

An Operational Guide for Expert Group at Work at FIP World Stamp Exhibitions

Introduction

This Operational Guideline is intended for use by the Expert Group at the FIP exhibitions, which may also be applicable at the continental exhibitions.

Role

The purpose of the Expert Group is to check the exhibits for any forged items. The group members are to verify the existence of authenticated certificates, and to recommend appropriate actions in cases where forged, faked, repaired and doubtful items are detected.

The Expert Group shall consist of a **minimum of 3 members** (including the Group Team Leader), preferably each member specializes in or is more well verse with a specific continent's philatelic materials, that is, Europe, America, Asia respectively. They are to be equipped with a pair of "sharp eyes" being able to see and spot the questionable items which may not be within their scope of specialization. They are to be selected by the Exhibition Management in consultation with the FIP Consultant. The FIP Board is to give the consent and final approval.

Independency

The Expert Group is independent of the Jury.

The Exhibition Management shall provide a separate room beside the Jury Room or an enclosed cubicle in the Jury Room. The essential equipment to be provided are computer, scanner, colour printer, an English-speaking runner (if possible), capable of operating the computer & scanner and a CD or thumb drive to save all the completed scanning work for FIP record.

Unauthorized person shall not have access to the Expert Group Room.

All matters pertaining to the Expert Group shall be referred to the Group Team Leader or the Jury Secretary

Preparatory Work

The FIP Secretary General shall assist the FIP Consultant to study the Exhibit Listing and identify the exhibits which have items that required certificates and items that do not exhibit again (as recommended from the previous exhibitions).

An action list for further inspection shall be prepared containing:

- (a) name of exhibitor
- (b) country of exhibitor
- (c) title of exhibits
- (d) detailed items in question for certificates, with illustrations sheets attached.

The information should be delivered or sent by email to the Expert Group Team Leader for attention, to reach him at least **5 weeks** in advance.

The Expert Group Team Leader will have to email the respective National Commissioners:

- (1) to ask for copies of the certificates of the specific items from the exhibitors, preferably to receive by the Group Team Leader before his departure for the Exhibition
- (2) to ascertain whether the "items do not exhibit again" has been complied with.

Procedures & Checklist During Jury Work:

- 1) The Expert Group Team Leader shall check to ensure that all the necessary papers, such as Registration Forms (ANNEX I), notice for removal of exhibit (Annex III), photocopier, scanning equipment and the assistant operating the scanner, printer and computer etc. are readily available.
- 2) The Expert Group Team Leader shall brief and discuss with group members of the daily programme and distribution of work where necessary:

