

52nd IAA SYMPOSIUM ON THE SEARCH FOR EXTRATERRESTRIAL INTELLIGENCE (SETI) –  
The Next Steps (A4)  
SETI 2: SETI and Society (2)

Author: Ms. Lori Walton  
Consultant, Canada, lwalton.astro@gmail.com

KEYNOTE: "BILLINGHAM CUTTING EDGE LECTURE" - THE HISTORY OF THE IAA SETI  
PERMANENT COMMITTEE - 1990 TO 1999

### Abstract

This paper is the third in a series outlining the history of the International Academy of Astronautics (IAA) SETI (search for extraterrestrial intelligence) Permanent Committee. The IAA established the SETI Committee in 1974 in response to growing awareness that humanity might detect intelligent extraterrestrial life. The IAA SETI Committee has an extraordinarily broad mandate to examine all aspects of the search for intelligent extraterrestrial life, including international issues, astrophysical and astronomical observations, biochemistry, exoplanets, complex life and evolution, planetary space missions, SETI search strategies, and the societal, legal, and political impact of a verified detection. The founding and early years of the IAA SETI Permanent Committee up to 1989 are described in two previous papers. By the late 1980s, the IAA SETI Committee focused on drafting "The Declaration of Principles Regarding Activities Following the Detection of Extraterrestrial Intelligence." Of particular concern was a separate agreement, which would present the outline of a potential response from earth. This paper describes SETI Committee activities during the 1990s, including the SETI Review Meetings held during the International Astronautical Congress, membership, SETI searches, and SETI topics of interest. Throughout the 1990s, the IAA SETI Committee worked vigorously on the contentious issue of transmissions from earth. The possibility of intelligent extraterrestrial life was heightened by the end of the 1990s with the confirmed detection of exoplanets.