

URSI/IAGA Joint Working Group on VERSIM (VLF/ELF Remote Sensing of the Ionosphere and Magnetosphere)

Business meeting - Tuesday 3 July 2007

There was a meeting of the VERSIM working group during the International Association of Geomagnetism and Aeronomy Scientific Assembly, held in Perugia (Italy), at 1230 on Tuesday 3 July 2007

Present: CJ Rodger (New Zealand) in the chair, J Lichtenberger (Hungary), J Manninen (Finland), M Parrot (France), F. Nemeč (Czech Republic), K. Andreeva (Czech Republic), D Grubor (Serbia), T Raita (Finland), M Clilverd (United Kingdom), E Lay (USA), C Price (Israel), R. Holzworth (USA).

Chairman's Report:

Craig Rodger (the IAGA co-chairman), described the purpose and nature of the working group, and outlined activities of the working group since the previous meeting of the working group. The last VERSIM business meeting was during last years VERSIM workshop held in Sodankylä (Finland) in September 2006. The chairman's report included a brief discussion on the yearly VERSIM newsletter, which is well supported by the community through a large number of reports made from many countries. Our email list has 133 members, and 3 new members requested to join during the business meeting.

Nominations for IAGA co-chair of VERSIM

Craig Rodger stood down as IAGA co-chair, and nominations were requested for the IAGA chair position (the other co-chair is a URSI representative, and is currently filled by J Lichtenberger (Hungary)). Craig Rodger was nominated as IAGA chair by Colin Price (Israel). The nomination was seconded by Bob Holzworth (USA). There were no other candidates, and thus Rodger returned to the role as chair of the working group.

Brief report on VERSIM Workshop in Sodankylä 26th – 30th September 2006

Jyrki Manninen, the lead organizer of the 2nd VERSIM workshop held last year in Finland, gave a brief report on the Workshop. There were 46 participants attending from 16 countries, ranging from Fiji and Slovenia all the way in scale-size to Brazil and the USA. Together, a total of 52 presentations occurred – 40% more than the first workshop in 2004. The 2nd VERSIM Workshop showed our community in good heart, including 9 young researchers as well as real pioneers in our field. IAGA support for the 2007 VERSIM workshop included a prize for the best presentation by a young scientist. This award provides support to participate in the Perugia Assembly and was awarded to Ms. Annika Seppälä, a Research Scientist at the Finnish Meteorological Institute.

Jyrki noted that a CD containing all the presentations given at the 2nd VERSIM workshop had been delayed, but is about to be sent out to the participants.

Brief report on VERSIM Workshop planned for Tihany, Hungary in September 2008

János Lichtenberger, the URSI co-chair of the working group, reported that he is to host the 3rd VERSIM Workshop in Tihany, Hungary. This is now planned for the week starting 18 August 2008, on the shores of Lake Balaton. János described the region around Tihany, and the options for the convention centre, accommodation, and social programme. He also discussed the timing of the workshop, relative to the URSI meeting earlier in 2008.

He answered questions as to transport option from Budapest to Hungary, and also funding support. The organisers of the 3rd VERSIM Workshop will approach the Hungarian Academy of Science and IAGA for support.

Reports on VERSIM-relevant future activities

Michel Parrot noted that the French microsatellite TARANIS has moved into phase B. TARANIS will study the luminous events and the electrostatic discharges which appear between the top of the thunderstorm clouds and the lower ionosphere. The launch is expected for 2011, and will provide significant VERSIM-relevant datasets.

Craig Rodger noted that the new NASA Radiation Belt Storm Probes are expected to launch around the same time, and there are exciting new measurements will be made in the near future.

There was a brief discussion as to meetings in 2008:

- URSI General Assembly, Chicago (August)
- HEPPA workshop, Helsinki (May)
- Sprite workshop, Corte in Corscia (late June)
- COSPAR, Montreal

VERSIM relevant sessions proposed for IAGA meeting in Sopron, Hungary in 2009

The following sessions were proposed:

Energetic particle precipitation into the atmosphere: sources and consequences

Possible conveners	Mark Clilverd	<macl@bas.ac.uk>
	Craig Rodger	<crodger@physics.otago.ac.nz>

Remote sensing of the plasmasphere

Possible convener	János Lichtenberger	<lityi@sas.elte.hu>
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the VERSIM group also noted support for a thunderstorm impact on the ionosphere (and beyond) session.

Other Business

The VERSIM co-chair was asked to pass on the displeasure of the working group members with the organisation levels of the Perugia IUGG Assembly. Many issues were raised, but the poor programme "book", the incoherent programme organisation, and the lack of any abstract availability (whether through a printed booklet or a CD) were all noted as particularly unacceptable. Some participants noted that the registration fee was not low by international standards, but that this was not reflected by the support the meeting has received. Several participants indicated that they are re-considering attending IAGA/IUGG meetings in the future.

At the end of the meeting comments were made as to the value of providing lunches for lunch-time business meetings. The VERSIM meeting broke up at around 13:15