	Action
1	<p>Review of exhibits which received unacceptable reports at previous FIP exhibitions, and check whether the item in question is on display (unless the certificate has been submitted before the exhibition or the item is not shown)</p> <p>When the item is found, the Group should take note of the frame and page Nos., and name of the national commissioner concerned (for the purpose of dismounting the exhibit pages subsequently). A Review Form is to be used (see ANNEX II).</p>
2	Examine all exhibits in the Championship Class
3	Inspect exhibits for new and doubtful items in every competitive class including the most senior group in Youth Class and shall aim for at least 5% of the total number of exhibits. Group Team Leader may wish to divide among themselves into 3 sub-teams, each examining items of certain classes or areas (eg Europe, America and Asia/Pacific).
4	Judging Teams are to submit the Registration Forms for dubious items to the Jury Secretary for handing over to Expert Group within the first 2 days of judging.
5	<p>One Registration Form is meant for use for one philatelic item in a sheet of exhibit, and all information stipulated in the Form should be accurately filled. Another Registration Form is required for the examination of a second item in the same sheet of exhibit. A single Registration Form may be used if the same opinion is sought for a set of stamps on a single exhibit sheet.</p> <p>It is advisable that the Registration Forms (including exhibits queried at previous exhibitions) be arranged in the sequence of frames numbering.</p>
6	All the exhibits of the Grand Prix candidates (Grand Prix National, Grand Prix International, Grand Prix d'Honneur and Grand Prix d'Exposition) should be examined immediately upon receipt of the list from the Jury Secretary
7	Expert Group Team Leader to confirm with the Commissioner-General the date and time for the dismounting of questionable exhibits, to open the frames. Ideally, the dismounting of exhibit pages containing doubtful items for closer examination should be done in the morning (so that the items after examination can be returned and remounted on the same day).
8	Commissioners from the country of which the exhibits are to be reviewed, together with the representatives of the Exhibition Management will accompany the Expert Group Members to the frames to witness the dismounting of pages concerned.
9	<p>An A4-size sheet of Notice "This Sheet is Temporarily Removed by the Organizing Committee" (Annex III) should be placed immediately when the particular page is removed. It is necessary for the Group to bring along a large container (a big paper bag or box) to keep these exhibits.</p> <p><i>[Note: The purposes of dismounting: (1) to ascertain whether the certificates are attached and to check the contents of the certificates, and (2) to examine the postmarks on the reverse of the covers, and/or to study the stamps in question. There was a case of an exhibit with certificate stating that the item is faked, but it was found on display, inadequately described. Furthermore, the certificates have to be scanned or photocopied for record purposes. Although digital camera can be a last resort in the absence of a scanner, the result is not ideal as the quality of pictures is poor due to reflection or lack of expertise. Records of some past exhibitions show that the items were actually photographed, but there was no follow up to produce the pictures for the files].</i></p>
10	Every page removed from the frame shall be examined and a report shall be made on the Registration Form with a scanned image of the sheet with the items in colour for FIP's records. A reference No. (eg SP07/GR/2203/2195-7) shall be allocated and quoted on top of each Registration Form.

	<p>[Note: SP07 denotes <i>St Petersburg 2007</i> i.e. name of exhibition & year/ GR denotes <i>Greece</i> (country of exhibit, not the exhibitor)/ 2203 denotes exhibit No. 2195 denotes frame No. where the said page is on display and -7 denotes the said page's position]</p> <p>The Expert Group Team Leader shall put down his signature, signifying his endorsement to the action proposed.</p>
11	<p>Actions proposed by the Expert Group are usually of the following types:</p> <p>1) No Action Taken (when item examined is in good order); 2) Do Not Show Again (when item is really in dubious condition and certificates are unlikely to be issued); 3) Has to be Certified (to tell the exhibitor that the item is doubtful and it is in his interest to have the item certified, if he wishes to show them again in future exhibitions).</p> <p>The Expert Group may also recommend downgrading the exhibit by 1 level of 5 points or more (usually for items without certificates, despite notices being given more than once); or to disqualify the exhibit from this and/or future FIP exhibitions (when there are more than half a dozen of forgeries in the exhibit).</p>
12	<p>The items, after examination and scanning/photocopying, shall be returned to the NCs concerned for remounting, if possible on the same day afternoon. It is advisable that the Registration Forms together with the returned exhibits be organized in the order of Frame No. to ease the workflow at site.</p> <p>The Expert Group Team Leader shall finalize all paperwork before noon and hand over <u>two copies</u> of the reports (i.e. the Registration Forms) together with illustrations to the National Commissioners concerned (during the Commissioners Meeting) for onward transmission to the respective exhibitors and the FIP member federations where the exhibitors belong to.</p> <p>The Commissioners shall sign the third copy of the Registration Form and the illustration sheet to acknowledge receipt to ensure that the message will be properly conveyed to the exhibitors.</p>
13	<p>The actions recommended by the Expert Group would need the consensus of the Jury. The Expert Group Report incorporating the Group's recommendations shall be presented by reading out to the Jury.</p>
14	<p>The results (awards) of all exhibits would then be tabled by the Jury Secretary, after having incorporated the Expert Group's recommendations, and having received the final approval of the Jury. Both the Expert Group Report and the Jury Report will be published in the Palmares Awards Booklet.</p>
15	<p>The Expert Group Team Leader shall, upon completion of the task, hand over the following to a FIP Board of Director who is in the Jury or to the FIP Secretary General if she is Assistant Jury Secretary:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. One copy of Expert Group Report duly signed by all the group members, b. One set of all Registration Forms signed by the respective Commissioners, together with the scan of the entire sheet with questionable item attached, c. A CD-rom or thumb drive containing all the scanned items

