

Group Corporate Membership Introduced

The EPS Interdivisional Group for Experimental Physics Control Systems (EPCS) aims to promote the development of controls systems by working closely with industries and institutes specialising in both hardware and software aspects. The group at present includes a network of contact persons who serve as channels for information and play an active role in setting up joint projects.

Many medium-sized companies and organizations have a keen interest in accessing the Group's know-how, expertise and activities as well as in developing synergies with specialists in the field. The group therefore decided at its last Board meeting in November to introduce Group Corporate Membership for medium-sized organizations and companies with up to about 100 staff members.

Group Corporate Members enjoy certain privileges and each can nominate a contact person who becomes an Individual Ordinary

Member of EPS. They are systematically informed about the EPCS Group and are able to participate in, and help decide upon, the Group's activities. Consequently, they are informed of Board meetings and invited to add to the proposed agenda: they can attend the Board's open sessions and receive the minutes of Board meetings as well as relevant documents issued by other members. They also have free access to membership lists and are encouraged to propose workshops and working groups and to nominate experts to take part in activities.

The minimum annual fee for Group Corporate Membership is set at SFR 500.-. Further information and an application form can be obtained from:

Axel Daneels, Chairman, EPCS-EPS,
AT Division, CERN, CH-1211 Geneva 23
Tel.: +41-22-767 25 81; fax: +41-22-785 10 63;
email: daneels @ cernvm.cern.ch.

BOARD ELECTIONS

Atomic and Molecular Physics Division Chemical Physics Section Molecular Physics Section

Elections to the Board of the Atomic and Molecular Physics Division (AMPD) of EPS and to the Boards of the Division's Sections for Chemical Physics and for Molecular Physics will take place during the 5th European Conference on Atomic and Molecular Physics (ECAMP-5) held in Edinburgh on 3-7 April 1995. Lists of the members of these three Boards were given in *Europhysics News* 25 (1994) 126-126. Most of the members will be replaced since they have served for the maximum period.

Nominations for new members, specifying the Division or Section, that give the name, address and telefax number of the candidate and include a brief supporting statement, should be sent to the AMPD Chair (H. Hotop, Fachbereich Physik, Universität Kaiserslautern, D-67653 Kaiserslautern; fax: +49-631-205 39 06) and arrive by 28 February 1995. The nomination should preferably be accompanied by the candidate's written consent and be endorsed by other members of the AMPD Division.

Information on ECAMP-5 can be obtained from the conference secretary,

Dr. Nigel Mason, Physics Dept., University College, Gower St., London WC1E 6BT, UK
(fax: +44-71-380 71 45; email: ucaps7n @ ucl.ac.uk).

CMD GENERAL CONFERENCE

Joint Events May Be the Answer

As announced briefly last month in *Europhysics News*, the next General Conference of the Condensed Matter Division (CMD) of EPS will take place in 1996 (in Stresa, Italy). P. Wyder, the Division's Chairman, explained why at the EPS Executive Meeting last month in Geneva.

It has proved difficult to consistently attract a large audience to the CMD conference — certainly one that reflects the strength and depth of condensed matter research in Europe. The average attendance of about 600 since the event started to be held annually in 1980 is significantly smaller than for national meetings in large countries (Germany: annual/March/2000-3000 participants; UK: annual/December/850-1000; France: biannual/August/=1000). A CMD working group feels the national events will remain successful because:

- Decisions on research funding are still largely taken at a national level so participants are motivated to attend national events.
- Exposure in seeking posts and information about career opportunities are essentially

nationally-based, especially in condensed matter where relatively few posts exist in large institutes.

- The scientific programme reflects the needs of a tightly knit community.
- The cost to attend can be kept fairly modest as travel distances are limited and local knowledge to organize cheap accommodation is widely available.
- National meetings provide an opportunity to make a first presentation in one's mother tongue.
- Information circulates rapidly these days so younger, more technically active scientists tend to prefer specialised rather than general meetings.

Nonetheless, a European-level general meeting as opposed to say a series of spe-

cialised workshops throughout Europe, remains viable because:

- Smaller countries account for a large number of condensed matter physicists.
- Science is increasingly judged with reference to international standards, so while applications may be processed nationally, one must often convince international panels.
- More and more young physicists leave home to study and work abroad.
- Companies increasingly view their personnel needs in an European if not an international perspective.
- Condensed matter physicists are increasingly involved with major facilities.
- The potential participation is growing as Europe becomes more "equilibrated", economically speaking.
- Sponsorship of European-level events is becoming more readily available.

