

## Note from Secretariat: Placing Host Selection onto an Annual Cycle

[Paper submitted to the 34<sup>th</sup> Executive Committee meeting: 21/22 December 2016]

The Secretariat recommends that the Committee:

- 1. NOTE** the substantial progress in achieving the strategic goal of encouraging and confirming hosts well in advance.
- 2. AGREE** to place host selection onto an annual cycle with an annual deadline for proposals to be set each year by the Secretariat in early-March.
- 3. ACCORDINGLY NOTE** that the Secretariat will implement a call for proposals for the 2019 Conference with a deadline in March 2017.

### Progress in reaching strategic objectives

The current strategic plan includes the goal to build upon earlier work of the Strategic Direction Working Group to implement arrangements “to encourage and confirm hosts well in advance”.

We have now operated the current arrangement for inviting, assessing, recommending and confirming hosts 3 times. The earlier practice that gave hosts a maximum 12 months preparation time. The new process has gradually increased that by 3 - 10 months.

	Deadline for proposals	Confirmed host	Preparation time
38 <sup>th</sup> Conference	April 2015	July 2015	15 months
39 <sup>th</sup> Conference	November 2015	April 2016	17 months
40 <sup>th</sup> Conference	July 2016	<i>February 2017</i>	<i>20 months (approx.)</i>

The process has now been fully tested and refined. It has proved its worth in several respects:

- Hosts have been confirmed well in advance (allowing longer to prepare for a major undertaking, reducing risk to the Conference, and creating a cross-over between designated hosts allowing better knowledge transfer).
- Member authorities have been encouraged to come forward to offer to host the annual event (previously the Conference struggled to get even one volunteer).
- The Executive Committee has been able to set some expectations for hosts and exercise some choice with the longer term objectives of continuous improvement, geographical diversity and delivery on strategic objectives.

## Placing host selection onto an annual cycle

The process has been run three times on an ad hoc basis with different deadlines and targets for the taking of decisions. It is now time to place host selection onto an annual cycle which will simplify the administrative burden for the Secretariat, create greater certainty for forward planning and enable a timetable that will give selected hosts a full 2 year planning period.

Assuming an annual Conference is held in September or October, the Secretariat has identified early-March as an optimum annual deadline for proposals which would allow time for Executive Committee evaluation prior to the Committee's busy period in the months running up to the annual meeting.

An approximate annual timeline would be:



The Secretariat seeks the Committee's approval to implement a system whereby host selection is placed onto an annual cycle. The Secretariat would plan to:

- Following the Committee's December meeting, to make a call for proposals to host the 2019 Conference with a deadline in early March 2017.
- The Secretariat has updated the guidance for proposals (set out below) so that it is generic and can be used for any future call for proposals (rather than being year-specific).
- Publicise the new annual cycle to members and record it on the website.

*[The guidance document to use for 2019 and beyond is available [here](#) and has been omitted from this note]*

Secretariat

