



SB/JAC/32045  
16 October 2015

Circular Communication to Commissioners and Contracting Governments  
**IWC.CCG.1171**

**Opportunity for the Commission to Purchase its Headquarters Premises**

The IWC operates from a building known as the Red House which is located in the City of Cambridge, United Kingdom. The Commission has occupied these same premises continuously since August 1976 under the terms of a commercial lease.

On 28 September 2015 the landlord communicated his wish to sell the freehold of the Red House. Given the length of the IWC's tenancy he has offered the Commission first refusal to purchase the property for a value of one million British pounds (see attached letter from Carter Jonas acting as agents for the landlord).

The landlord's offer will remain open for a period of three months, after which the property will be placed on the open market. Since the Commission will not assemble in person until October 2016 (for IWC66), I have been advised by the Chair and Bureau that the Commission should decide whether or not to accept the landlord's offer through a postal ballot.

Initial enquires indicate that the property is very fairly valued and that the cost of interest and capital repayments on a 25 year mortgage will be lower than the Commission is currently paying in rental. In view of this, the Secretariat is undertaking a process of due diligence in order to understand the full range of advantages and disadvantages associated with the opportunity to purchase and including review of all alternative arrangements.

We expect to have the diligence report ready in four to six weeks' time. At that point, I will circulate the report to Commissioners along with an interpretation of its findings, guidance on the postal ballot process and instructions on how to take part.

Those Contracting Governments with suspended votes were notified through Circular Communication IWC.CCG.1170 of 6 October 2015. The Secretariat will respond to queries on payments for any Contracting Government wishing to restore its vote by contacting [finance@iwc.int](mailto:finance@iwc.int)

Simon Brockington  
Executive Secretary

*C.C. Accredited observers to the IWC*