There have been discussions with the European Materials Research Society (EMRS) to see if a joint meeting was feasible. The EMRS felt parallel events were more appropriate since the materials community takes an integrated view, with conference topics tending to be organized horizontally by application rather than vertically by field. This has many advantages but there are disadvantages, especially when dealing with frontier topics where one needs to focus on precisely formulated issues. Finding common ground in a fairly short time meant that a slightly uncoordinated proposal for support sent to the Euroconferences activity of the EC Human Capital and Mobility Programme was unsuccessful.

It had by now become difficult to organize a high-level meeting for next year. So the CMD Board decided to cancel the 1995 conference, but to continue with the 1996 event in Italy and to explore the possibility of arranging a regular series jointly with the major national meetings. The joint conferences could take place every three years to allow the CMD conference in intervening years to be held in a more peripheral region while profiting from the scale and exposure provided by the joint meetings.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE DECISIONS

The Executive Committee meeting in open and closed sessions in Geneva on 11-12 November decided the following:

- To reduce the number of issues of *Europhysics News* to a minimum of six issues of 20 pages each year (*EN* next year is sent in bulk, and *pro rata* depending on fee payments, to all national societies except the German and UK societies). Meanwhile, ways will be explored to expand the magazine, including collaboration with a commercial publisher.
- To cease operating the East West Coordination Committee in its present form. A meeting with the Presidents of eastern and central European societies to be held early next year in Budapest will decide on future action and a more appropriate form of coordination.
- To endorse guidelines for operating the EPS Solidarity Fund. The Fund earmarks a part of conference fees for use by Division and Groups to develop meetings and schools and to sponsor conference participation.
- To recommend to organizers of EPS conferences that National Society Members (a new category agreed to by the last Council) attending EPS meetings pay the normal fee,

with non-members paying a supplement and EPS Individual Ordinary Members enjoying a reduction.

– To endorse a proposed transformation of the Action Committee for Applied Physics and Physics in Industry into an Interdivisional Group. The proposal, which aims to strengthen Divisional activities in applied physics to encourage physicists in industry to participate, will now be presented to Council.

– To ask the Conference Committee to prepare brief guidelines on how Divisions and Groups should apply to the European Commission for support for conferences.

– To appoint the Register Commission for Professional Qualifications once the number of proposed members is complete. The Working Group on Professional Qualifications has essentially completed all the preparatory work ready for launching the scheme around mid-1995.

Constitution and By-laws

The Council of EPS will have to vote on the following (minor) changes to the *EPS Constitution and By-laws* at its meeting of 24/25 March 1995.

Article 7: Individual members of a national society which has been accepted as an Ordinary Member of EPS may participate in the activities of EPS according to Rules 11 and 29 as National Society Members (NSM's) even if they did not become Individual Ordinary Members of EPS.

Proposed change: after "National Society Members (NSM's)" add "of EPS".

Articles 22.2j) and 24; Rules 25 and 26: Replace "Executive Secretary" by "Secretary General".

Rule 29: Participation in the activities of a Division and/or Interdivisional Group shall be open to Individual Ordinary Members (IOM's) of the Society and to National Society Members (NSM's) according to Article 7 of the *Constitution*, who have stated to the EPS Secretariat their intention to be a member of a Division and /or Interdivisional Group.

Proposed change: after "stated to the EPS Secretariat" add "via their National Society".

Rule 35b): *Proposed addition:* "The total number of copies of *Europhysics News* allocated to National Societies is thus given by (contribution paid minus students contribution)/unit fee plus number of students".

PHYSICS ACTION COUNCIL

Firming up on Specifics

UNESCO's Director-General agreed last year to create a Physics Action Council (PAC) in order to stress the importance of physics as a cultural, scientific and educational resource which can enrich both the quality of life and national economies. Operating as an advisory panel, PAC aims to promote the widest possible participation of physicists in international programmes by examining the situation and recommending actions to both the physics community and UNESCO (in the framework of the organization's two- and five-year plans). The Council would essentially help the international physics community in these critical times to harmonise and coordinate approaches towards a variety of major issues.

