



IMA
Commission in New Minerals, Nomenclature and Classification
(CNMNC)
Subcommittee on Unnamed Minerals
(SUM)

2014 Report

Jeffrey de Fourestier

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(Prepared by Jeffrey de Fourestier)

1. OBJECTIVES OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON UNNAMED MINERALS (SUM)

The SUM is a permanent subcommittee of the CNMNC founded in 2007 by Dorian G. W. Smith and Ernest H. Nickel. Its mandate is to:

- Oversee the assignment of numbers to future unnamed minerals, including those already described but which have not been identified in the initial lists;
- Decide and act upon future recommendations from the mineralogical community concerning the rejection of previously “valid” unnamed minerals; and
- Make recommendations to the CNMNC regarding the status of unnamed minerals.

2. MEMBERSHIP OF THE SUM

Dorian G. W. Smith was the first Chairman of the SUM with Ernest H. Nickel as a member. James A. Ferraiolo was later appointed to the SUM. Following Ernie Nickel's death, Jeffrey de Fourestier was recruited and appointed to the SUM at the end of 2012 by the Chairman for his knowledge of unnamed minerals generally and of Chinese minerals specifically. Shortly thereafter in the same year, Dorian G. W. Smith resigned as Chairman due to ill health and passed away the following year in 2013. Between Jim and Jeffrey it was decided not to name a new Chairman immediately. Unfortunately, Jim also passed away in February 2014 leaving only Jeffrey de Fourestier to oversee the SUM. The CNMNC Secretary Stuart Mills was consulted and Jeffrey was given the same mandate as Dorian had. At the end of June, Marco E. Ciriotti was appointed as a second member of the SUM. The new Chairman is now looking for at least one other person for the subcommittee.

3. ORGANISATION

Officers as of 2014

Chairman: Jeffrey de Fourestier (fu_xiaotu@yahoo.ca)

Marco E. Ciriotti (m.ciriotti@tin.it)

4. WORKING OF THE SUM

Since its creation the work of the SUM has been done through an informal working arrangement where all members are consulted on changes or additions to the lists. The distribution of proposals, comments and voting are done through e-mails so no postage

costs are incurred. Papers that contain reference(s) to unnamed minerals are circulated amongst the members, whenever possible in e-format, for comment and decision. It is not expected that this approach will be changed in the foreseeable future. An effort is made to distribute the workload in an as equitable manner as possible, although at present the SUM lacks sufficient members to be fully up to speed. The IMA does not cover any of the SUM or its member's costs, which are entirely borne by the members of the SUM.

To assist in facilitating the work of the SUM, it is recommended that:

- the CNMNC encourage authors to submit e-copies of papers citing unnamed minerals if already published or to consult the SUM on unnamed minerals to be published before publication. Furthermore, to encourage the editors of the mineralogical journals to require authors to consult the SUM before publication.

5. CHIEF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The SUM published its last version of the "Valid" and "Invalid" lists of unnamed mineral in 2012 before Dorian's resignation. These are available for consultation on the CNMNC website at:

<http://pubsites.uws.edu.au/ima-cnmnc/Invalid2012.pdf>
<http://pubsites.uws.edu.au/ima-cnmnc/Valid2012.pdf>

6. OUTSTANDING ISSUES AND PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

It was indicated that the CNMNC would require proposals for new minerals to consult the two lists. As best as can be determined, this change is presently not in place. Even then, the lists are not readily easy to find on the CNMNC website, nor is any other information on the SUM.

To facilitate finding the documents relevant to the SUM, which includes the two papers on the codification on unnamed minerals (Smith and Nickel, 2007; 2008) and the "Valid" and "Invalid" Lists of unnamed minerals, any reports and any subsequent new papers related to the SUM's mandate, it is recommended that:

- the link on the CNMNC website menu entitled "Codes for Unnamed Minerals" be changed to "Subcommittee on Unnamed Minerals" as it is a permanent subcommittee.

On this page the coordinates of the SUM members could also be given, so that authors can correspond with the SUM on unnamed minerals already published or planned to be published.

The unnamed mineral ("UM") codes are at present not widely used. In order to improve this situation it is recommended that:

- any unnamed minerals to be mentioned in new proposals or papers on new species also include the SUM code for the cited unnamed mineral(s).

7. WORKPLAN

The interim “UKI” numbers were created so that a temporary number could be issued and followed until such time as the SUM could issue a “valid” or “invalid” UM number. Until now, no evidence has been found to suggest that this measure has ever been used. This indicates two possibilities. Either the UKI number is not adequately known and understood or it is not ‘user friendly’. Because of this situation, the SUM plans to look at what steps can be undertaken so that it is used and also ‘usable’.

An important area of concern that Dorian Smith raised to the members of the SUM before resigning as Chairman, was the difficulty in bridging the great communications and language gap between the Orient (in particular China) and the West. His hope was that the SUM would have the capacity to review publications in Chinese characters or Chinese publications not readily available outside of the PRC. For this reason Jeffrey was approached. While a fairly comprehensive initial list of references has been put together, it remains to assign UM numbers to most of them. As well, continued outreach will be done to seek greater understanding and cooperation to bridge these two different worlds.

Lastly, the SUM will continue to look for members to strengthen the capacity of the SUM to be able to effectively carry out its mandate. The SUM will look at possible approaches to encourage greater support and participation to deal with the daunting task it has been given.

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