Conclusion

- 1) The above is the standard operating procedure of the Expert Group and modification in terms of time frame may be made depending on the number of exhibits and days of the exhibition. Expert Group Team Leader may, in consultation with FIP Consultant, propose the necessary changes.
- 2) It should be emphasized that the main objective of the Expert Group is to guide, assist and protect the interest of the exhibitors who enjoy the great fun of exhibiting in the FIP World Stamp Exhibitions.

ANNEX I



REQUEST TO THE EXPERT GROUP REGISTRATION FORM

(A) Important Notes (please read before filling):			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 All columns and boxes should be fully and accurately completed. 2 The Registration Form is meant to register one philatelic item only. 3 If there are more than one item in an exhibit sheet that are seeking opinion, please use a second Registration Form for the second item, etc 4 A set of stamps on an exhibit sheet that are seeking the same opinion may be grouped under one Registration Form. 			
(B) Registration Information			
From Team #	Team Leader	Exhibit Class	Exhibit #
Name of Exhibitor		Country of Exhibitor	Frame # Sheet #
Title of Exhibit			
Nature of Opinion(s) Sought: On Stamps: <input type="checkbox"/> 1) Is this stamp (or block of stamps) genuine? <input type="checkbox"/> 2) Is/Are the overprint(s) genuine? On Covers / Cards <input type="checkbox"/> 1) Does the stamp(s) originally belong to this cover? <input type="checkbox"/> 2) The postmark(s) / cancellation(s) on the stamp(s) is / are not tied to the cover? <input type="checkbox"/> 3) Is / Are the postmark(s) / cancellation(s) / handstruck stamp(s) on the cover(s) / stamp(s) genuine? <input type="checkbox"/> 4) Why the stamp(s) is / are not cancelled? <input type="checkbox"/> 5) Is the datestamp(s) applied in much later years? In General: <input type="checkbox"/> 1) Is certificate of genuineness available for this item? Other Opinion Sought: <input type="checkbox"/>			
(C) Expert Group's Action			
Was the item taken out of the frame?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Photocopied
Was the commissioner present?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Photographed/scanned
Remarks & Recommendations:			
<input type="checkbox"/> No action required (NA)	<input type="checkbox"/> Not to be shown again (DNE)	<input type="checkbox"/> Downgraded one level (D1)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Has to be certified (CR)	<input type="checkbox"/> Exhibit disqualified (ED)	<input type="checkbox"/> Downgraded two levels (D2)	
<input type="checkbox"/> No action required but to improve in description (NAI)			
Date :	Signature (Expert Group Team Leader):		
(D) Acknowledge the receipt of 2 sets of this Registration Form duly signed by the Expert Group Team Leader, complete with the illustrations. (One set is to forward to the national Federation and the second set for the exhibitor concerned.)		Sign :	
		(National Commissioner)	
	Date :		

ANNEX II
FIP WORLD STAMP CHAMPIONSHIP

PRAGA 08 : Review of Exhibit Queried at Previous Exhibition

Previous Ref No. _____
PRAGA 08 Exhibit No _____ Frame No _____ Sheet No _____

Observations/Comments:

- { } Certificate provided (PRAGA 08) - to photo copy for file
- { } Certificate not provided (PRAGA 08)
- { } Item not exhibited (PRAGA 08)
- { } Did not improve description (PRAGA 08)
- { } Exhibit absent (PRAGA 08)
- { } No Action (PRAGA 08) as per previous decision
- { } See below:

Recommendation:

- { } No action = NA (PRAGA 08)
- { } Do not exhibit again = DNE (PRAGA 08)
- { } New Certificate required (PRAGA 08)
- { } Deduct 5 point (PRAGA 08)
- { } see below:

Expert Group Team Leader _____ Date _____

Signature _____

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ANNEX III

This sheet is temporarily
removed by The Organizing
Committee