

UPDATE ON REVISION OF THE MOW *GENERAL GUIDELINES, STATUTES AND CODE OF ETHICS*

The MOWCAP Bureau

MOWCAP members may recall that in October 2015 Dr Ray Edmondson was appointed by the MoW International Advisory Committee (IAC) to chair a working group to review the *MoW General Guidelines*. As part of the Review, an issues paper was circulated in April 2016 and discussed at the MOWCAP General Meeting the following month. After this, a number of MOWCAP members contributed public submissions to the Review process.

A review group was also established in parallel with the General Guidelines review to review the IAC statutes. Changes to the statutes must be approved by UNESCO's Executive Board (EXB).

It was initially expected that the Review would be completed and adopted by an IAC meeting in July 2017, and that the International MoW Register process would return to its usual cycle (deadline for nominations in March of the "even" years, with IAC recommendations reached at a mid-year biennial meeting in the "odd" years).

The IAC meeting was postponed until October 2017 and the IAC signed off on the text of the revised General Guidelines (including the Code of Ethics) and the revised IAC Statutes in December 2017. These documents have been posted on the international MoW website (<https://en.unesco.org/programme/mow>).

The EXB met in April 2018 and considered a paper from the UNESCO Director-General called "Draft action plan for a comprehensive review of the Memory of the World Programme (204 EX/8; 204 EX/36)." At the time of writing an unedited version of the EXB decision is available. The EXB has expressed its appreciation for the work done by the IAC and requested the Director-General to promote more consultation with the Member States on the MoW Programme review process, in the spirit of dialogue, taking into account the work conducted by the IAC.

The timeframe for the work that the Director-General has been requested to undertake is not known and the Director-General has suspended the International MoW Register nomination process until the review is completed. This means the next nomination round will be based on the new guidelines, code of ethics and statutes.

When the revised General Guidelines become operative – some time after October 2018 – MOWCAP will need to revisit its own Guidelines to ensure they are fundamentally compatible. In principle, this will mean that MOWCAP will adopt the revised General Guidelines but with variations applicable to the Asia Pacific region.

One important feature of the revised international General Guidelines is the formal publication of a MoW Code of Ethics. MOWCAP will also need to adopt a Code of its own which upholds the same values, but is adjusted to accommodate cultural norms in Asia Pacific. Among other changes, the current draft of the General Guidelines has recommended some changes to the nomination process for inscription on the international register. These may change as the review progresses. We will need to monitor any changes carefully to ensure that the MOWCAP nomination process is consistent with the international process unless there are regional reasons not to do so.

One immediate step that MOWCAP can take is to establish a working group to assess developments at the international level as they occur. We suggest that the working group is established now and that members are appointed by the Bureau. The working group will have consultation and dialogue with all interested parties who wish to contribute to how the MOWCAP Guidelines, Statutes, MOWCAP Register Sub-Committee Rules of Procedure and MOWCAP Rules of Procedure (new) should be amended. The working group will provide interim reports to the Bureau, followed by a report to the MOWCAP members at the 9th General Meeting in 2020. This is also the earliest date at which revised MOWCAP operational documents could be approved and applied to a nomination round.

On 21 December 2017, the Director-General of UNESCO decided that the next nomination cycle for the Memory of the World International Register would not be opened in parallel with the international MoW review that is currently taking place. MOWCAP works in parallel with the internal Programme and is guided by international documents and decisions. The Bureau proposes that the 2019-2020 nomination round will not go ahead unless there is certainty that its current operational documents are as consistent as possible with international decisions and documents. The final date for making this decision is March 2019, which would be the normal date for calling for nominations to the MOWCAP register.

Bureau Recommendations:

1. That the Bureau establish a working group to review MOWCAP operational documents
2. The working group will undertake the following activities
 - Monitor the international review progress and decisions
 - Undertake consultation and dialogue with MOWCAP members when international decisions are known and their impact on MOWCAP operational documents can be assessed
 - By March 2019, provide an interim report to the MOWCAP Bureau on progress with the international review and impact on MOWCAP operational documents
 - Develop revised drafts of MOWCAP's operational documents as decisions on the international Programme become available

- Provide revised drafts of operational documents to the Bureau as they are developed
3. In March 2019 the Bureau to decide whether the next MOWCAP nomination should be deferred. The nomination round should be deferred if
- The Bureau cannot be certain that the current MOWCAP operational documents are reasonably consistent with the international decisions