

Chairman: Prof. Dr. Miguel Valcárcel (Córdoba, Spain)

Secretary: Dr. Ernst-Heiner Korte (Berlin, Germany)

## EUROPEAN ANALYTICAL COLUMN 28

Over more than two decades now the former Working Party and since 1998, Division of Analytical Chemistry (DAC) of the Federation of European Chemical Societies (FECS) addresses the European analytical community via this column which appears in a number of reknown periodicals. Over the years the authors of this column changed several times and with this issue a new crew takes over.

Following the elections at the 1998 Annual Meeting, the new Chairman and Secretary took over their offices by 1 January 1999. In their effort to adopt the background and to get into the current business, they received substantial support from the previous Chairman a.i. Prof. Lauri Niinistö, Finland, and the previous Secretary Ir. Bauke te Nijenhuis, The Netherlands, as well as from Ms McEwan of FECS Secretariat.

In the years to come, DAC will do its best to intensify communication and exchange of ideas within our community. This refers first of all to the DAC itself i.e. the Delegates and Observers who constitute the interfaces to national chemical societies and allied organizations they represent. At the same time the DAC will seek closer contacts to the individual analytical chemist and will develop convenient ways of communication.

By invitation of the Slovak Chemical Society, the Annual Meeting was held in Bratislava on 5 September 1999. It was linked to two important meetings, namely: the Symposium "Analytical Chemistry and Law", held in Vienna (Austria) on 3-4 September, and the EURACHEM Workshop "The Status of Traceability in Chemical Measurement", held in Bratislava (Slovakia) on 6-8 September 1999,. The reports given, discussed and endorsed during the Annual Meeting encompassed the full range of DAC activities. They were given by the Chairman, the Heads of the three DAC Study Groups (Education: Prof. D.T. Burns, UK; Quality Assurance and Accreditation: Prof. W. Wegscheider, Austria; History: Prof. H. Malissa, Austria) and the two Task

Forces, as well as by the organizers a number of conferences including Euroanalysis X, XI and XII.

Among the most relevant activities of DAC in 1999 are:

### **New "DAC Procedures and Practices"**

The most important item on the agenda of the Annual Meeting was the revision of the statutes of DAC called "Procedures and Practices". These had been drafted by a dedicated Task Force and the draft submitted to the DAC Council. Also, the FECS President and Secretariat had been asked to give their views. All comments have been compiled and were finalizingly discussed at the meeting of the DAC Council on 4 September 1999. The outcome was presented to and eventually passed by the Delegates at the Annual Meeting.

The idea behind the "Procedures and Practices" is to provide the necessary framework of cooperation without unduly restricting flexibility. Regarding the organization of the Division's actions, the roles of the Chairperson and of the Secretary are defined, as are those of the bodies Steering Committee replacing the former "Council", Study Groups dealing on longer terms with specific topics of particular importance and Task Forces to compile knowledge regarding pressing questions. The statutes are complemented by instructions for regular meetings and voting procedures as well as the framework for organizing Euroanalysis conferences.

### **Publication of books**

After the successful publishing of the textbook "Analytical Chemistry", based on the Eurocurriculum and edited by Kellner et al. in 1998, a review of the DAC history under the title "25 Years of the Working Party of Analytical Chemistry of the Federation of European Chemical Societies, 1972-1997" was edited by D.T. Burns, A. Gogala, H. Malissa and L. Niinistö and published by the Slovenian Chemical Society in 1999. The attractively arranged book was introduced at the Annual Meeting and received a warm welcome. Another project of DAC is the first edition of a directory "Who's Who in Analytical Chemistry in Europe" which is at its final stage.

### **Euroanalysis Conferences**

In compliance with the Directives for Divisions issued by FECS, DAC is organizing regularly the Euroanalysis conferences. Particular interest is therefore being given to the evaluation of the previous event. Euroanalysis X, held in Basel in 1998 was marked with an outstandingly interesting scientific program, along with a disappointingly low attendance from industry in spite of much effort to offer convenient access. Possible implications for the forthcoming

events were thoroughly discussed. Euroanalysis XI will be held in Lisbon from 3 to 9 September 2000. The Presidium - the link between the organizers of this conference and the DAC - visited the venue, and discussed and approved the general organizational schedule.

The 2nd Circular of Euroanalysis XI appeared versus the end of 1999; abstracts for contributed papers are due on 15 March and registration is required before 31 May 2000. The DAC Study Groups will promote actions in their specific areas, as will related institutions, publishers and other bodies. With a programme adequate to the width of analytical science though focussing on relevant aspects and developments, Euroanalysis will provide an excellent forum to present and discuss ideas and results.

### **Organization of other scientific meetings**

The "Analytical Chemistry and Law" meeting in Vienna, organized by Professors Malissa and Wegscheider, addressed a variety of aspects from the impact of our science on legislative formulation and enforcement over the challenge of legal and statutory limits to the role of an expert witness in litigations. The discussion on how the analyst provides 'prove beyond all reasonable doubt' revealed additional facets that require further investigation. The mandate of the related DAC Task Force was extended for another year.

Besides organizing its own meetings, DAC uses to cooperates with the organizers of quite a number of international conferences as well as specialized or regional symposia in order to support communication and exchange of ideas. In the year passed this referred to meetings in Greece, Ireland, Poland, Romania and Turkey as well as EURACHEM Workshops in Germany and Slovakia.

### **New initiatives**

Several new actions were proposed and endorsed at the Annual Meeting. Among these are (i) Invitation to colleagues from industry to take part in DAC activities; and (ii) Institution of a new Task Force under the leadership of Prof. B. Karlberg, Sweden, that is to provide, in one year's time, an inventory of definitions relevant to Analytical Chemistry.

Finally, it is worth noting with satisfaction that the former DAC Secretary, Bauke te Nijenhuis, received the FECS Award for Service in recognition of his engagement as Delegate, Head of a Study Group and Secretary of DAC, and also for his valuable role in the activities of the Division for over 15 years.