Managing the Crowded Underground

A new certification targets a global audience

BY BERT BOSSELER AND WILLIAM BUSCH, SR/WA

The universal importance of managing underground infrastructure is what first connected IRWA and the IKT, the Institute for Underground Infrastructure in Germany. Both organizations are internationally recognized—IKT for its research and engineering with partners throughout Europe, and IRWA for its education, certification programs and industry expertise serving members in many countries around the world.

For the last five years, IRWA and IKT have developed a close working relationship that maximizes our respective strengths. IKT representatives have presented sessions on underground infrastructure at IRWA's Annual Conferences and have published numerous articles in Right of Way Magazine. In 2014, IRWA participated at the IKT's 20th Anniversary infrastructure seminar in Germany, which was attended by participants from around the world. In addition to these professional exchange opportunities, members from both organizations have participated in a webinar series on underground infrastructure. A webinar series on energy is also in the works.

The next and most exciting cooperative effort is the first IRWA/IKT joint professional development initiative, the International Underground Certification. The goal is to provide a forum and venue for international participants to interact, network and learn about the techniques and best practices for resolving underground infrastructure challenges. Internationally acclaimed instructors will moderate the classes and provide insight to the participants through live interactive classes held online. The webinar program includes three courses, including Vegetation and Infrastructure, Asset Management of Underground Infrastructure and Management Implementation.

Class sessions will be approximately two hours in length to accommodate the various time zones of our global audience.

Managing the program is IRWA's Vice President of Professional Development Deidre Alves, M.Ed. and IKT's Project Manager of International Certification Programs, Dr. Sissis Kamarianakis.

"This global joint venture celebrates our commitment to providing powerfully relevant educational content and world class instructors, united in building a better world through thoughtful infrastructure development and management. The impact on those professionals who will benefit from this program will be significant, and we are humbled to be its catalyst," commented Deidre.

IRWA and IKT are proud to offer this unique educational opportunity which will link the industry's leading experts to a worldwide mix of participants. The pilot program is expected to launch in the coming months. ✪

In September, IRWA and IKT established the framework for the new global certification in Underground Infrastructure. From left, Bill Busch, SR/WA, IKT's Prof. Dr. Bert Bosseler and Dr. Sissis Kamarianakis.