

**Twenty-third Session
Vienna, 28 March – 4 April 2006**

**Item 7 of the Provisional Agenda:
Activities relating to the Working Group on Training
Courses in Toponymy**

**Report of the Convenor of the Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy 2004-
2006**

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Courses in Toponymy.**

Report of the Convenor of the Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy

International Training Courses held

1. UNGEGN stimulates the organisation of training courses in toponymy in order to increase awareness of the need for geographical names standardization and, more specifically, to help fill the need for qualified personnel. The general model of such courses is a two-week programme of lectures, alternated by exercises and fieldwork, and completed by instruction in digital processing techniques. As since 1982 at least one such a course, meant for an international audience, has been held each year, a suitable collection of lecture notes, manuals, fieldwork guides, etc has been built up, from which prospective lecturers might draw their inspiration.

2. Since the twenty-second session of UNGEGN the convenor has been informed about international training courses or workshops in toponymy held in Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic), Panama (Panama), Maputo (Mozambique), Bathurst (Australia), Malang (Indonesia) and Vienna (Austria).

3. The 16th Geographic Names Course in Applied Toponymy, sponsored by the Pan American Institute of Geography and History, was held August 17-28, 2004, in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. The course was directed by Roger Payne, Executive Secretary, U.S.Board on Geographic Names (rpayne@usgs.gov).

4. A UN-supported toponymic training course for Southern Africa was held from September 17-24 2004 in Maputo, Mozambique, at the National Directorate of Geography and Cadastre on behalf of the Africa South Division. Interested participants were able as well to attend the Names Society of Southern Africa Congress held in Maputo, as it was planned immediately following that course. Local organiser of the training course was Mr Luis Abrahamo, chair of the Africa-South Division, UNGEGN (luis.abrahamo@mae.gov.mz), who also reported in the UNGEGN Information Bulletin, No. 29, January 2005.

5. Another UN-supported Training Course in Toponymy was held from 12 to 24 October 2004 at Charles Sturt University, Bathurst, Australia, organised jointly by the Asia-Pacific Institute for Toponymy at Macquarie University and the New South Wales Geographical Names Board. Participants also got practical experience from attending a meeting of the Geographical names Board of New South Wales, after a full briefing on its work and from fieldwork in the surrounding region. Local organiser was Flavia Hodges (fhodges@hmn.mq.edu.au), who also reported in the UNGEGN Information Bulletin, No. 29, 2005.

6. The 17th Geographic Names Course in Applied Toponymy, sponsored by the Pan American Institute of Geography and History, was held in Panama City, Panama from August 23-September 2, 2005. The course was directed by Roger Payne, Executive Secretary, U.S.Board of Geographical Names (rpayne@usgs.gov).

7. Indonesia held its third UN-supported training course in toponymy near Malang, Indonesia (in the Batu mountain resort) on behalf of the Asia Southeast and Pacific Southwest Division, September 11-22, 2005. Apart from Indonesians it also attracted participants from Australia, Brunei, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Local Organiser was Prof Jacub Rais, member of the Indonesian Academy of Sciences and former director of the National mapping Organisation Bakosurtanal, and it was opened by its present director Ir Rudolf Matindas. It has been reported upon extensively and it will also be dealt with in the session of this Working Group.

8. The UNGEGN Dutch- and German-speaking Division hosted another toponymy course linked to an UNGEGN session, this one just prior to the 23rd session of UNGEGN in Vienna. It was aimed especially at toponymists from Eastern Europe and Central Asia and organised by the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the Austrian Topographic Survey. The organisation

was directed by Dr Isolde Hausner.

National training events held

9. Every other year, a Course entitled "Introduction à la gestion toponymique" is been held at the Geography Department of Laval University (Québec, Canada). It as been held in 2005 and will be offered again in 2007, with the collaboration of the Commission de toponymie du Québec (professor : Henri Dorion)

At Laval University, another course is given which does have an important toponymic content: Introduction à la carte du monde. More than 200 students attend that course every year (professor : Frédéric Lasserre). This course has been given for many years on the Québec TV network.

10. From 12-13 April 2005 - training in maintenance of the United State National Names Database known as the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS) was organised for names liaisons of the regional centers of the United States Forest Service and the United States Bureau of Land Management. There were ongoing training programmes for partners in the USGS GNIS Maintenance Program.

