



International Mathematical Agreement Signed Between Australia and Chile To Develop Bilateral Trade in Mining.

On Thursday March 1st, the Australian Ambassador to Chile, Crispin Conroy, witnessed the signing of a Co-operative Agreement between the ARC Centre of Excellence for Mathematics and Statistics of Complex Systems (MASCOS), and the Chilean Centre for Mathematical Modelling (CMM) at the University of Chile. The signatories were the two Centre Directors, Professor Tony Guttman (MASCOS) and Professor Rafael Correa (CMM).

This agreement was the culmination of a week of intense discussion at an International Meeting on Rock Mechanics and Logistics in Mining, jointly sponsored by the two Centres, plus two Canadian Centres, Mathematics of Information Technology and Complex Systems (MITACS) and the Pacific Institute for the Mathematical Sciences (PIMS), and the German DFG Research Centre MATHEON. MASCOS already has joint agreements with MITACS and MATHEON. The meeting was sponsored by key industry stakeholders BHP Billiton and Codelco, the Australian Government through the Council on Australia Latin America Relations (COALAR), and the Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute. It was also supported from Australia by Austrade, ALABC, Pro Chile, the Australia Chile Chamber of Commerce and the Australia Brazil Chamber of Commerce.

The Chilean Minister for Mining, Karen Poniachik, attended a session of the workshop, and expressed strong support for the research and for the Chilean mathematics research centre CMM. The Minister has recently visited Australia and subsequently signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Mining Technology with the Australian Minister for Trade, Ian MacFarlane.

At the signing of the Agreement, Ambassador Conroy spoke on the importance of mining to both countries, and the necessity to capture the best solutions to the many problems that face the industry worldwide. At the Meeting, problems ranging from the best way to schedule operations to the most effective way to tackle ore bodies were discussed, as well the modelling of rock fracture and the mathematical problems raised by metallurgical processes.

As a result of this agreement, further joint workshops on problems of mutual interest are being planned, as well as an exchange of graduate students and faculty members. This agreement, together with our pre-existing agreements, provides Australia with a worldwide network of expertise in almost all areas of industry-focused applied mathematics. The forthcoming workshop on Electricity Supply and Pricing, to be held at Surfers Paradise in April 2007, and jointly sponsored by MASCOS, Canadian partner MITACS and the Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute (AMSI), will be the next in a series of such workshops, which bring industry and academia together, resulting in both mutual and national benefit, as well as strengthening Australia's international links in these areas.

end

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