Summary of Salient points discussed in the Review meeting held on 29th November 2008

Members Present: Dr(s). S. G. Dhande, K. Muralidhar (Chairman), A. Upadhyaya (Actg. Convener), IRDC members

Special invitees: K. Poddar and S. Basu

1. National Wind Tunnel Facility (**NWTF)**

Dr. K. Poddar provided an update about the current activities of NWTF and also proposed a plan for HRD. A copy of his report and presentation are uploaded on DORD website.

Currently, NWTF has a two-tier management structure and works as per the guidelines issued at national and Dean's level. The IRDC committee members felt a need to constitute an academic advisory committee which will have representation from various departments within the institute as well as from outside academic and research institutions. It was suggested that this will further promote interdisciplinary activities. In addition, it was felt that NWTF should define its short-term as well as long-term program both with academic as well as research perspective. Besides being a testing facility, about 30% of the time should be made available to the institute faculty and student members for their research. It was stressed upon that there is a need to consolidate the computational, instrumental and experimental components at NWTF.

The committee members also opined that NWTF should have a professionally managed organizational structure which should have guidelines for administrative governance and other policy matters. It was also suggested that NWTF should present its budget under recurring and non-recurring heads. To better disseminate the ongoing activities at NWTF both within as well as outside IIT/K, it was recommended that NWTF brings out a newsletter. It is also desirable that both the existing as well as the potential users should be periodically updated about NWTF activities through email as well as discussion forums.

It was emphasized that student involvement needs to be encouraged and increased. This can be done by hiring and training undergraduate and postgraduate students on short-term or medium term basis. One of the models suggested was to advertise well in advance the requirement.

For regular appointment of technical and support staff, Head NWTF was advised to contact the registrar through DORD.

2. Digital Innovation Lab (DIL)

Dr. S. Basu presented the update about the DIL activities. A copy of his report and presentation are uploaded on the DORD website.

DIL facility is currently being used by the faculty members and students of the Mechanical Engineering, Civil Engineering and Design program. In particular, the students of Design programme are using the 3DS Studio Max software for several of the architectural and functional prototype designs.

While some of the students are using AutoDesk for their BTP projects, its wider use as teaching tool is yet to be realized to its full potential. This was attributed to the reluctance to shift over from 2D-based AutoCad to the solid (3D) drawing software (e.g. Inventor) provided by AuotoDesk. The committee members felt that it is important for the Digital Innovation Lab to have a broader vision. It was suggested that in addition to housing AutoDesk, DIL should also have an inventory of other software as well.

It was also proposed that the lab should adopt the student-model of governance. For this, select students in each semester should be provided both in house as well as on-site training by AutoDesk personnel.

The meeting ended with vote of thanks to the Chair.

Prepared by
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