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*J. Appl. Cryst.* (1987), **20**, 537**Commission on Powder Diffraction**

At its 14 August 1987 meeting in Perth, the General Assembly of the IUCr established a Commission on Powder Diffraction. This is an action widely welcomed and considered by many to be long overdue.

In early 1986, the IUCr Executive Committee established an *ad hoc* committee to assess world-wide interest and, if it be sufficient, to prepare specific proposals for the General Assembly to consider in determining whether to establish a Commission on Powder Diffraction. The Terms of Reference proposed by the committee and the Executive Committee and accepted by the General Assembly are:

i. To advise the IUCr in organizing or sponsoring meetings, schools and Congress sessions on powder diffraction and related subjects.

ii. To promote and coordinate scientific exchange between countries in the field of powder diffraction.

iii. To cooperate with other IUCr Commissions on matters concerning powder diffraction.

iv. To cooperate with other international bodies interested in powder diffraction and allied subjects.

v. To promote useful interactions of the IUCr with the large world-wide body of X-ray and neutron powder diffractionists.

vi. To promote the scientific growth and development of the field of powder diffraction.

Since the members of the *ad hoc* committee became the initial members of the Commission, they were able to meet three times during the Congress to make plans for Commission projects. Among those being given first consideration are Program exchange 'bank'.

Satellite meeting for the 1990 Bordeaux Congress.

Workshop on the Rietveld method (to be held between August 1988 and August 1989).

Newsletter.

Round-robin with the Rietveld method involving both X-ray and neutron data and several samples.

New book(s), possibly resulting from workshop(s).

Powder diffraction sessions at 1990 IUCr Congress at Bordeaux.

The members of the new Commission on Powder Diffraction are:

R. A. Young	USA (Chairman)
Z. Bojarski	Poland
R. J. Hill	Australia
A. W. Hewat	France
J. I. Langford	UK (Secretary)
P.-E. Werner	Sweden
T. Yamanaka	Japan

In addition, Dr L. Frevel serves as the JCPDS-appointed representative to the Commission.

**Notes and News**

*Announcements and other items of crystallographic interest will be published under this heading at the discretion of the Editorial Board. The notes (in duplicate) should be sent to the Executive Secretary of the International Union of Crystallography (J. N. King, International Union of Crystallography, 5 Abbey Square, Chester CH1 2HU, England).*

*J. Appl. Cryst.* (1987), **20**, 537**Standard Crystallographic File Structure–87**

How often have you been frustrated by finding that your datafile was in the wrong format for your program? And how much time have you spent in writing conversion programs to change data from one format to another?

In order to minimize these problems, the Data and Computing Commissions of the International Union of Crystallography approved, in 1981, a Standard Crystallographic File Structure (*Acta Cryst.* **A39**, 216–224). This describes a file structure that can be used to store or transfer most kinds of crystallographic data and, at the same time, is easy to program and is adaptable to individual users needs. Since 1981 the standard has been enhanced and in the most recent release (SCFS-87) it can include all the information (including text, tables