engineering Hall

### Tuesday January 11<sup>th</sup> 2005

Joint IAH-Geotechnical Society Lecture by David Ball on *How to drill and pump a water well*. GSI Lecture Theatre, 5.30 for 6.00 pm.

## Job Opportunity

### Geological Curator, National Museum of Ireland, Dublin

The National Museum of Ireland has a vacancy for a Geological Curator (permanent post). Further details can be found at [www.publicjobs.ie](http://www.publicjobs.ie) (under Professional/Technical, Museum Jobs). The deadline for receipt of applications is 5pm on Thursday 23 December 2004.

## 2004 John Jackson Memorial Lecture

IGI member Donal Daly (Geological Survey of Ireland) delivered the 2004 John Jackson Memorial Lecture on Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>. An abstract of Donal's lecture is given below. Full copies of his paper (32 pages) can be obtained from the GSI Customer Centre at a cost of €6 (includes postage) or €5 over the counter.

### Groundwater At Risk in Ireland

#### Putting Geoscientific Information and Maps at the Core of Land-use and Environmental Decision-making

The interaction between human activities and the natural environment is a key element in the well-being of both the environment and humans as an integral component of the environment. We have much to lose if our relationship with the geological environment is not managed effectively. Potential pressures on the environment, arising from social and economic development, are growing in Ireland. Yet never in our history have environmental and health concerns and awareness been so great. In parallel, knowledge and mapping of the subsurface – bedrock, subsoil, soil and groundwater – have made great progress in recent years. Decision-makers are now increasingly using geoscientific information and maps in land use and environmental planning as a means of achieving the optimum long-term benefit for all. The required information is now available, as are the means of communicating and utilising the information effectively. Current progress and future possibilities are illustrated in the paper.

## 48<sup>th</sup> Annual IGRM

The 48<sup>th</sup> annual Irish Geology Research Meeting will be held over the weekend of Friday 18<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2005 in the Walton Theatre (Arts Building), Trinity College Dublin. The deadline for receipt of abstracts of contributions (talks and posters) to the meeting is Monday 31<sup>st</sup> January.

The work presented must be in the broad area of Earth sciences, and must have an Irish connection (either because it is about an Irish issue, or because it has been carried out in an Irish institution). Poster contributions from undergraduate students are also welcome.

All enquiries should be directed to the meeting coordinator, [Dr Ian Sanders](mailto:isanders@tcd.ie) (isanders@tcd.ie)

## IAEG 2 Day Course

### An Introduction to Geotechnical Engineering for Underground Mining

By M. Struthers, Principal, AMC Consultants

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Friday 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2005  
at Ardboyne Hotel, Navan, Co. Meath.

Course Fees: IAEG Members €280.00, Non-members €325.00. Registration deadline is January 28<sup>th</sup> 2005. For further details and a registration form please see the IAEG Website ; [www.iaeg.org/](http://www.iaeg.org/)

## Articles Welcome

IGI Newsletters will be published every two months. Please send comments, letters and articles for inclusion in the next issue (due 1<sup>st</sup> February 2005) to EurGeol Frank McDermott PGeo, Department of Geology, UCD, e-mail: [frank.mcdermott@ucd.ie](mailto:frank.mcdermott@ucd.ie) before January 28<sup>th</sup> 2005.

**Editor's Note:** *All opinions and views expressed within articles published in IGI Newsletters are those of the contributors, and do not necessarily reflect those of the IGI Board.*