The initiative emerged from a consultative meeting held in Paris in June 1993 that pinpointed physics in developing countries, sustaining excellence in east and central Europe and the former Soviet Union, and large-scale projects as priorities. The meeting recommended that programmes involve partnerships between governmental and non-governmental organizations, and that learned societies and the like play a major role as concerted action from the base is needed to develop a consensus for action. With these general principles in mind, three UNESCO-supported working groups were set up following the PAC's first meeting last June.

The groups were able to report on some concrete items at the Council's second meeting in Cancun, Mexico, in September. Details concerning the interest and need for large facilities in developing countries is lacking, so the Working Group on **Large Facilities** chaired by H. Schopper has asked organizations in the region for information about major projects in their various phases (operational, planning, discussion). The information will provide a firm basis for identifying appropriate programmes and potential partners, as well as ways to train experts and to enhance links between academia and industry.

The group also believes that workshops are needed to allow projects in a given-sub field to be presented to the entire physics community so as to reach agreement, at least on the scientific merits, across a broad

base (most existing coordination bodies tend to limit consensus-building activities within a given sub-field). Developing such an approach may need additional coordination to be established in various fields by building on recognized starting points (many of which were discussed at September's *EPS Large Facilities in Physics Conference*).

Finally there is the issue of access to facilities: the ground-rules are moving as government's respond to a changed political climate and apparently reduced public support for the physical sciences. Guidelines for access need to be established that reflect specific requirements in various fields.

True to the spirit of its work, the Working Group on **Communication Networks** chaired by I.A. Lerch (American Physical Society) has set up a pilot computer conferencing system to help out. But the main effort will obviously be spent tackling problems in regions where such things are much more difficult to establish. The group thinks that it can help launch so-called Pilot Network Projects (PNP) for academic and research networks, notably in South America and the former Soviet Union. A PNP funded by the UN Development Programme and the International Science Foundation has recently reached agreement with Ukraine's EARN organization to develop an Internet network, with international connections provided by EARN-Ukraine. Such an approach may help circumvent the privately owned and reportedly avaricious RELCOM organization that handles Internet traffic in Russia. The group's analysis — particularly information relating to excessive traffic charges — will be incorporated into an intergovernmental conference on telecommunications that UNESCO is organizing in 1996.

The Working Group on **University Physics Education** chaired by M. Konuma (Physical Society of Japan) faces a wide range of major topics, mainly because university systems differ so much around the world. Distilling out and identifying priorities by its next meeting will itself represent progress, as well as providing a unique insight into global issues in what has up to now been largely a national and uncoordinated realm of physics.

Internationally sponsored research training is perhaps the most visible and successful aspect today of physics education. The International Centre for Theoretical Physics in Trieste has been proposed by many as the basis for an expanding group of cooperating "Triestinos", and one can perhaps build on the various international schools (e.g., the EPS Southern School and the International Schools of Physics in China and Russia). Similar initiatives are needed at other levels where it may be possible, for instance, to exploit modern technology in using networks to create a virtual university.

The PAC aims to submit a final report to UNESCO's Director-General at the end of 1995, together with recommendations on how the Council may evolve into a permanent body that unifies national and international instruments in physics. Some PAC members argue that a specialised United Nations agency would be the ideal, if ambitious, answer.

Statement in Support of LHC

In the past 40 years CERN, the European Organization for Particle Physics Research, has succeeded in bringing Europe to a position of leadership in the study of fundamental interactions. This is testified by the important number of CERN users coming from outside Europe, and in particular from the United States. At the same time, the number of users from Member States has more than doubled over the past 20 years.

The next logical step towards decisive progress in the field is the LHC. This machine is a 27 km in circumference superconducting proton collider which is foreseen to be installed in the same tunnel as the existing LEP machine. LHC will be the world frontier of high-energy physics; with a 14 TeV collision energy it will be in an unique position to provide answers to new fundamental questions raised by the present great successes of particle physics and cosmology.

The European Physical Society strongly supports this essential project for Europe which will allow to further the excellence of research on the ultimate constituents of matter and keep the momentum of CERN and Europe in this area. Worried by recent delays, the EPS urges the CERN Member State governments to quickly take a positive decision to approve the LHC.

*Geneva and Budapest
1 November 1994*

G. Jarlskog
Chairman, EPS-HEPP Division

N. Kroó
EPS President