

Reducing the costs of IWC meetings

The Secretariat

In 2011 the Commission asked the Secretariat to continue exploring opportunities for cost savings. These were to focus especially on the reduction of freight charges and increased use of electronic documents at annual meetings of the Scientific Committee and Commission.

A review of expenditure in 2011 indicates that the costs of maintaining a paper based infrastructure for these meetings was approximately £77,000 (USD 132,000) or around 5% of IWC core budget.

Table 1. Cost of a paper based infrastructure in 2011 (Scientific Committee and Commission)

Item	Cost (GBP)
Hire of high volume photocopiers in Tromsø	14,000
Charge for on-call photocopy engineer	1,500
Additional staff member for document reproduction and distribution (travel, overtime, subsistence)	2,000
Return air freight charge for 1000kg of cargo (to ship pre-prepared documents and pigeonholes)	16,000
Hire of high volume copiers in Jersey	5,000
Return freight shipment for 1500kg of cargo (to ship pre-prepared documents and pigeonholes)	10,000
Additional staff member in Jersey for document reproduction and distribution	2,000
Rental of high volume copier at Red House to allow for pre-preparation of meeting documents	25,000
Paper costs (nominal estimate)	1,000
Total	£76,500

Particular costs arise because of packing and air freight of the pigeonholes and pre-prepared documents which are both heavy and bulky; and also hire of high volume copiers as these are exponentially more expensive than low volume copiers.

This year, at their meeting, the Scientific Committee agreed to receive their primary documents in electronic format only. This will not only save on air freighting of pre-printed documents, but will also mean that shipment of pigeonholes can be ended for scientific committee meetings.

The Commission are invited to explore the potential for similar cost saving measures at sub-group and plenary meetings. Table 2 presents options for the Commission to reduce the cost of its meetings:

Table 2. Proposals for reducing costs at Commission meetings

Proposal	Suggestion
1 At present, all sub-committee documents are placed on the website as they are received at document control. Printed copies are provided on tables at the back of the room only for documents arriving immediately before the meeting in question.	The Commission may wish to retain this method of working as it allows full access to all documents, including those received at document control immediately prior to the meeting.
2 For Commission meetings all documents are also placed on the website. However documents received close to the meeting, or produced during the meeting itself, are distributed to delegates via pigeonholes.	The Commission may wish to retain this system as it allows full access to documents arriving close to the meeting, or produced during the meeting itself. However such documents could be distributed to the Commission via tables at the back of the room instead of through pigeonholes. Savings in airfreight charges due to pigeonholes are estimated at around £5,000 to £10,000 depending on venue.