

ISSN Activity Report for 2014

0. Introduction

2014 was a transition year for the ISSN International Centre. A strategic plan was adopted by the Governing Board in its June 2014 meeting. It validated the organisation of a two-tier consultancy mission about ISSN data and Open Access. ISSN IC contracted with Netherlands-based *Pleiade Management en Consultancy* to set up the tender. Three companies finally submitted a tender. *CiberResearch* was chosen by the selection committee and started working in February 2015.

At staff level, it was also a year of many changes. Mrs Françoise Pellé retired in February 2014 and was replaced by Mrs Gaëlle Béquet in March 2014. Three staff members also left ISSN IC in 2014 and three new staff joined.

1. The ISSN Network

1.1. Coverage and extension of the Network

In 2014, Kenya started the process of joining the ISSN network. The director of the National Library of Kenya, Mr Richard Atuti, is in charge of this process which implies some diplomatic exchanges between the Government of Kenya and UNESCO.

Since the joint ISBN-ISSN-ISMN meeting in Istanbul in September 2014, there have been regular contacts between the ISSN International Centre and the Russian Book Chamber based in Moscow and depending on ITAR-TASS news agency. A press conference was organised on March 16th, 2015 in Moscow. The accession of the Russian Federation is well advanced.

At the end of 2014, 88 countries participated officially in the ISSN network.

1.2. Activities of the ISSN Network

1.2.1. ISSN meetings

The 62nd Governing Board meeting took place at the ISSN International Centre in June 2014. The Consultative Committee also held its meeting in June 2014. The 63rd Governing Board distant meeting was scheduled in October 2014.

The 20th General Assembly took place on June 12th and 13th, 2014 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris.

The 39th Directors meeting was kindly hosted by the Turkish ISSN Centre from Sept. 16th to Sept. 19th, 2014 in Istanbul. 41 participants from 40 countries attended this meeting. ISSN IC was represented by its director and the three department managers.

1.2.2. Activities of the ISSN International Centre

- Data, Network and Standards activities: the latest version of the **ISSN Manual** was released in January 2015 after extensive review by the members of the ISSN Review Group. They are to be thanked for their commitment in this crucial activity. The ISSN Review group now comprises representatives from ISSN Sudan, ISSN Slovakia, ISSN France, ISSN UK, ISSN Canada, ISSN Bosnia and Herzegovina, ISSN USA, ISSN Finland, ISSN Germany, ISSN Poland.

ROAD website was revamped with new map designs and new statistical features. The new website was launched in December 2014.

In 2014, the International Centre was active in the standardization area and participated in various standardization groups and meetings at international and national levels. There was an official presentation of the PRESSoo model (see <http://library.ifla.org/838/1/086-leboeuf-en.pdf>) at the WLIC-IFLA conference in Lyon in August 2014.

There was also a presentation of ISSN IC for **ICEDIS meeting organised by EDITEUR** in Frankfurt (see http://www.editeur.org/files/Events%20pdfs/ICEDIS%20Events/Editeur_ICEDIS_meeting_2014_ISSN.pdf).

- Sales, Marketing and Communication activities: marketing and communication activities consisted in **placing adverts in major professional journals** (ALA newsletter, ALA magazine, Swets regional, Serials Librarian, ISQ, Archimag) and in participating in two professional events (Frankfurt Book Fair and Charleston Conference).
- IT activities: ISSN IC signed a contract with VTLS in August 2014 **to update its version of Virtua software** which hosts the ISSN Portal. Though some difficulties arose from the fact that VTLS was acquired by Innovative in 2014, the project was completed in March 2015 as scheduled. A new server was bought by ISSN IC in December 2014 to replace the existing hardware.

2. ISSN database – Management and development

2.1. ISSN Register

2.1.1. Statistics

61,139 new records were added in the ISSN Register in 2014. This figure is very similar to last year's one (61,696). The ISSN Network, including the International Centre, should be thanked and encouraged to pursue their efforts in this area which is vital for the success of the ISSN system.

It should also be noted that **33 countries are currently using Virtua client**, thus updating the ISSN Register on a daily basis.

The number of files received from ISSN national centres has grown significantly in 2014 reaching a peak at **844 files provided by 48 centres**. These files are loaded on a daily basis and this increase has put some stress on the newly recruited staff.

The identification of electronic resources continues to make good progress both in quantity and quality: **154,745 electronic titles** had an ISSN in 2014 (132, 806 at the end of 2013).

The cataloguing activity of the International Centre remained stable in 2014 with **4354 ISSN** assignments (both Register and Work records).

2.1.2. New actions and projects

CIDEMIS: The ISSN International Centre has participated in the implementation of CIDEMIS, a web service developed by the Agence bibliographique de l'enseignement supérieur (ABES) to smooth down the ISSN assignment process for serial publications handled by French academic libraries pertaining to ABES network. It should be said that other union catalogues and digital repositories such as SUNCAT in UK and HATHI Trust in the USA are also interested in establishing cooperation with the ISSN network to identify their holdings.

ProQuest: an agreement was signed with ProQuest to launch a pilot project aiming at assigning more ISSN to active print and online titles in Ulrich's database, to include these titles in the ISSN Register and to send the corresponding ISSN records to ProQuest for Ulrich's database. A test is currently underway with 200 records provided by Ulrich's regarding book series and journals published in the Netherlands.

3. ISSN Award

The "ISSN Award" was created in 2007 by the ISSN Governing board in order "*to support and encourage ISSN Members to participate in ISSN training sessions and meetings.*" The purpose of the award is to recognize special efforts made by a country in the ISSN field, and to provide an incentive to improve the coverage of the ISSN register.

The 2014 award was granted to the Nigerian ISSN Centre.

4. Conclusion

There are important challenges facing the ISSN Network in 2015.

Ciber Research's consultancy mission will come up with various scenarios to open up ISSN data. Whatever the decision taken by the Governing Board, ISSN IC shall make all necessary efforts to change and innovate and update its core business activity.

The celebration of the 40th Anniversary of the ISSN network should be the opportunity to remind the publishers' and libraries' communities of the benefit of ISSN as an identifier and to emphasize the projects of the network. A special issue (in English) of the journal *Ciencia do Informacao* will be published by IBICT in Brazil. A website is currently being developed by the Communication department to host documents, articles, pictures and other archives about ISSN history.

These promising developments shall motivate ISSN IC staff and national centres to join efforts to set ISSN at the outpost of innovation in the library and information sectors value chain.