Minutes (IRDC Meeting, August 31, 2012)

Members present: Drs. Y. Joshi (CHE); T. V. Prabhakar (CSE); T. K. Sengupta (AE); A. Mukherjee (HSS); S. Panda (DORD nominee): D. Philip (IME); A. Pradhan (PHY); R. Gupta (MSP); R. Vijaya (CELT); P. Venkitnarayanan (ME); S. Khandekar (DORD nominee); B. V. Phani (DORD nominee); T. K. Sengupta (AE); R. Hegde (EE); A. K. Chaturvedi (DORD); S. Verma (CHM); R. K. Sachan, DR (R&D)

Convener welcomed the members to the meeting.

1(a) DORD informed the members that the Director has constituted the Users' Committee for the Research Complex.

1(b) DORD announced the membership of IRDC effective from 1st October, 2012.

Further, the members were informed that the annual Call for CARE will be circulated shortly and that the R&D office have a new DR and AR.

2. Minutes of the previous IRDC meeting held on 28th Feb were confirmed.

3. Dr. S. Panda, Convenor, Industrial Collaboration Advisory Group (ICAG) presented a report on IITK-Industry Initiative event held on 30th March. On behalf of the ICAG, the following two recommendations were put forth for the consideration of the IRDC:

(i) Preparation of sector-wise regular reports on the projects, theses done and other related activities in the institute. To facilitate compilation of such reports, PIs should be asked to provide a copy of the final report when a project is being closed.

(ii) Holding of sector-wise R&D Open Houses in IITK. It was suggested that any group of 10 or more faculty members can seek funding from the institute provided they expect at least 10 industries/organizations in that sector to attend the Open House. A committee approved by the Director should evaluate all such proposals. For this, the institute should provide funding of Rs. 2 lakhs for local travel, stay, meals, preparation of space, stalls, memento, printing of brochures, banner, stationery etc. The funding can be higher if the participating organizations or faculty are larger than 10.

The IRDC accepted both the above proposals with the following additional suggestions:

(a) A one page template should be prepared for presenting a summary of the final report of a project. Such summaries can be uploaded on the R&D home page. A link to the full report can be provided in this summary.

(b) Projects should be encouraged to have their websites, links to which can be given from the R&D home page.

(c) A research portal for an industrial visitor to our website be created. It could have an 'ask-an-expert' button for quick access to relevant information.

(d) A dedicated liasion office be created.

4. Dr. BV Phani presented Clause II.3 of the institute IPR policy:

"It will be mandatory for students to submit an IPDF, countersigned by their supervisor(s), at the time of filing their B.Tech. report, M.Tech. and PhD theses." He pointed out that operationalizing this policy has the following difficulties:

(i) A large fraction of theses and reports may not have any patentable material. Forcing them to submit an Intellectual Property Disclosure Form (IPDF) is not desirable.

(ii) A large number of theses and reports are submitted in a short window in the month of May and it may not be possible to process too many IPDF's in that short window.

In view of this, the following two suggestion were put forth for the consideration of the IRDC:

(i) Students should be encouraged to submit IPDFs at the earliest instead of waiting till the submission time of their thesis/report. In any case, they should be encouraged to submit IPDF at least three months before they plan to submit their thesis/report. This will give SIIC adequate time to process the IPDFs.

(ii) To take care of situations wherein a thesis/report may not have any patentable material, a statement signed by the student(s) and countersigned by the supervisors can be submitted instead of an IPDF.

Some members felt that in cases were IPDF is not to be submitted, the language of the statement to be signed by the student needs to be finalized with care. Coordinator, SIIC was requested to work on the language and then bring it for the consideration of the IRDC. In view of the queries regarding patentability, willingness to patent, delay in publication etc. it was felt that Coordinator, SIIC should also prepare a FAQ and bring it for the consideration of IRDC.

5. (a)-(d) DORD announced new proposals for REACH, grant for nucleating research groups, and funding of student projects. All these three proposals were similar to the existing CARE scheme in the sense that they will be based on an open call and evaluated by committees appointed by the Director. While the three proposals were accepted by the IRDC, some members felt that it was not clear how the grant for nucleating research groups will be used. There were also concerns regarding its accountability and operational modalities. The views and suggestions of the members should be kept in mind while formulating its guidelines. DORD also announced a new institute level talk series (2-3 talks per semester) by faculty members of the institute.

The meeting ended with thanks to the Chair.