

25 Years Air and Space Law and Beyond

With issue 6 of 2000, volume XXV of our journal was completed. The conception of the journal took place in 1973, when on the return from the ILA centenary in Brussels, Fred Raming from Kluwer asked me whether I could suggest a title for a new English language law journal: he suggested a journal for space law, but as I knew very well the difficulties Stephen Gorove was experiencing with his brand-new Journal of Space Law, my idea was a journal for air law. The venerable Journal of Air Law and Commerce had limited itself to developments in the United States, and we thought we could cover the rest of the world. What we did not know at that moment was that McGill was preparing their Annals at the same time as we were busy with our preparations.

Having returned to The Netherlands, Mrs Diederiks was asked to participate, and together we completed the Board of Editors with Drs Van Wijk and Spanjaard. Our intention was to publish articles on air law from the whole world, in English. It should not be a typical Dutch journal, although contributions from our own country were expected too. It took us a year to collect enough materials to publish the first volume; the first issue was published at the end of 1975. We were lucky in that the Air Law section of the IBA met in Amsterdam in April 1975; many contacts with aviation lawyers were established, with perhaps the most important contact with Dieter Schoner, a lawyer from Frankfurt (Germany) who offered to provide our well-known Case Law Digest, with case law summaries from everywhere. When he left us in 1984, I took over the Digest.

During the 25 years the Board of Editors changed only very little. And what was special for us was the fact that the Editors really came and come together for every new issue. Also our latest addition, Mark Franklin from London, participates regularly. We were supported during the years by our Advisory Board, our contact persons in international organizations, and the members of our Case law committee. They have contributed frequently, both articles and ideas. What was added during the years were space law (1992), the regular contributions on the European Community and air law, and as from 1984, my annual bibliographical surveys of air law literature. During the last 12 years we published special issues “on the Warsaw Convention, ICAO, IATA, financing problems” whenever a central theme was available. Many times we asked colleagues from all over the world to write for us on a certain subject: almost without exception we received the requested article soon afterwards. The newest activity is the Isa Diederiks-Verschoor prize for young authors: Yun Zhao

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(volume 24, p. 304) was the first laureate. The collaboration with the publishers was always exceptionally good.

To show our subscribers our appreciation for the support they gave us, we have prepared a diskette with an index of 25 years of Air Law, respectively Air and Space Law (since 1992). This diskette will soon be sent to you. I have gone through all the pages of 25 volumes and was agreeably surprised at the riches and the diversity of materials found in all the issues. We also took the opportunity to give the journal a new cover and outlook, the result of which you now see in front of you. Stay with us and you will receive a reliable and easy accessible survey of all that happens in the fields of air and space law.

Wybo P. Heere
Editor