



# ASF Commission on Bibliography

## History

The Commission on Bibliography was established by the Federation in December 1970 when Greg Middleton was appointed its Convenor. For the next decade the Commission prepared abstracts of Australian speleological literature which were published in *Australian Speleo Abstracts* under an arrangement with the Sydney Speleological Society. Initially bi-annual (1970-72), in 1973 ASA became annual and the 10th and last issue covered the 4-year period 1976-79. Most of those issues and a comprehensive index are still available from Ross Ellis, 11 Arkana Street, Dundas NSW 2117 or [cel19110@bigpond.net.au](mailto:cel19110@bigpond.net.au)

The Commission effectively went into hibernation in the 1980s and early 90s but was revived again in 1998 to contribute abstracts to the international bibliography, published by the International Union of Speleology's Commission on Bibliography.

## Activities

The Commission's mission, as specified by the Federation, is "to compile indexes and/or abstracts of all published information on Australian caves and cooperate with the same commission of the International Union of Speleology". In practice the Commission interprets this widely, dealing with anything published concerning karst, pseudokarst, cavers and any other aspects of caves and karst in Oceania.

The Commission operates through a Convenor and a small (and dwindling) group of people who read the speleological literature and compile the abstracts. The abstracts are prepared in a format specified by the IUS Commission and sent electronically to the Convenor. He edits them as necessary, compiles them, tries to detect omissions and duplications and forwards the consolidated abstracts annually to IUS' Bibliography Commission in Switzerland. There they are combined with inputs from around the world and published annually as *Speleological Abstracts / Bulletin Bibliographique Spéléologique*. These are now available both as hard copy and on CD. A compilation CD is available covering the 20 yrs 1988-2007 comprising some 90,000 abstracts (price: CHF250). For full details of the IUS Commission and its publications, go to [www.isska.ch/bbs](http://www.isska.ch/bbs) or e-mail [ssslib@vtx.ch](mailto:ssslib@vtx.ch)

## Contributors

Having more Australian abstractors would obviously reduce the workload on the existing abstractors and also ensure better local coverage. Contributors would be particularly welcome from Western Australia, South Australia and Queensland, especially if they were prepared to commit to covering a whole state or region.

## The Task

IUS has provided guidelines for the preparation and compilation of abstracts. These can be made available on request to anyone who is interested. Dedicated database software can also be provided to facilitate the task of preparation, transmission and compilation of the abstracts.

More information can be sought from the Convenor, Greg Middleton at [ozspeleo@inet.net.au](mailto:ozspeleo@inet.net.au)