11. In December 2005 the Asia-Pacific Institute for Toponymy in Sydney, Australia, has held a course 'Researching Aboriginal Placenames' in collaboration with the New South Wales Geographical Names Board and the NSW Aboriginal Languages Research & Resource Centre. The participants represented a broad range of NSW languages currently undergoing renewal: Dharug, Gamilaraay, Gumbaynggir, Ngiyampaa, Wiradjuri and Yugambah. The participants learned how to discover information about traditional placenames through recording oral history and researching in libraries and archives. It is hoped that members of Aboriginal communities will be thus encouraged to submit applications to the Geographical Names Board to reinstate traditional placenames as official names or as dual names for geographical features according to the Board's policy dating from 2001.

12. At the November 2005 meeting of the Asia South-East & Pacific South-West Division of UNGEGN, APIT was requested to prepare a questionnaire on toponymic training needs, covering course duration, delivery, content and costs. It will be presented in Vienna by David Blair. After discussion at that forum, it will be sent to members of the division by early May, with responses requested by the end of June. A report will be prepared for the Division meeting in Jakarta in late August, 2006.

13. In February 2005, a three-day workshop was organized in Ottawa, Canada, by the Government of Nunavut and the Inuit Heritage Trust. The occasion gave the opportunity for some 20 researchers involved with field collection of indigenous names in Nunavut to share their experiences – both successes and problems. Discussion focussed on many aspects of collecting toponyms from oral tradition, including interviewing, recording (in Inuktitut, using syllabics and/or Roman script) and cartographic representation. More about the workshop is included in a separate working paper for the 23rd Session of UNGEGN.

International training courses planned

14. The 16th PAIGH course in Applied Toponymy, sponsored by the Pan American Institute of Geography and History, is tentatively scheduled for sometime in August or September, 2006. The course will be directed by Roger Payne, Executive Secretary, U.S.Board of Geographical Names (rpayne@usgs.gov).

15. A toponymic training course for Southern Africa will probably be held from September 18-25, 2006 in Maputo, Mozambique. Local organiser of the training course will be Mr Luis Abrahamo, chair of the Africa-South Division, UNGEGN (luis.abrahamo@mae.gov.mz).

16. Guinée is planning a conference and workshop to provide training in the standardization of geographical names and the establishment of a national names authority.

Training material

17. The organisation of training courses in toponymy has been much eased by the fact that training manuals on the collection and processing of geographical names are being made available.

This year both a "basic manual" on the national standardization of geographical names and a technical reference manual on romanization, toponymic data transfer standards and formats, and country names in the language(s) of the countries concerned will be published by the UN in the UN languages. Especially the basic manual will be of assistance for training purposes. The content is divided into two parts. Part I, this addresses the establishment of national names authorities, collection of names in the field, and maintenance of toponymic records. As a follow up at a more detailed level on technical and cultural aspects of toponymic administration, Part II contains further readings in geographical names administration, written by various UNGEGN experts. We hope that once the publications are issued by the United Nations, it would be expected that the text could be included as pdf files on the UNGEGN website.

18. Elisabeth Calvarin (Institut géographique national, Paris) and Henri Dorion are developing the project of building a website devoted to Applied toponymy offering a training course which is the result of the merging of both technical courses given by Mrs Calvarin for IGN technicians and by Mr. Dorion at Laval University. Financial support has been provided by the Agence intergouvernementale de la Francophonie. More detailed reports will be presented at the Vienna UNGEGN meeting by the Division francophone and Canada representative.

19. The International Cartographic Association (ICA) is still continuing the production of a toponymy module as a part of a cartography web course, made available by the ICA Commission on Education and Training (CET). Production is supervised by ICA-CET chair Laszlo Zentai. It is possible to access the course in production at the ICA-CET website <http://lazarus.elte.hu/cet/>

Other, previously produced training material and manuals are listed on the toponymy courses website <http://toponymycourses.geog.uu.nl/>

Working group composition

20. The Working Group on training courses in toponymy consists of:

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Mr H.Dorion
Ms Flavia Hodges
Mr N.Kadmon
Ms H.Kerfoot
Ms L.Möller
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Mr R.Payne
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