Jointly with the Oxford e-Research Centre, the ISC recently submitted a three-year proposal to develop a Visual Bulletin Analysis System (VBAS) to make the analysis of earthquake data fully interactive and the printed listings redundant. The proposal was submitted to the UK Government Knowledge Transfer Programme (KTP) that is set up to pass the expertise accumulated by UK universities to the business world as well as to give working experience to recent graduates.

Just before Christmas we received excellent news. Our proposal was granted with the funding commitment equally shared between two UK Research Councils for Natural Environment (NERC) and Engineering and Physical Sciences (EPSRC). The ISC will have to contribute only one third of the project costs.

We are grateful to the OeRC professor of computer visualization Min Chen, the OeRC Administrator and Research Facilitator Dr Mark Hylton (OeRC) and the KTP Regional Adviser, Dr Gillian Rysiecki for their keen participation, help and guidance during the proposal preparation and submission process. The OeRC is now in the process of recruiting the KTP Associate who will be stationed at the ISC to work on this exciting and long awaited development under the guidance of Prof Min Chen and relevant ISC staff whilst benefitting from advice of other OeRC staff at Oxford.

Huge stacks of computer printout listings are still used for analysis of the ISC Bulletin. This is set to change with the VBAS development funded by UK Government.

New Data
In recent months we have received new bulletin data from a number of network operators:

- National Seismological Network, Geological Survey, Colombia, thanks to Patricia Pedraza García;
- Earthquake Research Center, Ataturk University, Erzurum, Turkey, thanks to Mehmet Ozyazicioglu;
- Seismological Experimental Methodological Expedition, Ministry of Education and Science, Kazakhstan, thanks to Maria Gessel and Vladimir Panin.

Here we would also like to acknowledge the enormous and never-ending help we receive from our long-term supporter and professor emeritus of University of Bergen, Norway, Jens Havskov. Being involved in a number of training programmes around the world, Jens always encourages seismic network operators to start reporting bulletin data to the ISC.

NEIC-ISC-EMSC co-ordination
James Harris and Dmitry Storchak took part in the regular NEIC-ISC-EMSC Co-ordination meeting, this year at NEIC in Golden, Colorado. On the agenda were the topics and issues of mutual interest: the development of the catalogue, source characterization and impact estimation related products, citizen seismology, modernization of the international seismic station registry, seismic event types, as well as changes required to standard seismic bulletin formats.

Availability of the NEIC PDE
A number of the ISC bulletin data reporters use the NEIC hypocentre solutions of moderate to large earthquakes around the world in order to pick arrival times and amplitudes of seismic waves at their stations and report those to the ISC. In order to avoid reporting delays we advise them to use the weekly PDE that can be accessed approximately 8 to 12 weeks behind real time using either of the following links:

or
ftp://hazards.cr.usgs.gov/weekly/
The ISC History webpage updated

The International Seismological Summary (ISS) and then the ISC have jointly operated for almost 100 years. When other projects permit, we are continuing to work on improving the ISC webpages that preserve the history of both organizations. Several personal accounts have recently been added to complement an article written earlier by Robin Adams. These accounts include personal reminiscences from Bruce Bolt, Anthony Hughes’s interview by Henry Spall, Chris Argent’s notes on the developments in the ISC Governing Council, Anatoli Levshin’s story of his short-term work at the ISC with a number of unique black-and-white photos and a short note from the late Slawomir Gibowicz. Please see the www.isc.ac.uk/about/history/ for details.

Preparation of the ISC-GEM Catalogue involved a large volume of manual data entry from those historical station bulletins stored in the ISC warehouse. In line with the GEM proposal, these bulletins are to be digitally scanned and made freely available along with the Catalogue itself.

On October 3-4, Giulio Lozzi and Emanuele Frocione arrived at the ISC from INGV. Helped by the ISC’s own Italian speaker Domenico Di Giacomo, they loaded 150 boxes of bulletins into their van and drove them to Rome for scanning under the supervision of Graziano Ferrari. Digital bulletin images will later be linked to the ISC-GEM database and will also become part of the SISMOS collection at INGV. The ISC logo will be embedded on each page to give ISC/ISS the credit for collecting and storing these bulletins for almost 100 years. We expect the original bulletin collection will be returned to the ISC in early 2013.

“The Italian Job”

Ivana Jukić, a seismologist from Croatia, came to work at the ISC in September 2012. Ivana earned her MSc degree at the University of Trieste studying the macroseismic effects of the 1895 and 1897 Liubljana earthquakes under the supervision of Peter Suhadolc and Franco Pettenatti (OGS).

