

EXCHANGE OF LETTERS

recording the common understanding on the principles of international cooperation on research and development activities in the domain of intelligent manufacturing systems between the European Community and the United States of America, Japan, Australia, Canada and the EFTA countries of Norway and Switzerland

A. Letter from the Community

Brussels, 19 March 1997.

Sir,

I refer to discussions that have taken place concerning international cooperation on research and development activities in the domain of intelligent manufacturing systems (IMS) between the participants, i.e. the European Community, and the United States of America, Japan, Australia, Canada, and the EFTA countries of Norway and Switzerland.

The purpose of this letter is to record the common understanding reached on the principles of cooperation on IMS. The letter complements the Terms of Reference (ToR) developed by the International Steering Committee at the end of the IMS feasibility study in 1994 and modifies Article VIII of the ToR and Article 1.13 of Appendix 2 of the ToR as indicated below. The ToR, and the Appendices to the ToR, are annexed to this letter.

1. Objective

Participants will encourage and facilitate cooperation between entities, established within their territories (within the territories of its Member States in the case of the European Community), in the domain of intelligent manufacturing systems. Such cooperation should ensure a balance of benefits and contributions, be of industrial relevance and be based on the principle of mutual interest and understanding.

2. Technical themes for IMS cooperation

The cooperation will initially cover the following five technical themes:

- (a) total product life cycle issues;
- (b) process issues;
- (c) strategy/planning/design tools;
- (d) human/organizational/social issues, and,
- (e) virtual/extended enterprise issues.

Other themes within the scope of IMS may be envisaged, however, it should be ensured that new technical themes are consistent with government policies and industrial priorities of the participating regions.

3. Forms and means of cooperation

Cooperation will involve participation in projects by entities, in accordance with procedures adopted in common for the creation and operation of international consortia and may include visits, training and exchanges of scientists, engineers and other appropriate personnel for purposes relevant to the successful implementation and completion of the projects.

4. Dissemination and utilization of information

Intellectual property rights (IPR) resulting from projects carried out within IMS will be subject to the IMS/IPR provisions given in Appendix 2 of the ToR. This Appendix will be amended in Article 1.13 to reflect that Austria, Finland and Sweden are members of the European Union.

5. *Financing*

Financing of cooperative activities will be subject to the availability of funds and to the applicable laws and regulations, policies and programmes of the participating regions.

Each participant will cover its own participation.

Each participant will contribute, in funding or in kind, in an equitable manner to the execution of the functions and the costs of the interregional secretariat.

6. *Implementation of IMS*

Representatives of the participants appointed to the International Steering Committee (ISC) will act as the liaison between the ISC and their respective public administrations/governments. The representatives of the participants will monitor the implementation with respect to the purpose, principles and programme structure of IMS and they will have a facilitating role. In addition, they will have the following functions:

- facilitate good cooperation between the regional secretariats,
- exchange of information on local practices, laws, regulations and programmes relevant to the cooperation,
- facilitate participation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) directly and indirectly in the IMS programme. In particular this would include access to an electronic partner search facility and an electronic register of expressions of interest, and,
- present to government/public administrations for decision the recommendations of the ISC for the admission of new participants.

The participants will organize, manage or designate their respective regional secretariats. In particular, the regional secretariats will include the following responsibilities:

- facilitate the timely selection of projects at regional level, according to the rules and procedures in force in the participant's region,
- assist in consortium formation within and across respective regions, and,
- work with regional infrastructure groups to facilitate IMS.

7. *Duration*

The IMS programme will have a duration of 10 years, each participant may withdraw at any time subject to 12 months' notice. The participants will review the principles of their cooperation five years after its launch in order to see whether it should be continued, modified or terminated. This replaces Article VIII of the ToR.

8. *Implementation of IMS in Europe*

The European Community and Switzerland and Norway reserve the option to act together as a single European region, to be represented by a combined delegation on the International Steering Committee and to be supported by a single European IMS Secretariat.

The Commission of the European Community will provide the necessary support for its regional secretariat.

This letter, together with its acceptance by the participants, complements and modifies the ToR and records the common understanding on the principles of cooperation on IMS. I would be pleased to receive your early confirmation of this understanding.

*On behalf
of the European Community*

S. Micens

B. Letter from Norway

Oslo, 9 April 1997.

Sir,

I acknowledge receipt of your letter of 19 March 1997 which reads as follows:

'I refer to discussions that have taken place concerning international cooperation on research and development activities in the domain of intelligent manufacturing systems (IMS) between the participants, i.e. the European Community, and the United States of America, Japan, Australia, Canada, and the EFTA countries of Norway and Switzerland.

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Other themes within the scope of IMS may be envisaged, however, it should be ensured that new technical themes are consistent with government policies and industrial priorities of the participating regions.

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This letter, together with its acceptance by the participants, complements and modifies the ToR and records the common understanding on the principles of cooperation on IMS. I would be pleased to receive your early confirmation of this understanding.

I have the honour to confirm that my Government is in agreement with the contents of your letter.

*For the Government
of the Kingdom of Norway*



ANNEX

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A PROGRAMME OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN
ADVANCED MANUFACTURING**

(This Annex (and the Appendices thereto) is/(are) identical to that/(those) published on page 6 of this
Official Journal)
