

International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry
Meeting of the Editorial Advisory Board for *Pure and Applied Chemistry*
IUPAC General Assembly

09h00 08 August 2007

Turin, Italy

Present: D. StC. Black *Secretary-General* (Chair)

M Chorgade (arr. 10h30, on behalf of P. W. Erhardt *Div. VII- Chemistry and Human Health*)

A D. McNaught *Div. VIII- Chem. Nomencl. & Structural Rep.* (also, on behalf of J. W. Lorimer *ICTNS*)

J. R. Bull *Scientific Editor, Pure Appl. Chem.*

L. Glasser *CPEP*

L. K. Sydnes *Invited member*

In attendance: J. W. Jost *Secretariat*

Apologies: R. F. T. Stepto, H. K. J. Powell, P. W. Erhardt, J. W. Lorimer. No responses were received from representatives of Divisions I, II, III, and VI.

1. Introduction and Finalization of the Agenda

Professor Black welcomed those present, but the absence of representation from most Divisions was noted with regret. Discussion ensued on the feasibility of conducting a meaningful forum in these circumstances, for evaluation and promotion of the content and scientific standards of *Pure and Applied Chemistry (PAC)*. It was agreed that the meeting would proceed and that the pre-circulated agenda would be followed, taking note of a few additional sub-items arising from discussions prior to the meeting.

The poor attendance suggests that the composition and function of the Board, and the timing of its meetings, need to be reconsidered. The primary purpose of establishing and maintaining communication between the Scientific Editor and Divisions may necessitate an alternative approach, which will be investigated.

2. Matters arising from minutes of the Beijing EAB Meeting, 09 August 2005

Following a brief discussion of §4.2 of the 2005 meeting, it was agreed that no purpose would be served by revisiting listed items, or that they could be raised in the ensuing agenda.

However, it is noted for the record that ‘Membership’ was previously listed as a separate agenda item, but can be assimilated as a standing item under ‘Matters Arising’, for updating where necessary. There are no individual nominations in hand, but the outgoing President is a candidate for *ex officio* appointment, if willing, during his term as Immediate Past-President. Divisional representation will need to be updated for the forthcoming biennium, in compliance with EAB Standing Orders.

3. Report of the Scientific Editor

3.1 Progress Report 2006-2007

The contents of the latest annual Report of the Scientific Editor (pre-circulated to EAB members) were taken as read, and the following matters were highlighted for ongoing attention:

- Should IUPAC Reports and Recommendations continue to be published in *PAC*? Although *PAC* has hitherto fulfilled this role, certain compilations appear to be particularly out of place, and raise the question about more effective ways of facilitating access to their content. For example, glossaries and dictionaries do not conform to conventional *PAC* content, and may be more useful and searchable as web-based resources. The cautionary note was added, that authors of Reports and Recommendations are entitled to expect publication credit for such contributions, and it was agreed that it would be desirable to consult widely before considering any departure from current *PAC* policy and practice.
- The future of Special Topics was discussed briefly. The current practice will continue, whereby selected themes are identified for in-depth coverage, based upon evidence of topicality and readership potential. The terminology is perhaps somewhat inexplicit, and members are invited to offer thoughts on more appropriate and promotional alternatives to 'special topic'.
- The Manuscript Central system is generally operating at a satisfactory level, although some features are time-demanding and amenable to further refinement. It was agreed that goals and areas for attention should be further discussed (JRB and JWJ), and that future attendance (JRB) at a MC user conference might be advantageous.
- The question of feedback to reviewers was discussed. All reviewers receive a standard message of appreciation upon receipt of their reports and recommendations, and the online system makes provision for reviewers to request the opportunity to re-examine revised manuscripts. In practice, such requests are subject to editorial discretion, particularly in cases of minor revision. However, external evaluation of revised manuscripts may be undertaken when major revision has been recommended or in cases where recommendations for substantive revision are disputed by authors. It was noted that all steps should be taken to ensure that the important and sometimes unappreciated role of reviewers is fully recognized.

