



ISOLA - NINTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SECRETARY'S REPORT

A very warm welcome to all at this 9th AGM of the Indian Society of Landscape Architects....the annual general meeting presents us with the opportunity to evaluate and assess our performance, present our ongoing endeavors and outline our future plans. Keeping the same intent in mind, I hereby present to you the Secretary's Annual Report today.

The following points have been elaborated in this report:

1. Status of ISOLA Executive Council and Chapter Executive Committees
2. Status of ISOLA Accounts
3. Status of ISOLA Membership Database and Website
4. Professional Issues that need to be addressed
5. Report on the functioning of the various chapters/committees within ISOLA
6. Forthcoming/Planned events of the Society

STATUS OF ISOLA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND CHAPTER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

The current Executive Council is serving the second year of its two-year term. As you are aware, the current office bearers are:

Honorary President:	Sachin Jain
Honorary Vice-President:	Yogesh Kapoor
Honorary Treasurer:	Ashish Patankar
Honorary Secretary:	Shilpa Chandawarkar

The other EC members are Rohit Marol (immediate Past President), Savita Punde (Past President), Manguesh Prabhugaonkar, Vandana Labba, Atul Katariya, Gopal Bajaj and Sandip Patil.

Co-opted Associate member Sandip Patil has presently opted out of regular duties on health grounds. He shall resume his position once he has recovered.

This EC shall continue to hold office till the 22nd of May 2015. We shall be scheduling the next elections in accordance with this calendar.

ISOLA CHAPTER ELECTION UPDATE

Elections for the Executive Committee of ISOLA Delhi NCR Chapter for the term 2014-2016 were conducted in March 2014 and the results declared on the 31st of March 2014.

The new Executive Committee elected its office bearers and the names are as follows:

Honorary Chairperson:	Minesh Parikh
Honorary Secretary:	Nidhi Madan
Honorary Treasurer:	Chhitiz Gupta

EC Members:	Nupur Prothi Khanna
	Samir Mathur

Co-opted Members:	Sujata Kohli (Past President)
	Neelima Soni
	Jasleen Waraich



Sujata Hingorani
Pournima Kshirsagar Thote

As already reported in the last AGM, the Gujarat chapter was formed in August 2013. The office bearers are:

Honorary Chairperson:	Prof. Prabhakar Bhagwat
Honorary Secretary:	Sandip Patil
Honorary Treasurer:	Deepa Maheshwari

EC Members:	Shishir Raval
	Divya Shah
	Shweta Agarwal

The current Executive Committees of the Mumbai and Bengaluru Chapters continue their terms upto May 2015, as their election schedules are co-ordinated with the terms of the Central Executive Council.

STATUS OF ISOLA ACCOUNTS

We take this opportunity to place on record the consolidated accounts of ISOLA (which includes the Central ISOLA, and all its chapters – Delhi, Bangalore, Mumbai and Gujarat, and all its LOCs – Ahmedabad and Bhopal) for the year ending 31st March 2014 and are ready to be filed once they are approved at this AGM.

We are happy to share with all our members that all procedures and guidelines are in place for financial matters and are being rigorously adhered to in our endeavor to achieve water-tight financial discipline and complete transparency. I wish to thank our auditor Rajnikant Trivedi for his adherence to punctuality and strict discipline as well as being our 24-hour-guide in dealing with all accounting related matters and ensuring that we have completed our accounts audit well ahead of all deadlines.

STATUS OF ISOLA MEMBERSHIP DATABASE AND WEBSITE

I am happy to inform you that we have added 93 members in the last one year and our current strength is 407 members. This number does not include the members whose names have been deleted due to non-payment of subscription fees despite repeated reminders.

We have recently attempted to update our entire membership records but the issue of incorrect and incomplete contact details continues to plague us. We have a number of invalid email ids and addresses due to which we are unable to keep all members informed of their membership status, ISOLA activities and provide access to the ISOLA website.

We are now in the process of evaluating the option of having an interactive website where members can register online and even apply for memberships online. The financial and operational viability of this is currently being evaluated and we shall take a decision on this at the earliest possible.

We have been regularly updating our website www.isola.org.in and the following details are available on the website:

- Updated list of members
- Minutes of all EC meetings up to March 2014 and minutes of the 8th AGM
- List of Executive Council Office bearers and Members
- List of Chapter Executive Committee Members and contact information



- Announcements of the Forthcoming Events such as the next Annual Conference, the ISOLA Honours and Awards

We would yet again, like to appreciate the efforts of Adit Pal in helping us with updating and improving the functioning of the website.

INCREASE IN SUBSCRIPTION FEES

We have decided to place before the General Body a recommendation of increase in our subscription fees. There has been no change in the fees since inception of the Society and we feel that ISOLA membership now merits a higher subscription.

