

International Statistical Education Newsletter

A Publication of
the International Statistical Institute

Professor R.M. Loynes, Editor
Editorial address: ISEN,
Department of Statistics
University of Sheffield
Sheffield S3 7RH, UK

Vol.3, No.1 - February 1983

EDITORIAL

Contributions of news items have been requested from the first issue of ISEN, but very few have materialised. There must surely be conferences, working groups, and so on, in many countries whose activities are worth reporting, either because their end product is interesting in itself, or because their existence may serve as a pattern for others elsewhere. Anyone who is active in some systematic way in statistical education should ask himself whether he would wish to know about it if someone else were doing it - and if the answer is yes, then it is a candidate for a mention in ISEN.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Chairman, J. Gani, writes:

The ISI Statistical Education Committee took the opportunity of meeting on two occasions during the first ICOTS Conference held in Sheffield last August 1982.

The first meeting on 11 August began with a review of the activities of the Education Committee since 1981. The Task Force on Conference and Meetings (Chairman: L. Råde) was asked to circulate a questionnaire to all ICOTS participants, to obtain their views. The future of ICOTS Conferences was discussed and possible locations for the second Conference suggested. The Task Force was charged with (a) exploring possible host countries for the second ICOTS Conference in 1986, (b) making a specific proposal for such a Conference at Madrid in 1983 after presenting an evaluative report on the first Conference.

The Task Force on the Teaching of Statistics in Schools (Chairman: V. Barnett) had completed its first project: the book *Teaching Statistics in Schools Throughout the World* had just been published. Professor Barnett outlined his plans to attract more active participants to his Task Force.

The Task Force on Tertiary & Technical Education has been responsible for publishing *ISEN (International Statistical Education Newsletter)*, and was making further improvements to it. Contacts with STPA had been made in 1981-82 and the Task Force was urged to prepare (a) teaching materials for in-service statistical training and (b) a guide syllabus for professional training in statistics for developing countries.

It was agreed that the ISI Education Committee Chairman (J. Gani) should visit Calcutta at the

end of 1983 to evaluate changes implemented at ISEC (International Statistical Education Centre) Calcutta, since 1981.

It was suggested that Directors of International Statistical Training Centres might participate in a meeting at Madrid in September 1983 to discuss their future activities. It was hoped to revise the Almanac of Training Centres on the basis of an improved questionnaire.

A request from IASS has been received by the Education Committee for support in preparing teaching materials on various aspects of data collection. It was agreed that IASS should be asked to formulate a concrete proposal to be approved by the IASS Council, before its final discussion with the Education Committee in Madrid.

The meeting on 12 August continued with the review of activities of the ISI Education Committee. The Task Force on Conferences and Meetings confirmed its plans to proceed with an overall evaluation of the first ICOTS Conference. It would offer assistance to the next ICME Meeting in 1984 in organizing a session on the teaching of statistics. Various locations for the second ICOTS Conference were to be investigated in detail; a visit from Task Force members to the potential host country was recommended.

Since work on teacher training materials was being actively developed in Sheffield, no action on this topic by ISI was needed. It was reported that the fourth expanded edition of Kendall and Buckland's *Dictionary of Statistical Terms* was shortly to appear in print; the *ISI Short Book Reviews* was proving successful. It was agreed that an announcement about ISI's co-operation with ASA on videotapes of distinguished statisticians was to be included in *ISEN*. Efforts to obtain popular

articles on Statistics had not proved successful.

The Committee agreed that ISI Round Table Meetings on specialized topics were desirable, and invited the Task Force on Conferences and Meetings to consider this issue. The IASS proposal for teaching manuals on data collection might form a suitable topic for a Round Table Meeting in late 1983.

Some further recommendations for the development of *ISEN* were made; these included its translation into French and Spanish. Finally the Chairman of the ISI Education Committee requested Task Force Chairmen to prepare budget estimates for 1983 as a preliminary to the allocation of funds for the educational activities of ISI.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Books:

It is not proposed, at least at present, to review books in this Newsletter, since there are many other more appropriate places for this. The appearance of books on statistical education - i.e. on how to teach, or on how to choose what to teach, and on similar matters - will, however, be noted as far as possible; if they have been reviewed in Short Book Reviews, the ISI book review newsletter, a cross-reference will be made.

- (a) Rustagi, J.S. & Wolfe, D.A. (eds) *Teaching of Statistics and Statistical Consulting*. New York, U.S.A. Academic Press, 1982. US\$ 36.00. This volume contains the proceedings of the conference reported in *ISEN* number 1 (January 1981).
- (b) Barnett, V. (ed) *Teaching Statistics in Schools Throughout the World*. Voorburg, Holland: ISI, 1982. US\$ 10.00/£6.00 (reviewed in Short Book Reviews 2 (3), December 1982).
- (c) Boen, J.R. & Zahn, D.A. *The Human Side of Statistical Consulting*. Belmont, California: Lifetime Learning Publications, 1982. US\$ 14.95.

2. Journals and other serials:

- (a) *Teaching Statistics*

This journal has been mentioned before, but new readers may like to know of its existence. It appears three times a year, and is directed at school and similar levels. Editor: P. Holmes, Sheffield; subscription enquiries to STEP, Department of Probability & Statistics, University of Sheffield, Sheffield S3 7RH, U.K. Volume 5, number 1, has just appeared.

- (b) *Stochastik in der Schule*

Volume 1 (3 issues) of this journal consisted almost completely of translations into German of *Teaching Statistics*. Now established on a regular basis, roughly half of its contents are original, the remainder still being translated. Editor: F. Eicker, Dortmund, DBR; subscription enquiries to StD Arnold a Campo, Kammanstr.13, 5800, Hagen, DBR. The last issue of volume 2 appeared a short time ago.

- (c) *Teaching Statistics in the Health Sciences Newsletter*.

This is a three-times yearly publication of a subsection of the Section on Statistical Education of the American Statistical Association. Issue 33, the latest, contained several short notes under the heading *Trends in Teaching* and two other items. Contact address: Dr. Beth Dawson-Saunders, Department of Medical Humanities, Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, P.O. Box 3926, Springfield, IL 62708, U.S.A.

REPORTS FROM ROUND THE WORLD

In a number of countries statistical education committees exist - sometimes under other names - usually under the aegis of a learned society. Brief accounts of their activities will be published here as they become available. One has been published already in Vol.2, No.2 (May 1982), on the Statistical Education Committee in the U.K.

ASA-NCTM Joint Committee (U.S.A.)
=====

The Chairman, R.L. Schaeffer, writes:

The American Statistical Association - National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Joint Committee on the Curriculum in Statistics and Probability was formed in the late 1960's to promote the teaching of statistics in precollege mathematics. It has been involved in writing materials, promoting short courses for teachers, evaluating teaching materials, providing sessions and speakers at meetings and, in general, promoting statistical education.

For example, this Committee was responsible for the production of *Statistics: A Guide to the Unknown*. We have just begun a newsletter entitled the "Statistics Teacher Network" which provides a mechanism for interested persons to exchange ideas on the teaching of statistics; it will appear three times a year.

For information on the newsletter write to:

Ann Watkins
Department of Mathematics
Los Angeles Pierce College
2601 Winnetka Avenue
Woodland Hills
CA 91371
U.S.A.

For other information you may contact R.L. Sheaffe:
Department of Statistics, University of Florida,
Gainesville, FL. 32611, U.S.A.