

Observations on the Roles, Responsibilities, and Future of the CEOS Executive Officer(s)

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Our terms as CEOS Executive Officer (CEO) and Deputy Executive Officer (DCEO) will conclude in December 2012. We have developed this background paper for SIT-27 participants, to inform discussion on the CEOS Chair's choice of (a) successor(s), provide "food for thought" on the position(s) future, and recommend a more formal approach to the position.

Brief History

The CEOS Executive Officer position was agreed to at the 2006 CEOS Plenary in Buenos Aires. The first two officers, Jean-Louis Fellous and Ivan Petiteville, did an outstanding job in 1) establishing the position, 2) facilitating CEOS coordination with GEO, GCOS, and other stakeholders, and 3) providing support and guidance to CEOS leadership and its membership at large. CEOS-wide reporting, documentation, and overall governance improved greatly with their efforts, and they provided a solid foundation for our work.

After being chosen by then-CEOS Chair Gilberto Câmara, we began our terms in December 2010, following a very useful transition period working alongside Ivan. This process began in earnest in September 2010, and helped us to assume full responsibilities in December 2010.

A general description of our duties for 2011-2012 is attached. From the outset, we defined our duties in a separate but complementary manner, in an attempt to improve efficiency and enable us to better support a growing portfolio of CEOS activities.

Workload

On paper, we have dedicated 90% and 50% of our time (Tim and Kerry, respectively), to CEOS duties. In actuality, our positions have each become more than a full-time job. Since the start of our terms, we have witnessed a steady increase in workload. We believe this increase is attributable primarily to the following factors:

1. A time of transition with GEO (establishment of a new GEO Work Plan and related CEOS actions, and CEOS leadership in new GEO management structures and working groups)
2. Activities relating to the conduct of the CEOS Self-Study
3. Support to new CEOS entities and projects (e.g., Working Group Climate, new Virtual Constellations, and emerging initiatives such as JECAM and GEOGLAM), and,
4. Accretion of duties ("Maybe we should talk with Tim or Kerry about (x)....")

While some of these activities may ease up in 2013, we expect the workload will remain quite heavy – more than one individual could handle on his or her own. Therefore, we would strongly recommend another CEO/DCEO team for 2013-2014, provided that there are interested and qualified volunteers from within the ranks of the CEOS membership.

Formalization of the Executive Officer(s) Role within CEOS

Since its establishment, the position(s) of the Executive Officer(s) has functioned well on an informal basis. This has been due to the generosity and flexibility of donating agencies, creativity and good working relationships of the staff involved, and excellent leadership elsewhere in CEOS. However, with the growing portfolio of work undertaken by CEOS, and the pressures on the CEO/DCEO to pitch in and help in more and more areas, we believe it is time to more formally define the role of the Executive Officer. This activity would provide clarity to Executive Officer(s) responsibilities, set reasonable expectations across CEOS, and contribute to improved internal decision-making and governance,

To assist future CEOS leadership and provide full transparency, we also would recommend that the process and schedule for selection of (the) Executive Officer(s) be defined and agreed by the CEOS membership. If a CEO/DCEO team remains the norm in the future, then CEOS membership may also wish to consider a succession process for the DCEO to become the next CEO (understanding this would entail a longer-term commitment by the sponsoring agency).

In closing, we offer the following recommendation to the CEOS Membership:

That the role, responsibilities, and selection process for the CEOS Executive Officer be presented for CEOS review and approval at its October 2012 Plenary meeting. If needed, this activity could entail a modification to the current CEOS Terms of Reference.

We look forward to further discussion of this topic at SIT-27.

**General Description of Duties
CEOS Executive Officer and Deputy Executive Officer
2011-2012**

1. Advise CEOS leadership on CEOS's annual priorities, objectives, and timetables
2. Draft the annual CEOS Work Plan
3. Develop the annual CEOS Implementation Plan (year-end review of CEOS contributions to the GEOSS)
4. Consultation and coordination with the GEO Secretariat, to include the following activities:
 - a. CEOS completion of 2009-2011 GEO Work Plan Tasks
 - b. Development of the 2012-2015 GEO Work Plan
 - c. CEOS participation in GEO Work Plan Task leadership
 - d. CEOS development of actions in support of 2012-2015 Work Plan Tasks
 - e. CEOS participation in the GEO Data Sharing Working Group and the GEO Post-2015 Working Group
5. Provide overall guidance to and reporting on CEOS actions
6. Provide advice and guidance on major CEOS initiatives (e.g., Climate Architecture, FCT/GFOI, JECAM/GEOGLAM, Data Democracy, Disasters)
7. Liaise with the CEOS Troika, the CEOS Secretariat, the CEOS Systems Engineering Office, and the CEOS Virtual Constellations
8. Assist with leadership guidance and liaison to the CEOS Working Groups
9. At the request of the CEOS Chair, represent CEOS at meetings of CEOS partners and stakeholders
10. Edit major CEOS publications and advise/assist with outreach efforts, as appropriate
11. Undertake other duties as assigned by the CEOS Chair
12. As needed -- procure contractor support to assist in the execution of defined duties, including meeting support, teleconferences and research, and related information management and distribution activities