Technical Committees and Working Groups

Geographic Names (Working Group)
The José Joaquín Hungría Morell Geographic Names Course was held in Quito, Ecuador from 30 March through 11 April 2008. The course was presented by George Troupe and Roger Payne. The Instituto Geografico Militar served as host and provided 19 students, excellent training facilities and administrative support. The course was also scheduled to coincide with the 80th anniversary of the establishment of the Instituto Geografico Militar, and was part of the numerous celebration events. Much of the Working Group’s activities and collaborations during the year were directed toward fielding questions regarding the course from the international toponymic community and especially from the Working Group on Training of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN), which sanctions (since 1996) this course as an official international toponymic training course in accordance with guidelines of UNGEGN. The results and achievements of the course’s presentation in April 2008 have also been reported to UNGEGN’s Working Group on Training.

Global Map of the Americas (MGA) (Working Group)
During 2008, Ms. Parcher worked with the Ecuadorian National Section and CLIRSEN to review the survey, solicit letters of endorsement from the GSDI Chair and the PAIGH Secretary General, and translate the survey into English for distribution to the U.S. and Canada. The Global Map of the Americas Survey was sent out to all countries on May 12th. The final surveys will be collected by October and a summary of the results will be available at the Directing Council meeting in El Salvador.

The 4th annual MGA meeting in Panama was held on July 24-25th, 2008 at the Panamanian Instituto Geografica Nacional, “Tommy Guardia”. Both delegates from the U.S. National Section, Jean Parcher and Greg Badger attended along with the U.S. Cartography Commission Chair, Leslie Armstrong. Monica Duque from CLIRSEN presented an outstanding analysis of the current results of the Global Map of the
Americas Survey. Unfortunately the response has not been as high as desired. Each MGA delegate was assigned the task of contacting the various countries that have not responded to the survey. The current technical plan discussing the methodologies needed to build a seamless Global Map of the Americas was reviewed, and assignments were made to provide comments. The future of the MGA working group and possible funding activities were discussed. It has been highly suggested by top officials of PAIGH that the MGA focus on a regional application to ensure future funding opportunities. The U.S. delegation suggested organizing a small meeting with Central American participants at the Meeting of Authorities in El Salvador this November.

Gregg Badger – US, Amador Suarez – Argentina, and Monica Duque – Ecuador at the Global Map of the Americas meeting which was held at Tommy Guardia in Panama.

Jean Parcher – US, Anna Freitas – Brazil, Leslie Armstrong – US, and Monica Duque – Ecuador at the Global Map of the Americas meeting which was held at Tommy Guardia in Panama.
Ms. Parcher visited the PAIGH office in Mexico City during her Embassy Science Fellowship at the U.S.-Embassy in Mexico. She discussed programmatic priorities with the Secretary General of PAIGH.

**Hydrography (Technical Committee)**

The Multibeam Data Collection and Processing Workshop was presented aboard the RIO TUXPAN in Mexico (16 – 20 June, 2008). This workshop was organized under the auspices of the PAIGH Hydrographic Committee of the Cartography Commission, the 4th in a series on multibeam surveys and high volume data processing. Funding and institutional support were provided by the Secretariat. PAIGH Secretary General Santiago Borrero Mutis traveled to Vera Cruz to address the closing ceremony of the WS at the Navy Base and recognize the 80th Anniversary of PAIGH.

The technical goals of this WS were to give attendees on board experience of using multibeam echo sounders, surveying, planning techniques, and use of the attendant software for collection and processing. Mr. Cooper provided data processing and software training on board.

The WS was attended by Brazil, Colombia, Argentina, Jamaica, United States, and Mexico. All attendees came from their respective hydrographic offices and will be using the knowledge gained in their own operations.

