

Structure Reports Online: further growth leads to major changes

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The basic message of each year's editorial in *Acta Crystallographica Section E: Structure Reports Online* seems to be predictably the same – the journal continues to grow, attracting more authors and substantially more submitted papers. The figures for the year 2005 are no exception. Indeed, the growth appears to be accelerating. In last year's editorial, published in January 2005, we noted that the December 2004 issue was the largest to date, and continuation of its size would represent over 2500 papers per year. The figure of 2500 was, in fact, surpassed in 2005, with a total of 2887 papers and 7439 pages in PDF format. We believe that the journal is now the largest annual contributor to the Cambridge Structural Database. Nevertheless, publication continues to be rapid, with an average of less than one month between receipt of a submission and its appearance online.

Partly in response to the growing popularity and success of the journal, and partly in conjunction with changes being made generally in the IUCr's publications following a meeting of the Commission on Journals in Italy in August 2005, this year sees the most significant new developments since *Structure Reports Online* was launched in 2001, a little over five years ago. These major changes have involved much work by staff in the Editorial Office, creating and testing new procedures, and for some time Co-editors have been using these procedures in parallel with the existing ones. They have now reached the stage where they can be fully introduced, and they will take effect from March 2006. It is for this reason that we have delayed this year's editorial until now. The *Notes for Authors* have been extensively revised to take account of the various changes; they are available, together with much other important and useful material, in the Author Services section of the journal web site at <http://journals.iucr.org/e/services/authorservices.html>.

For authors, the most important development is the introduction of a new system for the submission, handling and tracking of papers. This is designed to be easier to use at all stages, for authors, for Co-editors, and for the Editorial Office staff. The submission of a new paper now involves uploading all relevant files in a single operation, the online selection of a Co-editor, and the author's declaration regarding copyright and ethical issues. Any CIF generating a level A alert will not pass the submission stage unless an author response to such alerts is included; this response will be assessed by the Co-editor as part of the review process. Revisions to submitted papers are also made through the web interface, at the Co-editor's invitation, and the status of the paper can be checked at any time.

The *Notes for Authors* give details of a number of requirements and restrictions, some of which have been newly introduced in order to apply some restraint to the journal's growth and in response to a decision of the IUCr Executive Committee to limit the number of published pages. In particular, there is now a limit of 400 words on the *Comment* section; papers longer than this, which must be justified in the submission process as a response to a level A alert, will be accepted only at the discretion of the Co-editors and Section Editors, and such exceptions are intended to be rare. Structures for which a more extended discussion is necessary or desirable should be published elsewhere, since *Structure Reports Online* is intended as a journal for concise reports. The background to a structural study should be brief and should not involve a long list of

literature references. Spectroscopic data will be published in the PDF and HTML versions only if assignments are made; unassigned data may be included, as for other supporting information, in the various `_special_details` fields of the CIF and will be available for readers to consult if they wish. Figures which are not discussed in the text will not be published, and geometric parameters in Tables must be restricted to those of importance; 'Fig. 2 shows a packing diagram' is not an acceptable case for inclusion of such a figure, and the complete set of bond lengths and angles (together with torsion angles and other results) are available to all readers in the CIF. These new restrictions and requirements will be applied to all new submissions from March, and papers already in the review and publication process may be edited to conform to them.

The task of reviewing and editing papers is undertaken by our team of expert Co-editors, whose time is valuable and must not be wasted on dealing with poorly prepared submissions. Papers which are difficult to understand, which fall well short of the requirements of the *Notes for Authors*, or which require extensive text correction and editing will be returned to the author for revision without a detailed review; it is the responsibility of authors, not of Co-editors, to generate an acceptable text for the *Abstract*, *Comment* and *Experimental* sections and to ensure that other CIF items are correct and complete. Co-editors and the Section Editors will make moderate changes where required so that papers conform to the journal's standards and style. Authors can save the Co-editors considerable effort and time by checking their own papers before submission for errors, unacceptable and undesirable features; a list of common problems, which corresponds to guidelines provided to the Co-editors, is given in the Author checklist at <http://journals.iucr.org/e/services/authorchecklist.html>.

Finally, we welcome a substantial number of new Co-editors, the largest increase the journal has so far seen, whose appointment will enable us to handle the large

volume of papers and maintain short publication times without creating an intolerable burden for the existing Co-editors, all of whom are continuing their work. Six new Co-editors were appointed in March 2005: Professor Mehmet Akkurt (Erciyes University, Turkey), Professor Len Barbour (University of Stellenbosch, South Africa), Professor Sylvain Bernès (Universidad Autonoma de Nuevo León, Mexico), Professor Tuncer Hökelek, (Hacettepe University, Turkey), Professor Alex Slawin (University of St. Andrews, Scotland) and Professor Duan-Jun Xu (Zhejiang University, People's Republic of China). We thank them, and the rest of our Co-editorial team, for their willing service and enthusiasm, without which we would not be celebrating such success for our journal.

The following additional Co-editors have been appointed very recently: Dr Andrew Bond (University of Southern Denmark, Odense, Denmark), Professor Ivan Brito (Universidad de Antofagasto, Chile), Dr Mátyás Czugler (Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest, Hungary), Dr Catharine Esterhuysen (University of Stellenbosch, South Africa), Dr Jan Fábry (Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, Prague, Czech Republic), Dr Andreas Fischer (Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm, Sweden), Professor Maria Gdaniec (A. Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland), Professor Ning-Hai Hu (Chinese Academy of Sciences, Changchun, People's Republic of China), Dr Huub Kooijman (Utrecht University, The Netherlands), Professor Ramaswamy Rajaram (Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, India), Dr Manuela da Silva (Universidade de Coimbra, Portugal) and Professor Bohari Yamin (Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia). We welcome them and hope they will find the work rewarding. This brings the total number of Co-editors to 48, or 50 including the two Section Editors.

In conclusion, we also thank our many authors and readers for your support and interest.