

1<sup>st</sup> September 2011

Dear Members,

Following previous notification in July, we would like to remind our members that **ICOM-CC members, at their General Assembly on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2011, are voting to change their by-laws.**

One of these by-laws concerns the use of the title of Conservator-Restorer; ICOM-CC proposes to replace this widely accepted title with the umbrella term *Conservator* across the profession. They have already replaced the term *Conservation-Restoration* with the term *Conservation* in their terminology (New Delhi 2008), to which E.C.C.O. voiced an objection at the time. From this definition ICOM-CC places restoration as a sub-activity of conservation, and preservation is not considered. **As the E.C.C.O. position remains unchanged on the full use of the title Conservator-Restorer, we see this as an unnecessary and regressive change and therefore ask that our members be alert and vote against this proposal.**

We would like to reiterate our reasons for this request:

- *Conservation-Restoration* and by corollary, the *Conservator-Restorer*, are composite terms that acknowledge two different concepts which are closely allied. These result in actions, which can be carried out by the same person, specific to the requirements of the cultural heritage.
- These composite terms unify two different areas of practice under one title without making one action subordinate to the other. In particular it erases the difference in meaning between historical Latin and the Anglo-Saxon use of the terms *Conservator* and *Restorer*, which in some cases is contradictory and which can lead to misunderstandings.
- Furthermore as an umbrella term *Conservator-Restorer* is trans-national in Europe, it does not demand exceptions, which is the case for the new proposal. The importance of this term was recognised by ICOM-CC in their commentary<sup>1</sup> made when proposing the change in terminology, which may have been the reason why it was not more strongly opposed at the time. They are now intending to make these changes to their by-laws.

In addition to your voting against this change, the following message will be written to ICOM-CC Directory Board with the request for it to be read to the General Assembly before the vote:

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#### <sup>1</sup> Issue of the 'conservator-restorer' definition of the profession

Although we used the term "conservation" as the umbrella-term, the resolution makes specific reference to one of the conservation professions, i.e. the "conservator-restorer". This term refers to the document produced and adopted by ICOM-CC in 1984: The conservator-restorer: a definition of the profession. Considering the importance of this document, and until it is revised, the Task Force decided to keep the use of the term. Quote from *Commentary on the ICOM-CC Resolution on Terminology for Conservation*, Rome, 7-8 March 2008, C. Antomarchi, M. Berducou, G. de Guichen, F. Hanssen-Bauer, D. Leigh, J. L. Pedersoli Jr., M. te Marvelde, K. Sibul, R. Varoli-Piazza, J. Wadum



*“E.C.C.O., the European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers’ Organisations, object to the changes proposed by ICOM-CC on terminology regarding the trans-national umbrella term Conservator-Restorer, subject to vote at the ICOM-CC General Assembly on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2011 in Lisbon.*

*The proposed changes will destroy the universality of the terms that were chosen as best compromise over 25 years ago and have been in use since that time.*

*The variety of traditions and cultures in Europe necessitate the retention of the current terminology to reflect the diversity of the profession (and to give respect to) everyone practicing in this profession. E.C.C.O. strongly feels that the changes proposed by ICOM-CC represent a lack of consistency in our sector undermines the position of the profession at a European level and further afield.*

*We, as the representative professional body of Conservator-Restorers at European level, express concern over the lack of consultation and consideration that has taken place about these changes.*

*We recommend, in line with the vote made in European standardization of our field, through CEN (EN 15898) to allow the co-existence of the two umbrella terms, i.e. conservation and Conservation-restoration - as they are used with the same concepts and concerns for cultural heritage in mind - by a wide community of professionals.”*

We ask you, as members of E.C.C.O., to support our position with the following decisive actions:

- a) Send a message about this subject to ICOM-CC Directory Board, clearly expressing your opinion as national professional body, in relation to your country and to the European context.
- b) Inform your members who are attending the meeting in Lisbon and who have a voting right to attend the vote and voice the position of their organisation and of E.C.C.O. If this is done by several participants, this would strongly influence the vote and support the action of E.C.C.O.
- c) Ask your members to be present at the General Assembly and vote against this change.

The E.C.C.O. committee would be grateful if you could inform them of the action that you are taking.

In the name of the committee of E.C.C.O.

Yours sincerely

Monica Martelli Castaldi  
President of E.C.C.O.