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Christmas GREETINGS

The Chairman and Committee send their Best Wishes for Christmas and the New Year to BARSC Member Companies and all our Colleagues and Collaborators throughout Government and Industry.

Annual CONFERENCE

The BARSC 2001 Conference is tentatively planned for the week of April 9th. The theme will be: 'GMES, and implications for the UK Earth Observation Industry'.

PLEASE NOTE:

An important planning session for the Conference and our participation in RSS 2001 will take place at the Committee Meeting to be held on January 11th.

Annual Luncheon

This well-attended Summer event provided members with an opportunity to hear the BNSC DG outline the position of EO in Government thinking

With a number of personnel changes at BNSC in the months preceding the Annual Luncheon, the meeting was an excellent opportunity to meet recent (or relatively so!) appointees to BNSC. These included the Director General, Dr. Colin Hicks; the Director of Applications, Paula Freedman and the industrial secondee, Richard Saull (from Science Systems) who is working in the Earth observation sector.

In his welcome to Colin Hicks, the Chairman, Nigel Press, outlined BARSC's objectives and stressed our wish to work closely with BNSC. In reply, Dr. Hicks outlined his perception of the current position of Earth observation in Government thinking. DTI spending on space is under review, and represents £90m. out of a total of £330m.. Earth observation has so far failed to deliver the economic returns predicted by reviews conducted in the late 1980's. Government is wondering whether there may be greater and faster returns to be expected from investment in other sectors. Since past predictions have been found to be wrong, the future is unsure. On the other hand, the result of the Enquiry by the Select Committee of the House of Commons showed interest in Earth observation and was by no means negative.

In his reply, Nigel Press reaffirmed BARSC's view that levels of spending on applications and use of data still fell far short relative to the commitments to the space sector. Since the space sector commitments were fixed for the short to medium term, it is essential to ensure that applications' funding is sustained to match. If this is not possible through the National Programme, one approach, in BARSC's view would be via ESA's Data Utilisation Programme (DUP). Nigel also offered BARSC's commitment and support to any responses that BNSC might have to make to the Select Committee or to the DTI review.

Since the luncheon, a meeting has taken place between BNSC, representatives of some of their partner agencies and BARSC to discuss DUP. We understand that Liz McIntosh is continuing to review possible DUP participation at BNSC.

An interesting presentation on 'The InfoTerra Initiative – Status and Opportunities' followed the Luncheon

Members were addressed by Nick Veck and Joerg Hermann of Astrium on the InfoTerra initiative. An outline of the technical specification, business plan and opportunities for collaboration was presented. This aroused considerable interest and a further discussion, involving Nick Veck, took place at a recent BARSC Committee meeting. An open forum between Astrium, BARSC and BNSC on InfoTerra is proposed for the near future – details to follow shortly.



Best Practice Club

Helping to improve the competitiveness of space sector companies

Over 30 organisations have joined the Space Industry Best Practice Club since its launch in July 1999. Managed by BNSC, in partnership with UKISC, ASTOS and BARSC, the club is open, free of charge, to all companies with business interests in the field of space technologies, products and services. Benefits of membership include access to a wide range of services and events aimed at improving business processes, maximising trade opportunities and enhancing cooperation and collaboration within the sector. Several BARSC members have already joined the club and have been involved in a variety of initiatives and modules on offer.

For more information about the club's activities, for contact details and to download a copy of the latest club newsletter visit:
www.spacebestpractice.org

barsc.org.uk

UKSpace web site currently provides BARSC with a web presence

Although BARSC does not yet have its own web site, a list of BARSC members and general information about the Association is published within the UKSpace site (www.ukspace.com). A prime objective of the UKSpace site is to provide information about capabilities of UK space companies; thus profiles of individual companies are published free of charge. Links to these profiles are provided from the list of members on the BARSC page.

BARSC has registered a domain name – barsc.org.uk – with the intention of providing a direct route into the BARSC page from the web. This page will also contain news of upcoming meetings and events as well as a pointer to past and current editions of OverView. Once this is functioning we will promote the domain name – so now would be a good time for members, who have not done so already, to submit a profile to the site, which can be done easily on-line.

EOPB update

The most recent meeting of BNSC's Earth Observation Programme Board was held on 31 October 2000. Issues on the agenda included the BNSC workplan, ESA programmes, and the European Strategy for Space. Much of the meeting was spent discussing the EC's Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) initiative and UK initiatives with other government departments (GIFTSS). Alan Apling provided a provocative view from DETR's perspective. It is clear that much work remains to be done before "government as user" becomes a reality, not least we need a clear and common definition of GMES. 2001 will be an important year for EO and the EOPB. In the UK there are plans for a revised space strategy document and there will be further progress on the GIFTSS initiative. In ESA the next tranche of Earth Explorer missions will be chosen and there will be continued debate on Earth Watch, including the role of Astrium's InfoTerra/TerraSAR programme. GMES will continue to mature. Towards the end of the year the ESA ministerial will provide an important focal point for many of the new developments.

MEMBERS NEWS RELEASES

Re-focus for EOS

EOS is going through a major business refocus in line with MacDonald Dettwiler's new UK interests, notably the 'National Land Information Service' (NLIS) and the associated 'Local Authority Modernisation Programme' (LAMP). The reorganisation of EOS away from Earth observation has required a number of redundancies, with remaining staff being redirected to work on NLIS and related e-business opportunities.

RSAC moves into new offices

After almost seven years in the village of Medstead, RSAC has moved into

Alton. The new, more spacious arrangements enable the allocation of offices to individual project teams and facilities. There is also an excellent meeting room. The new location is within walking distance of Alton's railway station, which is under an hour from Waterloo. BARSC colleagues should note the new address, telephone and fax numbers. Email addresses and the company web site (www.rsac.co.uk) remain the same.
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Peter Fletcher: peter@rsac.co.uk*

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

Dr Andy Wells has recently left ERDAS to join the NRSC Sales Team. Working principally for the Applied Information Systems Division, he will be promoting NRSC's Geo-Management Solutions capability. E-mail: a.wells@nrsc.co.uk

Correspondence and contributions:
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**Over
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