This workshop was organized by PAIGH and the Mexican Navy Direccion General Adjunta de Oceanografia Hidrografía y Meteorologia with support from, International Hydrographic Organization Capacity Building Committee, CARIS Inc, Kongsberg Inc, EdgeTech Inc, and US Naval Oceanographic Office (NAVOCEANO), and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).
ARGENTINA: Suboficial Principal Higrógrafo Sergio Canteros (SHN); BRAZIL: Capitán de Corbeta José Waldez Guimaraes Junior (DHN), Teniente Primero Anderson Barbosa da Cruz Pecanha (DHN); COLOMBIA: Capitán de Corbeta José Manuel Plazas Moreno (CIOH); JAMAICA: Ingeniero Antonio Therando Camau Williams; MEXICO: Capitán de Corbeta Santiago Flores Magon García (SEMAR), Capitán de Corbeta Miguel Ángel Flores Pina (SEMÁR) Teniente de Fragata Jesús Fermín González Vázquez (SEMÁR); USA: Lt. Mark Van Waes (NOAA) – Managed calibration and hydrographic survey operations Hydrographer - Elliot Arroyo (NAVOCEANO) - Managed calibration and hydrographic survey operations

Aeronautic Charting (Technical Committee)
Mr. Robert Goodson participated as a member of the International Civil Aeronautical Organization (ICAO) Aeronautical Information Management (AIM) sub group of GREPECAS that has tangential responsibility for ensuring the safe and expeditious exchange of digital/published aeronautical information used in producing aeronautical charts. The most recent initiative is to develop a global strategy to plan, manage and facilitate global transition from paper based aeronautical information exchange to a digital data base exchange. This transition will depend upon individual states abilities to evolve through technological advancement enhance the exchange of digital aeronautical information. As such the plan provides for a graduated development that is internationally harmonized and integrated while improving the quality, availability and punctuality of the data managed via the systems.
He tentatively plans to attend the second NGA/FAA Aeronautical Information Exchange Model (AIXM) workshop to be held in Honduras and supported by ICAO. The intent is to develop a better regional understanding of the definitive exchange model for digital aeronautical data through a hands-on training event. The intended audience is Caribbean and Central American states.

Mr. Robert Goodson continues to participate in (ICAO) Electronic Mapping task force for the CARSAM region working on organizing a standardized framework for regional production of electronic aeronautical charts. To include, a reference file catalog, quality control and evaluation process, metadata, geospatial data infrastructure, zymology, naming conventions, and applicable international standards.

**Fundamental Data (Working Group)**

For the GEOSS Symposium held in Panama on September 29 – October 2, 2008, Ms. Jean Parcher provided a presentation for the Regional Session on the Pan American Institute of Geography and History on behalf of the Secretary General, Santiago Borrero. In conjunction with Lilia Patricia Arias of the Instituto Geográfico Agustín Codazzi of Colombia, Ms. Jean Parcher organized a session, Geographic Information: Applications and Services for a breakout session during the GEOSS Symposium. The breakout session was well attended with over 32 participants. Mexico, United States, and Jamaica provided innovative solutions for problems such as access and maintenance of current geospatial data and metadata documentation.

Ms. Jean Parcher participated on two panels at the Mexican National Geography Conference in Durango, Mexico in September 2008. The panels were the Continuous Elevation Model of Mexico and the National Hydrography Network.

The U.S. Geological Survey and the Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática signed an Annex to collaboratively provide harmonized geospatial datasets along the U.S.-Mexico border to support the U.S.-Mexico Border Geographic Information System. The data can viewed in an internet map service at [http://borderhealth.cr.usgs.gov/IMS.html](http://borderhealth.cr.usgs.gov/IMS.html) and is available for public release at of all datasets along the U.S.-Mexico border at [http://borderhealth.cr.usgs.gov/datalayers.html](http://borderhealth.cr.usgs.gov/datalayers.html) through the U.S.-Mexico Border Environmental Health Initiative data download page. Data layers range from elevation, land cover, hydrography, geology, geographic names, and contaminants datasets. Collaboratively the two agencies are working on harmonizing the watersheds and hydrography networks across the border region.

**Thematic Cartography and Applications (Working Group)**

**Revista Cartografica (Technical Committee)**
Ms. Jean Parcher is publishing an article titled “Aplicaciones del Mapa Global de Las Americas” in the Revista Cartográfica, Instituto Panamericano de Geografía e Historia. The article will be published in both English and Spanish for the 80th Anniversary edition of the Revista Cartográfica.