

Petroleum Structure and Geomechanics Division - A New Technical Division for the Future!

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The Executive Committee of AAPG has made a recommendation to recognize Petroleum Structure and Geomechanics (PSGD) as a new technical division – under Article VI, Section 2 of AAPG Bylaws. This recommendation from the EC to the House of Delegates will be voted on at the annual HOD meeting in Pittsburgh in May, 2013. An affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Delegates present and voting is necessary for the establishment of any new division.

In 1997 the petroleum structural geology community first met as an informal group at the annual convention. The unofficial technical discussion program was so successful that the following year the AAPG Reservoir Deformation Research Group (RDRG) was designated a standing sub-committee of the Research Committee, and they have met annually on Tuesday evenings at ACE ever since. With a meeting room provided by AAPG and with support from numerous companies for other amenities, RDRG meetings consist of an informal technical session with presentations and discussion as well as a community gathering. Interactions at these meetings have led to journal theme issues, books, at least two Hedberg conferences, and have afforded young professionals with structure and geomechanics backgrounds a chance to interact with the leaders in their technical community. The opportunity for meaningful community mentoring, communication, initiative, and leadership are at the heart of the benefits that association and division membership can provide. After about 13 years of meeting, recognizing the increasing size and importance of the practicing geomechanics community and the limited scope afforded by committee status, Peter Hennings of ConocoPhillips and David Ferrill of the Southwest Research Institute approached the AAPG EC, on behalf of the community, and proposed that the group be allowed to form a new technical division.

The proposed new division represents a distinct technical community that touches many of the geomechanically complex areas of the petroleum business including fractured and faulted reservoirs, subsalt



and unconventional. The November 2009 issue of the AAPG *Bulletin* is a theme that covers some of the topics of interest to this community.

Within AAPG's structure, the needs of technical communities such as structure and geomechanics are not well met by a committee structure. Such groups are far too large to work through committees and decisions about community leadership are most effective when left to the group itself rather than relying on Presidential appointment, as is the case for committees. The RDRG has a simple governance plan that has been used effectively for over a decade, and a slightly modified version is the structure the new Division would adopt. This simple structure is feasible because for the purpose of creating and distributing new technical content the proposed Division intends to operate through seats on AAPG standing committees.

Today the part of the structure and geomechanics community that regularly attends RDRG meetings has approximately 300 participants. Tuesday evening ACE meeting attendance is between 50 and 80, with only word-of-mouth advertising. This core group interacts with a greater community of at least 2000 individuals throughout our industry. A new Division would likely be at least this large.

By officially recognizing and sanctioning this active group, AAPG could reap many benefits, including meeting leaders and a consistent stream of book, journal theme issues funneled through AAPG standing committees. The Division will help recruit new members, and provide more visible mentoring for young professionals, particularly in the areas of structural geology, seal analysis, pressure analysis and geomechanics.

AAPG President Ted Beaumont has emphasized that we are "all about science" and AAPG should lead in the science of petroleum geology. Delegates are charged with looking forward and envisioning the future of AAPG and how it will continue to serve its members with outstanding science. Here is an opportunity to expand a constituency that has organically grown within AAPG and to advance petroleum geology for its future members.

A slide presentation outlining some of the contributions the structure and geomechanics community have already made to AAPG, including Hedberg conferences, *Bulletin* articles, and other benefits our association can gain by raising the visibility of this technical group, will be made available on the AAPG website in the near future for your review.

Motion to move several Central Asian countries from Asia Pacific Region to European Region

David K. Curtiss
AAPG Executive Director

The Executive Committee voted at its February 6 meeting to recommend to the HoD a change in the boundary between AAPG's Asia Pacific and European regions. According to the motion, the countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan would be transferred to the European Region.



This change was requested by Asia Pacific Region President Peter Baillie and European Region President Vlastimila Dvorakova after they held discussions about how best to serve members in these Central Asian nations. Before the EC vote, I contacted the one affiliated society that would be affected by this change, the Association of Petroleum Geologists of Kazakhstan. And APGK President Baltabek Kuandykov responded in writing that APGK supports the proposed modification.