This Report briefly covers three principal issues addressed initially in San Diego. Broadly conceived, the first issue concerns attendance, specifically (a) last-minute cancellations or no-shows; (b) the proper requirements of attendance; and (c) a code of conduct. Some excuses, it was agreed, were unavoidable, but financial constraints were not one of them. According to provisional records for the annual meeting in Montreal, there were 275 no-shows. One curious fact is that there were no geographical or section differentials in the ratios of no-shows. However, ISA members were less prone to not showing up than non-members.

The second issue relates to the requirements of attendance, particularly for those listed as paper presenters on the program. Paper presenters were required to present a ‘proper’ paper. Currently, the policy is that the paper ought to be accessible electronically at least seven days before the convention. Regrettably, this policy is not always respected.

The issue of plagiarism was also tackled in the Committee’s deliberations. One option discussed in San Diego to avoid potential cases of plagiarism was to solicit only a shorter version of the paper. The other suggestion was to create a ‘hidden archive’ accessible only to members. Plagiarism, it was recognized, was not preventable in all instances, but stressing the need for an established ‘code of conduct’ could help instil positive behavior and also deter negative conduct.

The above issues were taken up again in a conference call on Friday, January 11, 2013. All current members of the Committee (except Tom Volgy) were able to participate, despite a short notice. The discussion was coordinated by the outgoing chair of the Committee, who has also prepared this Report.

On the issue of ‘no-shows’ there was agreement that financial constraints could not be entirely neglected since academic institutions took considerable time to decide on prospective travel requests. However, the Committee also concurred that December 1 would be a reasonable deadline for excused absences. Any absence after that date would be regarded as a ‘no-show’ subject to ISA’s ‘no-shows’ enforcement mechanism.

It was agreed that paper presenters had the responsibility to send their papers to the discussant(s) at last seven days before the convention preceded by submission of a ‘good abstract’ two weeks ahead of the convention. The discussant was under no obligation to provide feedback on the panel without timely receipt of the paper. In this vein, the responsibilities of the chair also needed to be ‘beefed up’ including the authority to disallow the listed author(s) on the panel participation without a paper. A second reminder to the panel chairs delineating their responsibilities two weeks before the convention was also proposed.
The question of giving ‘Open Access’ to ISA papers versus setting up a ‘Firewall’ to prevent plagiarism generated a spirited discussion. The firewall option, some members suggested, had the potential to stunt knowledge, especially latest research in the field. This option also had the potential to give ‘a false sense of security’ to the authors rather than reliance on extant copyright laws to protect intellectual property. It was proposed that: (a) more empirical information was needed to gauge the extent and scope of the alleged abuse; and (b) information on ‘good practice’ of other professional associations (including APSA) was also needed to avoid producing a ‘draconian’ solution.

On the other hand, the reported abuse due to plagiarism could not be ignored. One idea proposed in addition to copyrighting papers by authors, was to request the editors of the six ISA-sponsored journals to use some mechanism to screen submissions to avert cases of possible plagiarism. Subsequently, the publishers of IR journals could also be approached for that purpose. The Committee agreed that socialization of professional norms was, perhaps, the most effective mechanism to produce a proper code of conduct.

To the degree that these are thorny and potentially controversial issues, the key recommendations of this Committee can be properly reviewed by the Governing Council.