IADISC Report to the ISIS Board of Trustees
October, 2005

The past six months have been some of the busiest ones for IADISC members. We have been supporting the ZIMS Project and ISIS in many ways including the following:

- System Use Case (SUC) Webex sessions – eighteen focus groups have been established to work with CGI to develop many of the screens for ZIMS, including search screens, details pages and activities pages. Each of these focus groups participate in approximately three to eight Webex sessions per batch of screens.
- August SUC meeting – some of the SUC Webex sessions were not as productive as we had hoped due to challenges such as, global scheduling, incomplete document presentation from CGI; and decrease participation by some members of the focus groups. Therefore the process was reviewed and revised by the PMO and IADISC to include two additional workshops. A revised process saw a very successful four-day workshop held in Toronto, where twenty Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) worked with CGI team members to review many additional search screens, details pages and activities pages for the core, and planning, alerts and scheduling areas of the application. This workshop achieved more than we had hoped, and was extremely successful.
- By the time the ISIS Board meets, we will have held a second SUC workshop in Toronto in late September, focusing on various areas of animal health and report designing. We anticipate that this workshop will be as successful as the August workshop.
- Data standards development and review continues. The last of the data standards workshops was held in Orlando in late May, with approximately 60 SMEs attending. We have now identified around 180 business standards, with 34 of these having been presented to the ISIS community for voting. The remaining standards are still in the final stages of review.
- A number of SMEs were involved in a three-day training and deployment workshop in St. Louis in August. Participants at this workshop assisted CGI to draft the initial deployment plan, and review the draft plan for user training.
- The drafting of report specifications has begun. CGI are contracted to include 200 reports in the first release of ZIMS. The focus groups have identified the reports that are required, and these have been prioritized. Reports champions are now working on writing up the specifications for each report, and these will then be made available for wider review and discussion.
- IADISC members Kevin Johnson and John Inkson continue to manage a web-based discussion forum. This has been a very successful tool for SMEs' electronic involvement in data standards work, user interface reviews, and use case feedback. The discussion forum now has 292 members, with some 3296 articles posted.

The next six months present some significant challenges pertaining to the user community's involvement in the ZIMS Project. There are many concurrent bands of work requiring SME input:
- continued data standards review and approval
- additional SUC Webexes
- reports elaboration

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- training plan

This will require an even greater effort in coordinating, educating and communicating with SMEs. There has been a definite decline in the number of SMEs that have contributed their time over the past six months, and in many cases, the amount of time that SMEs have worked on ZIMS seems to have decreased. This is predominantly due to volunteer burnout, combined with other work commitments such as regional conferences and mid-year inventories. The schedule of work for the SMEs has been aggressive and demanding of late, and this results in a high risk of further decreases in SME participation. Some possible means for mitigating the risk were presented at the last ISIS Board meeting, and most of these are still very relevant:

- Increase the communication about project timeline and deliverables, due dates and responsibilities so that everyone is clear about the tasks to be performed. Provide a monthly (or more frequent) status report to continually monitor status.
- Manage scope more aggressively. Focus on doing the core requirements well.
- Dedicate one person, at least half-time, to the coordination of Focus Groups and participation in web conferences.
- Provide better training material and orientation for SMEs so the assignments are very clear. Examine the overall training strategy and seek continuity between training activities through construction, user acceptance testing and through deployment.
- Establish clear roles and responsibilities of all involved (SMEs, Focus Group leaders, ISIS staff support).
- Provide additional positive feedback to volunteers and team members during this high stress time.

During the May IADISC meeting in Melbourne, Sue Dubois, Senior Systems Analyst at Disney's Animal Kingdom/The Living Seas, tendered her resignation as IADSIC Chair, due to increasing work commitments from her employer. Sue has been involved with the ZIMS Project since its inception and served as the ZIMS Project Manager during the initiation phase. Without a doubt, Sue has been one of the major contributors to the ZIMS Project during this time, and has given thousands of hours of her own time to work on the project. Kevin Johnson from ARAZPA, was subsequently appointed to the position of IADISC Chair during the Orlando data standards workshop.

On the membership front, we have one new member since May, 2005; AZA designated one new representative to IADISC, Nilda Ferrer from the Wildlife Conservation Society.

IADISC members will continue to work very hard to ensure that we have the broadest possible regional representation and that adequate SMEs are involved in the process to ensure the successful delivery of ZIMS.

Submitted by:

Kevin Johnson
Chair, IADISC