

SOGESCI-B.V.W.B.

General Assembly meeting on Thursday January 28, 2010

Annual report of activities for 2009

Dear Chairman, Dear Members of the Administration Board, Dear Members of SOGESCI-B.V.W.B.,

First of all I would like to thank Hugo Pastijn, our previous Delegate Administrator who went into retirement in 2009 after a long and fruitful career at the Royal Military Academy. This is my first term in this position he has occupied for so many years, and I apologise in advance for my lack of experience in the job. As each year there were three main activities and services of our society in 2009:

- The ORBEL'09 conference
- The ORBEL award 2009
- The 4OR publications

The 23th yearly national conference of SOGESCI-B.V.W.B. ORBEL'09 on Operations Research was organised in Leuven on 5 and 6 February 2009, at the Faculty of Applied Economics of the KUL. Main organisers were Kenneth Sörensen and Dirk Cattrysse of the Faculty of Engineering, and Roel Leus and Frits Spieksma of the Faculty of Business and Economics. About 125 people participated. The conference dinner in the beautiful Faculty Club restaurant was attended by about 90 people. 74 papers were presented in three parallel sessions. A plenary talk was given on the first conference day by Maurice Queyranne on "Smith's ratio rule in Scheduling". The master thesis of Arnaud Vandaele (EPFL Lausanne and Faculté Polytechnique de Mons) 'Measures in congestion in container terminals' was selected for the ORBEL award 2009 and presented during the plenary closing session on the second day. This award, sponsored by OM Partners, is bestowed on the author of a scientifically oriented student's thesis with the exception of PhD theses. The presentation of the laureate gave an interesting complement to the following also much appreciated talk of Martin Gröschel on "The practice of OR today" giving an impressive overview of OR techniques used today by practitioners in many different fields. During the conference dinner the ORTEC "Excellence in Industry award" was awarded to the best talk on applications of OR to Rowan Van Schaeren and Wout Dullaert for their work on "Berth Scheduling".

4OR, a quarterly journal of Operations Research, in cooperation with the French and Italian societies, continued to strengthen its scientific position. During 2009 volume 7 of 4OR was published, containing 404 pages, including 3 invited surveys, 13 research papers, 1 Industry paper, 14 PhD Thesis summaries (4 from Belgium), and 2 editorial papers. Note that Vol. 7/4 publishes an invited survey on "Intra-domain traffic engineering with shortest path routing protocols" of which our treasurer Bernard Fortz is a co-author. The year 2010 will be important for the journal with respect to its international visibility and ranking since its first Journal Citation Reports impact factor rating for 2009 will be published. Also the editorial team of 4OR changed in 2009, first by the replacement of Denis Bouyssou by Philippe Baptiste as France's editor-in-chief, and by an important renewal of the board of now 15 area editors, 5 of which from Belgium. This has also been the last year of Frank Plastria as the first Belgium's editor-in-chief, who will be replaced by Thierry Marchant. On behalf of our society I would like to thank very much Frank for the fantastic job he has achieved, bringing 4OR to such a high scientific standard.

In 2009 two workshops have been organised by administrators of SOGESCI-B.V.W.B.:

- The workshop “Interdisciplinary aspects of Multicriteria decision aid” held on November 27 2009 at Université Libre de Bruxelles was organised by Yves De Smet in collaboration with Martin Geiger from the German OR Society.
- The international workshop “Integer Programming at Core” held on May 27-29 was organised by Etienne Loute at CORE/UCL to honour Laurence Wolsey, who has been in the forefront of the research in integer programming during several decades. The three-day workshop of recognised very high quality was attended by about 120 participants, including some 40 PhD students thanks to the financial support of our society.

In 2009 two Belgian researchers were selected for EURO activities. Nicolas Gillis, laureate of the ORBEL 2008 award, was selected by EURO for attending the ELAVIO 2009 conference in El Fuerte, Mexico, August 9-14, 2009. Pablo Vanegas was selected as the Belgian participant to the EURO Summer Institute on “OR in Agriculture and Forest Management” held in Leida (Spain) on July 25-August 8, 2009.

Here some more news in 2009:

- The web-site www.orbel.be continues to be maintained by François Glineur. It is planned to include or complete information over all past activities: the list of all past presidents and winners of the ORBEL award, members’ achievements, the Borsalino archives, etc.
- Marc Roubens has transferred in 2009 to our archives the probably unique still existing society founding act.
- An article providing information on our society, its history, activities and achievements has been prepared for publication in 2010 on request of ‘The Wiley encyclopedia of Operations Research and Management Science’.
- The ORBEL newsletter prepared by Sabine Wittevrongel is regularly sent by e-mail to all members.
- The Borsalino web site containing a digital archive of our past publications in JORBEL is nearly ready. When completed the Borsalino pages will be added into the ORBEL website.

Concerning our financial situation needless to say it remains excellent, partly thanks to the subsidies offered by the French Community of Belgium. I thank Bernard Fortz for his dedicated management of our money assets and all the sometimes complex work around membership fees and conference registrations. It is not the purpose of this society to accumulate unused capital for its own sake. All administrators, especially the younger ones, are encouraged to organise OR workshops and seminars as a constructive way of spending money for the promotion of OR techniques in all fields.

I would also like to thank very much our president Raymond Bisdorff, the first citizen of the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg to occupy this position, for the very efficient and dedicated way he did comply with his sometimes quite arduous task. Patrick De Causmaecker from KUL Campus Kortrijk will succeed him in a short while. I wish him all the best.

Finally I wish you all on behalf of our society a very happy year with many OR achievements as a support to solving important and complex issues faced by public and private organisations in Belgium and all over the world.

Pierre Kunsch, Delegate Administrator, January 2010