We also face a number of issues with receipt of subscription fees:

- Members do not renew their membership despite reminders of dues
- Students do not upgrade to Graduate category
- Students take membership only for registering their entries to the ISOLA Awards (that too after graduating)
- Graduate members choose to not upgrade to Associate category and Associates do not upgrade to Fellow category

All this eventually results in a financial loss to the Society and unfortunately it also reflects a lackadaisical attitude towards our own professional body. We are striving to make ISOLA reach a level where our fraternity should be proud to be its members and we need co-operation of all members to meet this objective.

PROFESSIONAL ISSUES THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED BY ISOLA

• WHAT IS OUR PROFESSIONAL STATUS?

At a members' interaction meeting held during the pre-conference dinner at Delhi on the 27th of February 2014, an idea was floated that Landscape Architects need to have their own COUNCIL as we are not included in the Architects Act/Council of Architecture. A number of members volunteered to be a part of the Committee which would work further to explore the possibilities:

Sachin Jain	Sujata Kohli	Savita Punde
Dr.Surinder Suneja	Dr.Romell Mehta	Samir Mathur
Shishir Raval	Dr.Sridevi Rao	Jasleen Waraich
Ashish Patankar	Jayant Dharap	Mahesh Paliwal
Vikas Bhosekar		

Taking this thought further, we have invited Sudhir Vohra, an architect with legal expertise in our field, today (after the AGM) to guide us further in this matter.

• PROFESSIONAL FEES

At the same meeting mentioned earlier, it was unanimously agreed upon that we need to set norms in place for professional fees being charged by landscape architects in India. The members who had volunteered to participate in the exercise of framing these norms are:

T.M.Chengappa	Swati Dike
Samir Mathur	Savita Punde
Vikas Bhosekar	Varsha Gavandi



I would formally request these members to create a common platform of interaction and work towards the framing of these guidelines/norms so that we may be able to take a stand on this sensitive professional issue at the earliest.

• **BYE LAWS OF THE SOCIETY**

As per the directives given by the Charity Commissioner's office, we had submitted a complete dossier of our byelaws along with details of all previous Executive Council members for approval. However, the submittals were not accepted citing reasons of incorrect formats. We are now seeking legal aid for understanding the lacunae in our submittals. We will once again seek the co-operation of previous EC members for getting declaration letters and affidavits from them and are hopeful that with a guided approach, we will get the Society's byelaws registered at the earliest.

• **MEMBERSHIP CERTIFICATES**

The new membership certificates for all member categories were ready and available at the Delhi conference and were handed over to some of the members who attended. The remaining were sent by courier or speed post to all the members, but again, due to incorrect contact information, some have been returned back to the ISOLA office.

I once again request all members to update their contact information with ISOLA .

REPORT ON THE FUNCTIONING OF THE VARIOUS CHAPTERS/COMMITTEES WITHIN ISOLA

• **RESOURCE COMMITTEE**

As reported last year, the Resource Committee spear-headed by an advisory panel of Prof. Ram Sharma, Prof. Mohammed Shaheer, Prof. Kishor Pradhan, Adit Pal and ably steered by its Convenor Yogesh Kapoor and members Savita Punde, Sachin Jain, Nikhil Dhar, Nidhi Madan and Dwaipayan Bhattacharya have commenced work on the following areas:

1. Listing of books related to Landscape Architecture

The aim of this exercise is to create an inventory which will serve as an important data resource for students, graduate and associate members. The first listing is already available on the ISOLA website. The Delhi chapter has expressed an interest in taking up this initiative and consolidating the list further. We are thankful to them for volunteering to do this.

2. Traditional Techniques of Rain Water Harvesting – our member Nikhil Dhar is currently working on this topic

3. Documentation of Public spaces in Indian Cities

4. Specifications of Materials (Landscape Finishes)

These research initiatives have been undertaken in the hope that, over a period of time, we will be able to have a significant database of significant landscapes, public and historic spaces, gardens and ecological habitats.

Unfortunately, not adequate progress has been made on these initiatives in the past one year, mainly due to lack of human resource and funding. It may be a good idea to involve the growing student membership base to voluntarily participate in the activities of the Resource Committee.

We are open to suggestions and active involvement of the Departments of Landscape Architecture in the various colleges that are conducting post-graduate courses.



• EDUCATION BOARD

The Education Board members for the current term are:

Prof. Deepa Maheshwari (Chairperson)	Prof. Mohammed Shaheer (Advisor)
Prof. Surinder Suneja	Savita Punde
Dr. Shishir Raval	Dr. Abhijit Natu
Sandip Patil	

I also take this opportunity to welcome our member Prof. Savita Raje as a new member of the Education Board.

This Committee shall primarily look into setting up definitive guidelines for courses, eventually setting the qualifying criteria for ISOLA membership and continue their pursuits towards excellence in landscape education. After the AGM today, the Education Board is holding a meeting followed by an open forum with all attending members to discuss and deliberate on the same.

• PROFESSIONAL STANDING COMMITTEE, ISOLA CODE OF CONDUCT AND MANUAL OF PROCEDURES

We regret to admit that this is one of the commitments made by the EC that has been delayed.

However, the Professional Code of Conduct is being drafted and we look forward to active participation from members for this.

