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BARSC AGM 2001

Initially scheduled for 15 March, this year's AGM will now be held at 17.00 on 10 April, after the GMES Summit has closed.

Positions to be filled at the AGM include Vice-Chair, for which nominations have already been received, as well as a few general committee member positions.

Other business will include the annual review of the accounts and the Chairman's review of the year.

Correspondence and contributions:

Jon Williams
Logica UK Limited
Wyndham Court
74 Portsmouth Road
Cobham
Surrey KT11 3LG
williamsj@logica.com

OverView is produced and edited by
Lois Proud

BARSC staging key GMES meeting

Following its successful Conference last year on EO Technologies and Information Services, BARSC is turning its attention this year to a subject of key importance to global environment and security as well as in the European space arena – the Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) initiative. A one-day Summit on GMES will be held on 10 April, hosted by BNSC at the DTI Conference Centre in London.

GMES is an exciting European initiative to focus industrial and political efforts and develop a common strategy for global monitoring.

This event, which will be attended by an invited group of delegates from industry, government and academia, will bring together all the communities associated with GMES in the UK for the first time, and will aim to determine the user communities' views on the GMES initiative.

Christian Patermann, Director of DG Research, and Chair of the GMES Partnership, and Peter Churchill, Head of the Space Applications Unit at JRC will give keynote speeches. In addition, UK experts will address the GMES themes, Steven Briggs will provide ESA's perspective and a discussion chaired by David Williams, Head of Strategic and International Relations at Eumetsat, will draw together conclusions from the day.

Summit Programme

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| Christian Patermann | European Commission
'Current and future plans for GMES' |
| Peter Churchill | Joint Research Centre, EC
'Defining Europe's priorities for GMES' |
| Pete Cox | Hadley Centre
'Long term monitoring needs for Kyoto' |
| Jane Kinniburgh | Environment Agency
'Environmental indicators' |
| Prof. W. McGuire | University College, London
'Threats from natural hazards' |
| Steven Briggs | ESRIN, European Space Agency
'Current ESA perspective on GMES' |

Round Table Discussion (Chair: David Williams)





Data from space for environmental and security information services

Europe's policy makers increasingly recognise the need to have access to continuous independent information services on key issues in the field of environment and security. GMES is a European initiative to help implement those information services that require data from space observing systems. Full consultation with those responsible for particular policy areas will lead to concrete actions to achieve this goal. GMES forms a key element in an overarching European strategy for space.

Embracing European and National policies

GMES embraces European and national policies on the environment, resource management, regional development, civil protection, and research, bearing in mind the political emphasis on sustainable development, and Europe's role on the international stage. It also includes

issues such as crisis management and humanitarian aid that touch on the additional dimension of security.

Exploiting existing and establishing new infrastructures

Currently, space data that is used for information on environment and security is derived largely from experimental systems. GMES will exploit to the maximum extent Europe's existing and planned capabilities and infrastructures, but will also establish sustainable and consistent operational information-gathering and distribution chains.

Concentrating on key domains

Effort in GMES has so far been provided by certain research departments, agencies and industry within the 'supply side' of the space sector and related services. It has focussed on an initial identification and understanding of user requirements for geo-spatial information, concentrating on three domains: environmental conventions; environmental stress; and risks and hazards. Implementation scenarios for the services in support of GMES are already being developed by relevant agencies, and are being included in their planned programmes.

Establishing dialogue with users

The next step is to increase the focus on the 'demand side', and to establish a structured dialogue with users and other stakeholders. There will also be attention on the economic aspects (such as cost-benefit analyses and funding scenarios) and political questions (such as the need for European independence). This will require a high level debate between decision makers across the relevant policy areas.

Private sector to have key role

GMES is primarily motivated by the need to identify and meet public sector policy needs. However, as markets in this area continue to develop, the private sector is expected to have a key role in the provision of information services, and supporting space infrastructure. Initial operational systems are likely to be dependent on the negotiation of public-private partnership arrangements.

Implementation proposals by June

The EU Research Council has requested that specific implementing proposals for GMES be drawn up by June 2001, in line with the European Strategy for Space, and with the timetable for expected EU decisions on the European Research Area and the 6th Framework Programme, and decisions of the ESA Council. Building on the meetings held in Baveno, and on the impetus provided by the Lille colloquium held in October 2000 under the auspices of the French presidency, the Commission will use the forum of the GMES Partnership and structured consultations with stakeholders to meet this timetable.

(Based on a Statement from the GMES Partnership.)

MEMBERS NEWS RELEASES

Infoterra – A major new geo-information company is launched

Infoterra is comprised of Infoterra Ltd. in the UK, formerly the National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC Ltd) and Infoterra GmbH in Germany, formerly the Earth Observation Services Department of Astrium GmbH. Both companies are

under the management of Dave Fox, the former NRSC Managing Director.

'Infoterra is committed to providing clients with the best geo-spatial solutions available, across all market application areas, not only now but in the future'.

