

Report on Introduction of Cost Saving Measures

Submitted by The Secretariat

Introduction

In 2011 the Finance and Administration Committee stressed the importance of continued examination of savings that could be established through modification of the Commission's working practices. In 2012 the F&A Committee agreed to establish an Agenda Item on Operational Effectiveness and Cost-savings measures and this report is submitted to assist the Committee in its discussions.

At IWC64 in 2012 discussions particularly focused on a move to paper free working at Commission meetings. A move to paper free operations was expected to create savings arising from reduced airfreight costs and reduced costs for hire of high volume printing equipment and associated staff.

Results

1 Freight charges associated with Commission and Scientific Committee Meetings

Following the Commission's recommendations in 2012 the Secretariat has been working to reduce the volume and weight of material that is shipped to meetings. Particular savings have been made on the transport of pigeonholes and pre-printed documents.

Prior to introduction of these savings, Secretariat records show that freight charges to mobilise to IWC64 in 2012 were £52,000. For the 2013 Scientific Committee meeting in Jeju these costs reduced to £30,000 and these were further reduced at the 2014 Scientific Committee Meeting to £16,000.

Feedback from Scientific Committee delegates at the close of the 2014 meeting indicated a high level of satisfaction with the provision of primary papers and working papers as electronic documents.

2 Reduction of charges associated with copying machines

The move to reduce paper working provides an opportunity to introduce low volume copying and printing machinery. This is considerably cheaper than the high volume equipment required to provide hundreds of copies of documents. Accordingly low volume printing equipment is in use at IWC65 and will also be used at future Scientific Committee meetings.

The lease on a high volume copier at the Red House in Cambridge has been surrendered. This copier was required for pre-printing meeting documents for air freight shipment. It has been replaced by a low volume office copier which has reduced annual rental costs from £35,000 to £5,000.

3 Reduction of meeting charges

The Secretariat has reviewed costs associated with the organisation of meetings and introduced savings where possible. By way of example, previous practice at Commission meetings required the hire of a separate room for private meetings should it be required during plenary session. At IWC65 if a private session is required observers will be asked to leave the plenary room. This, and other savings created by needing only one set of interpretation equipment have reduced costs from £105k at IWC61 and £75k at IWC64 to £30k in 2015.

4 Re-structuring of Finance Department

In 2012 the Secretariat's Head of Finance and Administration moved to full time sick leave. This allowed a re-structuring of the work and roles within the Finance Department. Following the re-structuring the role of Finance Manager has been created which decreases the total number of finance staff from three to two. At the same time modifications to reporting practices have been introduced to improve the transparency of the Commission's financial affairs.

The Secretariat will remain vigilant to opportunities for introduction of further cost saving and efficiency measures.