



## **ISBIS – the International Society for Business and Industrial Statistics**

### **Report to ISBIS on Vietnam Regional Meeting**

#### **2008 International Conference on Applied Probability and Statistics**

#### **(CAPS2008)**

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**N I Fisher**

[nif@valuemetrics.com.au](mailto:nif@valuemetrics.com.au)

### ***Introduction***

The ISBIS Mission is to facilitate the advancement and exchange of knowledge in business, financial and industrial statistics. A key strategy in pursuing this mission is to hold regional conferences, where host region provides a lot of the organisational effort and ISBIS provides significant assistance with developing the scientific program. In 2009, ISBIS will be sponsoring regional meetings in Cagliari, Stellenbosch and Beijing. This is a brief report on CAPS2008, the first regional meeting since the strategy was adopted in July 2008. Considerable effort was devoted to attracting people from the South-east Asian region to attend, as well as ensuring the participation of some international leaders in the field. This report provides a brief summary of the meeting.

### ***Location***

Vietnam was selected as a place for a regional meeting for a couple of reasons. Firstly, and most importantly, there was someone local, Dr Nam-Ky Nguyen, who was keen to 'make it happen'. Secondly, Vietnam has a very large population (some 86 million people) yet has very few statisticians, and with little formalised communication between them. One key goal for ISBIS was to catalyse intra-regional cooperation between statisticians, particularly within Vietnam itself.

### ***Organisation and Promotion***

The Organising Committee was chaired by Nam-Ky Nguyen with members Pham Gia Thu (University of Moncton, Canada), Vijay Nair (University of Michigan, USA) and Dennis Lin (Pennsylvania State University, USA). Chairs of the Scientific Program Committee were: Sudhir Gupta (Northern Illinois University, USA), Pham Gia Thu and Nicholas Fisher (University of Sydney & ValueMetrics Australia). Considerable assistance was provided by Action-M Agency, Czech Republic, whose Principal, Ms Milena Zeithamlova, donated considerable time and resources to the organisation, and who travelled to Hanoi with a colleague to supervise the running of the actual meeting at no cost to the conference beyond travel expenses. Action-M's involvement contributed very significantly to the success of the meeting. The meeting was held in a high-quality venue (the Press Club),

and Action-M were able to utilise mailing lists developed from the recent international meeting run by ISBIS in Prague to promote CAPS2008. There were some 115 delegates from 22 countries, including 28 from Vietnam and representatives from 8 other South-East Asian countries. These numbers would have been larger had the Bangkok Airport closure not occurred.

### ***Scientific Program***

Four Keynote addresses were presented:

- *How can Statisticians Help Vietnam Prosper?* – Nick Fisher, University of Sydney
- *The Sample Size Determination Problem: Frequentist vs Bayes?* – Thu Gia Pham, University of Monckton
- *Recent Developments in Degradation Modeling and Applications to Reliability and Maintainability* – Vijay Nair, University of Michigan
- *Process Mining and RFID* – Nick Fisher, Pennsylvania State University

The other 8 Invited Paper sessions covered areas such as Financial Statistics, Biopharmaceutical Studies, Discrete Choice Modelling in Business, Design of Experiments, Hydrological Statistics, and Statistics and the Environment, and there were a further 10 sessions containing over 40 contributed papers.

### ***Sponsorship***

Support for the event was provided by

- the Australian Government, through its International Seminar Support Scheme (which covered travel and expenses for the ISBIS President, Nick Fisher, to participate and present the opening Keynote Address)
- Minitab
- Institute of Mathematics (VAST), Hanoi
- Hanoi University of Sciences (VNU)
- Statistics South Africa

All Keynote and Invited speakers secured their travel support from elsewhere.

### ***Social Events***

A Welcoming Reception was held at the Press Club on the evening of 30 November, the fee for which was included in the Registration Fee, and a Conference Dinner (fee event) on the evening of Tuesday 2 December. Both were well-patronised and much appreciated by the attendees.

### ***Concluding remarks***

This was a successful regional meeting from the ISBIS point of view. It attracted significant attendance from people in many of the countries in the region, and planning

has already commenced for CAPS2011 (although ISBIS has yet to consider what its rôle might be in this). The success was due mainly to Dr Nam-Ky Nguyen as local Chair, and to the voluntary participation of Action-M Agency.

Detailed information about the scientific program, membership of the Scientific Program Committee, a list of attendees, and photographs taken at the conference, can be found at <http://www.action-m.com/isbis2008/>.

N.I. Fisher

President, ISBIS

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