Further items having a bearing on *PAC* content and procedures are recorded under discrete agenda items in para. 4.

3.2 Citation Analysis 2007

The contents of the latest annual Citation Analysis (pre-circulated to EAB members) were taken as read.

3.3 Work in Progress and Planning

The status of plans for coverage of 2008 events was outlined briefly.

4. Editorial Policy and Practice

4.1 Traditional Event Coverage in *PAC*

The Scientific Editor expressed concern about the lack of information on certain biennial events that were expected to take place during 2008 but had not yet featured in formal applications for IUPAC sponsorship. He drew attention to the need to nurture regular events that constitute traditional sources of *PAC* coverage, by ensuring that organizers are briefed on the need for timely sponsorship application and formulation of appropriate publication plans.

4.2 Fixed-Venue and Regional Event Coverage

Discussion of this agenda item was deferred.

4.3 Subject Areas for Attention

This is a fixed agenda item that serves as a standing reminder to Divisions to identify new opportunities for expanding areas for *PAC* coverage - either based on initiating or reviving appropriate theme events or undertaking *ad hoc* projects in new and developing areas of chemistry.

4.4 Replicate Publication

At the request of the Scientific Editor, the EAB confirmed for the record that *PAC* adheres to conventional copyright and ethical norms, and does not engage in replicate publication. Accordingly, any past departures from this policy are inadvertent aberrations that will not be condoned in future.

4.5 Style Guide

It was noted that Professor Lorimer is presently engaged in preparing a more comprehensive style guide for authors.

4.6 Supplementary Material

In response to recent inquiries from authors, a supplementary material service will be implemented. Authors will be offered the option to submit such material in support of findings in the work intended for conventional publication. Current 'Instructions to Authors' will be amended accordingly, and provision will be made for web site access to supplementary material by readers. Inauguration of the service will follow the launch of the revised *PAC* web site.

4.7 Referencing System

The question of a preferred referencing system in *PAC* has been revived, following an inquiry from authors of an IUPAC Report, arguing in favour of including paper titles. This practice is still unusual in chemistry journals, although there are a few notable exceptions. Furthermore, ICTNS is divided on the question of a preferred practice, and the Scientific Editor of *P11 January 2008*/*11 January 2008AC* is opposed to arbitrary trend setting or usage of different styles at the discretion of authors. Accordingly, the current practice will be retained, but it was agreed that authors can augment their published reference lists with more detailed versions (including paper titles and so on) for deposition as supplementary material.

4.8 Colour Illustrations

Present *PAC* practice is to publish colour illustrations at the request and for the account of authors, since free availability of colour on demand is impractical and unaffordable. This practice will be retained, but authors will now be offered the option of free deposition of colour illustrations in supplementary material. .

4.9 General

- It was agreed that *PAC* should be seen as a champion of the International Chemical Identifier project ('InChI'). EAB therefore supports a proposal for a CPEP project to generate InChI terms for chemical structures featuring in the *PAC* archive, and to maintain an ongoing service for future issues.
- In the absence of a more representative forum, the request from CPEP for the EAB to consider the implications of the 'decline in print' of scientific publications, with reference to *PAC* [CPEP meeting 14-16 July 2006, minute 6.3], was deferred. However, EAB members are invited to submit written opinions and suggestions.
- The Scientific Editor drew attention to the need for succession planning in his task, with a view to identifying candidates who may eventually be willing to understudy the role during any future transition period. This item is placed on record for attention when the need arises.
- An opinion was expressed that some ICTNS draft documents are poorly presented, and should perhaps be subjected to copy editing prior to final approval. ICTNS will be invited to comment.
- Suggestions to promote the image and awareness of *PAC* include communication with subscribers, for example, through a brochure to accompany renewal notices, containing information about citation performance, special topics and advanced features of the revised *PAC* web site.