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Editorial for *Ergonomics*, vol 50, issue 1

As the journal *Ergonomics* enters its 50th year, volume 50, issue 1 marks a significant watershed, with the retirement of General Editor Rob Stammers after serving for 11 years. Rob has put a great deal of time and dedication into his editorship and those of us working in the field of ergonomics have good reason to be grateful to him for his considerable efforts. Based on a rough reckoning, Rob has overseen something of the order of 150 issues of *Ergonomics*, with perhaps as many as 1,200 individual papers having made it into print. Many more manuscripts will, of course, have passed across Rob's desk, considered unsuitable for publication once having undergone peer review.

Since its early days, *Ergonomics* has been the Official Journal of the UK Ergonomics Society (Waterson and Sell, 2006), with editors appointed by publishers Taylor & Francis in consultation with the Society. Applications to join a new editorial team were invited earlier in 2006, with the following Editors now appointed to take the journal forward: Sue Hignett, Neil Mansfield, Neville Stanton and Leon Straker. Christine Haslegrave will continue in her existing role as Editor, providing continuity. Roger Haslam has been appointed Co-ordinating Editor on behalf of the Ergonomics Society. It is expected that an additional North American Editor will be recruited to join the editorial team in due course.

An immediate priority for the new editors will be to accelerate the peer review process, ensuring that authors receive a high quality service. It is expected that manuscript handling and review times will benefit significantly from a move to the online web-based peer review system Manuscript Central™ from the beginning of 2007.

A further priority will be to increase the range and quality of submissions the journal receives. It is essential to the health of any scientific discipline to have flourishing academic journals. As the longest standing periodical in the field of ergonomics and human factors, it is perhaps not surprising that *Ergonomics* is rated highly in both objective and subjective rankings of quality. Indeed *Ergonomics* was rated '...the best journal in the field of ergonomics' based on the analysis by Dul et al (2005). It is a tribute to Rob Stammers and his predecessors that *Ergonomics* has achieved this status.

There is no room for complacency, however. Although the standing of the journal among those working in the field of ergonomics is high, it has a lesser impact among the wider scientific community. It is also a time when practices in academic publishing are changing rapidly. Both authors and users of scientific information are becoming more demanding and journals are having to adapt, with *Ergonomics* no exception. It is timely that the journal has a new team of editors, enthusiastic about addressing the challenges facing *Ergonomics* as it runs into its second half century.

Roger Haslam
3/12/06

References

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