Prior to joining the ISC, Ivana visited three institutions in Serbia, Slovenia and Croatia helped by a large number of colleagues who provided Ivana with details of their national networks, data acquisition and processing and most importantly demonstrated to her examples of local seismicity recordings.

We would like to gratefully acknowledge the time, knowledge and expertise that our colleagues in the Balkans kindly gave to Ivana during her visits which enhanced her training for her work at the ISC.

New Bulletin Analyst arrives from Croatia

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Environmental Agency of the Republic of Slovenia, left to right: Tamara Jesenko, Ivana Jukić and Jurij Pahor; Ivana’s training was also assisted by Milka Ložar Stopar, Mladen Živčič and Ina Cecić.

Seismological Survey of the Republic of Croatia, University of Zagreb, left to right: Snježan Prevolnik, Ivana Jukić and Tomislav Fiket; Ivana’s visit was organized by Vlado Kuk and assisted by Marijan and Davorka Herak.

Seismological Survey of Serbia, left to right: Nataša Koter, Ivana Jukić, Svetlana Kovačević and Goran Krunić; Ivana’s training was also assisted by Dejan Valčić and kindly organized by Slavica Radovanović and Branko Dragičević.

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International meetings

The ISC’s Seismologist/Analyst, Blessing Shumba has taken part in the November meeting of the East and Southern Africa Regional Seismology Working Group in the Entebbe (Uganda) that brought together seismologists from nine countries. The meeting was supported by the International Science Programme (ISP) of Uppsala University in Sweden. We also acknowledge partial support of Blessing’s trip, thanks to the ISP’s Director, Dr Ernst Van Groningen. Blessing gave several presentations describing the ISC operations and current developments to the meeting participants, took part in the compilation of the joint regional earthquake bulletin and encouraged participants from several individual networks to start contributing bulletin data to the ISC on a regular basis.

Participants of the regular ESARSWG group met in Entebbe, Uganda on Nov 5-9. Right to left: Richard Wambura Ferdinand (University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania), Atalay Ayele (Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia), Blessing Shumba ISC, UK), Patricia Mavazhe (Goetz Observatory, Zimbabwe), Duncan Gondwe (Geological Survey, Malawi), Abebe Albie (Institute of Geophysics, Space Science and Astronomy, Ethiopia), Gift Chafwa (Geological Survey Department, Zambia), Richard Kariuki Gichini (Department of Geology, Kenya), Geraldine Paula Babirye (Department of Geology and Mines, Uganda), Bwambale Barnabas (Makerere University, Uganda) and Peace Tumworobere in red.

In the months leading up to the end of the year several other members of the ISC staff took part in meetings worldwide. The ISC Senior Seismologist, Wayne Richardson gave a talk on the ISC Bulletin Rebuild project at the Asian Seismological Commission (ASC) meeting in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. The ISC Seismologist, Domenico Di Giacomo gave presentations on the ISC developments at the Nordic Seismology Seminar in Tallinn, Estonia. István Bondár and Dmitry Storchak took part in the Latin American Seismology meeting in Lima, Peru and AGU Fall meeting in San Francisco, US. They also visited the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) and discussed the details of the 3D locations using the RSTT. Dmitry Storchak presented the ISC-GEM Catalogue development in the headquarters of the Risk Management Solutions (RMS), during the GEM semi-annual Progress Review meeting in Pavia, Italy and at the International Seismology School in Minsk, Belarus.

Peter Marshall, a long-term supporter of the ISC, has sadly passed away on Oct 5, 2012. For most of his life Peter worked at nearby AWE Blacknest, just 5 miles away from the ISC and was one of our most frequent visitors. For 50 years Peter worked in forensic seismology. He developed outstanding skills in reading and interpreting seismograms whilst researching techniques to distinguish the seismic signals generated by underground nuclear explosions from those generated by earthquakes. Peter was rightfully considered to be the Father of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. For his work in arms control he was awarded an OBE (Officer of the Order of British Empire) and CMG (Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George).

Visitors from overseas included Dr Gary Gibson (SRC & Melbourne University), Maiclaire Bolton (RMS, San Francisco) and Prof. Natalya Mikhailova (Kazakhstan NDC, Almaty). We expected that on this trip Natalya Mikhailova would be accompanied by Dr Zlata Sinyova, the Head of the KNDC’s processing group and one of the most keen bulletin data contributors to the ISC in Central Asia. Tragically, just a few days before the flight to UK, Zlata died at her home in Almaty. Please see a note on Zlata’s life achievements in the “News from Data Contributors” section of the ISC front webpage.