

AIAA Manuscript Review Process

This description of AIAA manuscript review procedures is given so that authors, reviewers, and readers will better understand the paper selection and publication process. The first step in manuscript evaluation is an examination by the Editor-in-Chief of papers submitted to the journal. The Editor-in-Chief first tests the manuscript for the several criteria of subject scope, archival editorial style, apparent technical validity, topical importance, timeliness, relationship to prior publication, conciseness, appropriate references, and length. Precise requirements are given on the inside back cover of each journal issue.

Formal Review

If it passes these first tests, the paper is sent to that journal's Associate Editor with the most direct knowledge of the subject matter and of expert reviewers in the field. The Associate Editor then evaluates the paper according to the same criteria and, in most cases, has the paper sent to two or more reviewers in the field for confidential review. The review report form (reprinted here) is designed both to encourage the reviewer's objectivity and to ensure the thoroughness of his or her evaluation.

Considerable significance is attached to the review reports. Each reviewer is asked to judge the technical validity of the manuscript and the extent of its advance beyond work previously published. The reviewer is asked also for advice concerning the specific merits and/or deficiencies of the manuscript. However, the decision to publish, to require major revision before publication, or to reject for reasons cited lies first with the Associate Editor and ultimately with the Editor-in-Chief.

It takes a minimum of several months (at least three) after receipt of the manuscript to accomplish the evaluation and review steps discussed above.

Revision or Rebuttal

The next step is up to the author. If the paper has been rejected or if extensive revisions have been requested that the author believes are incorrect or unwarranted, he or she is entitled to submit a point-by-point rebuttal to the Editor's statement of reasons and the reviewers' comments. The rebuttal then is analyzed by the Editors, and a final decision is made, although there may be a need for an additional review cycle. Authors who revise their papers must make an effort to do so within the stated time period.

A reviewer who feels strongly that a particular paper should not be published may choose to write his or her criticism as a Technical Comment. The author then will be allowed to write a closing response for publication in the same issue as the Comment.

Formal acceptance will not occur until the author has complied with all of the revision requests (if any) made by the Associate Editor and has prepared the paper in AIAA archival style. (Or the Associate Editor may accept the author's rebuttal, as described above.)

Acceptance and Publication

When a paper is formally accepted, it will be scheduled for publication in a forthcoming issue, and the author will be informed of the tentative date. Depending upon the number of papers awaiting publication and projected size of issues, this may require that papers be scheduled several issues ahead. When feasible, papers will be published in the order of their original receipt.

Galley proofs will be sent to authors for correction and release approximately two months prior to publication. In order to allow for late or nonreturn of galleys by authors and to provide the flexibility to meet issue-length and topic-mix constraints, issues will be overscheduled by about 25%. Thus, there will always be a certain number of papers held over for the next issue. All authors and co-authors receive a complimentary copy of the issue in which their papers appear.