

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Institute for Water Resources

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PIANC USA Wins International Award for “Best Section” at the PIANC 2012 Annual General Assembly

ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA. At the recent PIANC 2012 Annual General Assembly (AGA) in Valencia, Spain, the U.S. Section took home the Award for “Best Performing National Section” for 2011. Each year, the PIANC international Secretariat recognizes one country with this distinction. The Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy (ASA-CW) and Chair of the U.S. National Commission, accepted the award on behalf of the U.S. Delegation. She thanked the U.S. Commissioners, volunteers, and staff for their dedication and hard work, particularly for organizing the successful Smart Rivers 2011 Conference.



*Left to right: Louis Van Schel (Secretary General of PIANC),
Jo-Ellen Darcy (ASA-CW and Chairman, U.S. National Commission),
Geoffroy Caude (President of PIANC)*

PIANC USA had a full delegation to this year’s AGA, led by Ms. Darcy and the USACE’s DCG-CEO Major General Michael Walsh. Other members of the delegation included Ms. Anne Cann, Mr. James McCarville, Dr. Robert Engler, Mr. Dale Miller, Mr. John Headland, Mr. Edward Schmeltz, Ms. Lillian Almodovar, Mr. Joseph Mantey, Ms. Kelly Barnes. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Institute for Water Resources are sponsoring organizations for the U.S. Section PIANC. Ms. Anne Cann (U.S. Section Secretary), Ms. Almodovar, and Ms. Barnes, all from IWR, play leadership roles in the organization.

During the AGA meeting Ms. Darcy gave a presentation on the 2014 AGA and Quadrennial Congress which the U.S. Section will host in San Francisco (May 30 - June 5, 2014). The new PIANC International President, Mr. Geoffroy Caude from France, proposed several new initiatives, including: 1) evaluation of PIANC working group publications, how they are used, how many are sold, etc.; 2) social networks, how they might be used to increase PIANC’s visibility; 3) strengthening partnerships with sister organizations such as IAPH; and 4) establishing a platform for new technical ideas. Other highlights of the meeting included technical presentations on the Panama Canal expansion and the impact of the tsunami on ports and navigation infrastructure in Japan.

The U.S. Section hosted a networking reception on the evening prior to the AGA. It was an excellent opportunity to network with delegates from other countries. Ms. Darcy was pleased to introduce the other countries’

delegates to PIANC USA's new President, Maj. Gen. Walsh, since it was his first time attending the AGA. Attendees of note included Mr. Geoffroy Caude (President of PIANC, France), Mr. Louis Van Schel (Secretary-General of PIANC International, Belgium), Mr. Yutaka Sunohara (President of the Japanese Section and former Director-General of Port and Harbors Bureau, Ministry of Land Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, Japan), Mr. Yves Morin (Chairman of the Inland Navigation Commission, France), Mr. Esteban Lefler (Chairman of the Maritime Navigation Commission, Spain), Mr. Elio Ciralli (Chairman of the Recreational Navigation Commission, Italy).

U.S. delegates also participated in several committee meetings to take advantage of the fact that the international members were together. Members of the Young Professionals Commission (YPCOM) held a meeting. Planning for the 2013 technical visit was the main focus of the discussion, with the group leaning towards a visit to the Panama Canal in the fall of 2013.

The AGA was followed by the Mediterranean Days technical conference on May 23 – 25, which focused on issues related to ports and navigation infrastructure. The conference also included an excellent tour of the Port of Valencia by boat.

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