The past EC with Mr. Rohit Marol as the co-ordinator along with member Mr. Avadhoot Kumthekar had put together a draft Manual of procedures for running ISOLA. Members keenly felt a need for this document as it would clearly set out how the society functioned, especially in the case of formalities to be followed by incoming EC members.

Those interested in volunteering for consolidating these documents may please contact Rohit Marol and Gopal Bajaj.

EVENTS / CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

We are happy to report that all our Chapters have been involved in a range of activities in the past year and we request all Chapter ECs to document their events so that we can make this data available on our website for those members who could not be a part of these activities.

The Delhi Chapter hosted the 9th Annual ISOLA Conference based on the theme A SENSE OF PLACE on the 28th of February and 1st of March 2014. We had a record audience of about 400 people with approximately 357 registrations, 15 speakers, 4 walk leaders and 9 panorama entries.

This event was followed by the BeLoose Graphic Workshop conducted by Mike Lin – hosted by the ISOLA Central EC and organized by the Delhi NCR Chapter on the 2nd and 3rd of March 2014. The workshop was a huge success with 85 professionals and students participating in it.

The Mumbai Chapter organized a student workshop conducted by our member Jayant Dharap titled HANDS ON APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING LANDFORMS AND EARTHWORKS at the L.S. Raheja College of Architecture on the 22nd and 23rd November 2013.

They also hosted the second S.D. Vaidya Memorial Lecture on the 30th of November 2013 at the Noshir



Talati Auditorium of the Rachana Sansad's Academy of Architecture. Freddie Ribeiro of BDP was the invited speaker and he spoke on PLACEMAKING-DESIGNING FOR PEOPLE.

The Gujarat Chapter hosted the Fourth International Symposium of Cultural and Historic Landscapes on the 14th and 15th of December 2013. The key theme was CULTURAL LANDSCAPES – TRANSFORMATIONS and 15 speakers from 6 different countries presented papers on various sub-themes.

In the month of March 2014, ISOLA was approached by Doordarshan to participate in a shoot for their show HUNNARBAAZ which showcases upcoming professions in India. We had successfully shot for this episode with immense help from some of the senior ISOLA members in Delhi and enthusiastic participation from the Department of Landscape Architecture, SPA Delhi. The episode was telecast on Doordarshan on the 8th of June 2014.

The Central EC also organized 2 other talks –one by Prof.Liu Hui, Director, Dept. of Landscape Architecture, XAUAT (China) on EXPLORING & RECOVERING CHINESE LANDSCAPE CULTURE (event hosted by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture) on the 3rd of May 2014 and the other by Inaki Alday (Quesada Professor and Chair of the Department of Architecture, University of Virginia, Charlottesville) titled CITIES AND RIVERS on the 26th of July 2014.

After the successful response to the NASA ISOLA Landscape Trophy for the last 3 years, ISOLA again conducted the Landscape trophy for the NASA convention at Hyderabad in 2013. We would like to thank our members in Hyderabad Naveen Panuganti, V.Narasimhan and Gopal Bajaj who graciously agreed to be a part of the jury perusing through more than 175 entries to select the most deserving one. We shall be continuing our association with the undergraduate students of architecture in the forthcoming NASA Convention at Chennai.

FORTHCOMING / PLANNED EVENTS OF THE SOCIETY

• ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The 10th Annual Conference of ISOLA is scheduled to be held on the 20th and 21st of February 2015 at Pune. The conference theme is VALUES, WISDOM AND AESTHETICS. The details of the same will soon be forwarded to all members via email and be uploaded on the website. We look forward to your active participation.

• ISOLA AWARDS AND HONOURS

The Indian Society of Landscape Architects has invited entries for the fourth cycle of ISOLA Awards for the year 2014. It has been decided that the Awards Jury shall comprise of the ISOLA President (or a Fellow EC Member in case the President is unable to participate), a senior ISOLA member and a previous Fellow Award Winner.

Details have been emailed to all members and will shortly be uploaded on the website.

The Awards and Honours will be presented to the winners at the next Annual Conference.

I would like to thank Nikhil Dhar for taking on the role of Convenor for the Awards.

IN CONCLUSION....

It is already a year and a half since the current EC took over. Many goals remain unattained, but we would like to believe that the journey towards the goals is underway. I have tried my best to keep all members updated and involved in all activities of ISOLA. We would welcome any comments, suggestions, recommendations to further improve member communication and involvement.



I would like to take this opportunity to thank my entire team, especially Savita Punde and Rohit Marol for being the guiding lights of the Executive Council, President Sachin Jain for his endless energy and Vice-President Yogesh Kapoor for his strict diligence in all EC matters. A big thanks is also due to our Treasurer Ashish Patankar whose unrelenting efforts have ensured that our financial records are all updated and in order.

Last but not the least, I would like to thank all ISOLA members, especially those who have made the effort to be present here today, for supporting and participating in the initiatives taken by the EC. I end this address by once again requesting all members to whole-heartedly and proactively participate in all activities of the Society.

Shilpa Chandawarkar
Honorary Secretary, ISOLA