



International Academy of Mediators

INTERNATIONAL TASK FORCE

FINAL REPORT FOR

VIRTUAL BOARD MEETING on the 24TH March 2021

Further to my previous reports to the Board, I wish to report the following:

1. There appears to be a consensus among all those to whom I have spoken, and I have not polled the membership as a whole, that after the current Covid pandemic travel restrictions are lifted, there should be **one** person to person conference a year which all members should be encouraged to attend. The universal opinion expressed to me is that the collegiality and interface of these conferences is one of the most important benefits of membership. It is critical for the future of IAM that we recognise:
 - a. That informal contact is so important to our members that we should do all we can to facilitate as full an attendance to our conferences as possible; this means:
 - i. Choosing venues which are as accessible as possible for **all** our members wherever they are;
 - ii. Alternating the venues between an American¹ venue and a non-American venue;
 - iii. Giving serious consideration to the costs for all our members.
 - b. The pressing desire for there to be speakers from all jurisdictions with topics that are of universal interest rather than parochial, (see paragraph 2 below);
 - c. The need for us all to appreciate that different jurisdictions have developed, or are developing, variants to our own experience of mediation and that we can always learn from others to improve or modify our own methods;
 - d. The aim to be truly International is not limited to attracting members from other jurisdictions, but providing an access to the enormous and probably unique body of experience which IAM has through its members to all those with aspirations to international practice; and
 - e. That, properly handled², we could harness that combined knowledge and experience to develop a unique position to support world-wide diversity in every sense of the word.
2. In addition to an actual Conference, we should aim to host at least one virtual conference each year which involves as many jurisdictions as possible. I remind the Board of the answer to Question 3³ of the survey:

“The majority considered that the topics were not sufficiently relevant to the needs and interests of the extra-American mediation community. All considered that there should be

¹ By ‘American’ I mean Canada and USA but not South America

² By ‘properly handled’ I am referring to the need to maintain our independence, neutrality and apolitical status

³ The full List of questions is attached for convenience.

more non-American speakers. Most considered that Junto was not an appropriate title for our discussions as an international body.”

I commented in my last report that ‘Workshop’ is a well tried and possibly over-tired title. For the Hong Kong Symposium, we used the title ‘Capsule’, which seemed to work well.

3. There were two issues identified in my last Report which had been raised by all those I polled, but for which no suggested solutions were put forward. The first involved the level of annual membership fees which the majority considered excessive. The second was ancillary to that, namely the reserves of some US\$300,000, given that IAM was a non-profit making organisation.
4. As it happens, those two issues were raised with Board as result of observations from some of our members, notably, DF John Sturrock. The Board reconsidered the level of dues for the current year in view of the pandemic travel restrictions which has meant that we have been unable to hold any conferences for over a year. The dues were reduced to US\$500 for this year. The Board set up an Allocation Committee to consider the question of the Reserve Fund, under the chairmanship of Larry Rute whose Report is on the Agenda.
5. As those two issues are now to be considered by the Board separately from its consideration of the Task Force Report, I consider that my work is finished as far as reporting to the Board is concerned.
6. For convenience I summarise my recommendations:
 - 6.1 My suggestion for the Board would be to have one actual and one virtual conference a year with one actual conference outside North America at least every three years. I would suggest that this proposal be put to the membership at the AGM.
 - 6.2 All members be required to attend an actual conference at least every three years, but encouraged to attend all.
 - 6.3 Balancing the desire to promote diversity and encourage international membership should not involve attenuating the current membership criteria, but on a country by country basis the Board could consider the extent of mediation practice in those jurisdictions where there is as yet insufficient mediation to sustain a full time practice as a mediator.
 - 6.4 All our conferences (both virtual and actual) should contain a wider variety of speakers from different jurisdictions and the topics be of more general interest.

Michel Kallipetis QC FCI Arb

President Elect
