ICEB Mid-Term Executive Meeting 2018
Public Relations Report

Prepared March 2018 by Leona Holloway

# Committee

The Promotions Committee members are Leona Holloway (Chair), Jen Goulden (Canada), Stuart Lawler (Ireland), Maria Stevens (New Zealand), Reinette Popplestone (South Africa), Mike Townsend (UK), Sue Reilly (USA). There are an additional three observers.

The Committee has been using the ICEB-promotion listserv, however communications have been minimal.

# Charges

## BP-3, BP-8 & BP-12 Repository, Publicity and promotional materials

BP-3 Charge: Agree on a process for submitting material to the repository of UEB related articles, news items, and reports. Monitor the repository and edit and republish useful items as part of promotional activities. Particularly useful materials include good practice in UEB and transitioning to UEB.

Status: A listing of free UEB training materials is housed on the ICEB website at <http://iceb.org/ueb-training.html>. UEB related news items and articles are posted on the ICEB facebook page. Should these also be stored elsewhere?

BP-8 Charge: edit and publish Jean Obi’s report on low cost braille production.

This should include a resource list about UEB itself, ICEB membership and setting up a braille authority.

Status: Mary has submitted her article on setting up a Braille Authority but it has not yet been published. What is the status of Jean's paper on low cost braille production?

BP12 Charge: Create materials and identify outlets for publicity and promotional materials including press releases.

Publicity outlets may include:

* the ICEB website, facebook page and twitter account
* the World Blind Union (WBU) and its regional bodies
* the International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI) and its regional bodies

Status: Refer to section 3 below for information on use of ICEB's website, facebook page and twitter account.

## BP-13 & BP-14 Newsletter

BP-13 Charge: Create a newsletter at least twice a year. The newsletter should communicate the activities of ICEB and promote UEB especially in countries which are currently not members of ICEB.

BP-14 Charge: Distribute the newsletter through as many existing channels as practical

Status: The first newsletter has not yet been initiated. Suggested topics are:

* Welcome and message from the President.
* apostrophes issue, survey results and next steps
* ICEB membership – who are our current members, changes to rules for membership, and how to become a member
* UEB in Nepal
* UEB Rulebook – French and Japanese translations. Where to find out about updates to the rulebook.
* People profiles – congratulations to Darleen Bogart, Jean Obi and Reinette Popplestone
* FAQ – What do you do with your old library books?
* New resources – UEB training materials and UEB music resources
* ICEB contact details

## BP-7 & BP-15 Working with WBC

BP-7 Charge: Make contact with WBU/WBC both globally and at a regional level to set up a joint “developing countries UEB working group for the development and promotion of braille”.

BP-15 Charge: Engage with the World Braille Council, emphasizing the utility of UEB where English is a second or regional language such as in the European Union or Anglophone Africa.

Status: Judy Dixon has been appointed as ICEB's representative to the World Braille Council, which will hold its first meeting in Ottawa in May 2018.

# Media

## 3.1 Website

A number of minor updates have been made to the ICEB website over the past two years, including:

* iceb.org – news updated, general assembly papers, and quick links created.
* iceb.org/ueb.html – updates to the UEB Rulebook and GTM documented
* iceb.org/ueb-training – some links updated
* iceb.org/signage – new page created to report on work of the signage committee

Further updates to the website are required:

* committees page to be created, with description of committees, names (and contact details?) of members, and links to specific pages for those committees that need one:
	+ bylaws to have one page
	+ music committee to have one main page and two sub-pages for music resources updated to UEB and resolutions
	+ promotions subcommittee to have an "outreach" page with information about becoming a member (including how to set up a braille authority) and to house the newsletters
	+ certification page to be created to report on history of the certification committee (being compiled by Maria)
* UEB Rulebook and GTM updates to be moved off the main UEB page onto a dedicated sub-page
* the UBC page needs some re-wording but can be renamed /ueb-history as a sub-page under UEB.
* The ICEB brochure page is out of date or already covered on the main page. This page should be removed, with information about funding moved to the new outreach page
* Information about ordering a hard copy on the /icebipa page needs to be updated

Updates can be very time-consuming as they must be entered as raw html text. Text in braille font is particularly difficult. This has limited the amount of work done on the website, which still has a very limited visual appeal.

**Recommendation:** Expand the ICEB website as outlined above using the current framework. Consider upgrading the website to a more user-friendly platform (e.g. WordPress) once the other work of the Promotions Committee is more well-established.

## 3.2 Facebook

The ICEB facebook page [www.facebook.com/ICEBbraille/](http://www.facebook.com/ICEBbraille/) as established in February 2017. From then until March 2018, we published a total of 125 updates with news and events from ICEB and elsewhere. 93 people follow the page. Of the followers:

* 75% are female
* the most common age group is 35-44 years
* 26 are from USA; 24 from Australia; 10 from New Zealand; 9 from Canada; 6 from South Africa; 5 from Ireland; 3 from UK; 2 from India; 1 from Brazil; 1 from Mauritius

The most popular post reached 2000 people, however recent changes to facebook's algorithms have greatly reduced our reach in the last few months, with the most popular posts reaching only around 200.

**Recommendation:** Facebook is a suitable medium for sharing braille and UEB good news stories, however more active promotion is required to boost the number of followers, particularly in the UK. Alternatively, the page could be changed into a group, which would have a much higher reach but require more careful monitoring for posts from members.

## 3.3 Twitter

The ICEB twitter account @ICEBbraille was established in May 2016. From then until March 2018 we have tweeted a total of 94 times, including 32 reports on the ICEB General Assembly. The account has 91 followers, many of whom are organisations rather than individuals.

As of January 2018, Twitter had 330 million active users worldwide. This number is much less than that of facebook, which had 2,167 active users. The main advantage of Twitter is that it is used by the media to find news stories. Also, the user has more control over the visibility of tweets so it is well suited for coverage of active events.

**Recommendation:** Focus use of the ICEB twitter account on reporting the General Assembly (and to a lesser extent the mid-term executive meetings), making announcements about ICEB endeavours, and making statements on key dates (such as World Braille Day).

# Outreach

No formal work has been done to formally invite additional members to ICEB. There has been some informal correspondence with the ICEB President.

**Recommendation:** Draft a letter to be sent directly to known braille authorities or organisations from countries using UEB to explain UEB membership options and invite their involvement.