

## The Publications Year in Review

As we are all painfully aware, 1975 was another year of continuing inflation. It marked also the first widely publicized cases of financial crises in organizations in both the private and public sectors. In this environment it should be no surprise to our readers that financial issues were the primary topic of discussion this year in both the Publications Committee and in the AIAA headquarters staff planning sessions. The issue, of course, is to maintain the quality of our publications while attempting to maintain revenues and contain costs in the increasingly difficult economic environment. With regard to quality, be assured that those of us responsible for the technical content of the journals have not changed, and will not change, our publications' standards.

On the revenue side of the journal financial picture, there are three sources of income: member subscriptions (at \$7.00 per year for *JSR*, nonmember subscriptions (at \$69 per year for *JSR*, and reprint and page charges. (Note that none of the cost of the journals comes from member dues.) For the *Journal of Spacecraft and Rockets* in the last fiscal year, these three sources represented, respectively, 12, 48, and 40% of the total revenue. Unfortunately, there has been a downward trend in the past few years in the percentage of voluntary page charges actually paid. Since this is such a substantial part of the revenue available to the journals, the page charge was a subject of much discussion in the Publications Committee this year. After lengthy debate about the unfairness of some authors having their work published at no cost, while others honored the page charges, the critical need for the additional revenue vs the potential decrease in paper submittals and journal quality, and other related issues, the Committee voted against the implementation of compulsory page charges. This action, which was taken primarily to protect the quality and competitive stance of the journals, was confirmed by the AIAA Board of Directors at its October meeting.

Page charge revenue, nevertheless, remains a necessary and increasingly important source of revenue for the journals. Indeed, it is essential to the continuance of a quality technical journal at a price that individuals can afford. For this reason all authors whose organizations or programs can incur the cost should see to it that page charges are authorized for their papers. All should be aware that all government contracts permit such charges. Each should take the necessary steps within his own organization to be sure his employer institutes a policy of honoring page charges, and to assure commitment of funds for this purpose before expiration of the contract under which the work was performed. These are important steps in avoiding a financial crisis in all technical society publications.

Turning next to the expenses part of the financial issue, I have somewhat remarkable news to report. This is the fact that the cost per page to publish our journals remained essentially constant again last year. Indeed, this has been the case for the past five years. The accomplishment of this feat in today's economic environment and in the face of the associated increases in the cost of raw materials and manpower is a tribute to the management skill of Ruth Bryans, AIAA Director of Scientific Publications, and others of the staff.

Computer controlled, photo-typeset, in-house composition of all four technical journals was begun this year. The first issue of the *Journal of Spacecraft and Rockets* to be composed in this fashion was the February edition. This major change in the mechanics of our operation was undertaken in an effort to reduce publication costs and to provide some direct control over, and protection against, the upward spiral of composition expenses. Composition of *Astronautics & Aeronautics* was begun by this means at our New York headquarters in 1971 and has contributed greatly to cost savings. In order to compose the journals, however, it was necessary to develop a special set of mathematical symbols and computer programs for setting equations. This pioneering exercise, which is due to the ingenuity and many overtime hours of David Staiger, Stanley Beiler, and their staff, resulted in the first in-house computer controlled technical typesetting done anywhere.

Unfortunately, as with any new technology, there has been a considerable learning, training, and development process. This has caused a slip in delivery schedules of an additional three months beyond the one month that was incurred previously by sending manuscripts overseas for composition. (This latter move was made in 1972 in an earlier cost reduction effort.) To recover this time, a faster machine has been ordered to replace the one now in operation, and the operating personnel has been temporarily doubled. At this writing (Christmas week, 1975) an acceleration of the schedule has been measured, and the staff expects to return to the normal schedule early in 1976. The date of your receipt of this issue will be a measure of the success or failure of this expectation. Because of these problems, the cost and time savings have not yet been fully realized. The commercial costs for composition, however, are continuing to rise sharply and we should have established an important position to effect considerable savings in the future.

Another trend attributable to the economic environment began to appear in the *Journal of Spacecraft and Rockets* this year: a downturn in the number of papers submitted for publication. Although this is perhaps largely due to the decreasing national interest in space programs and the associated cutback in funding in this area, it is disturbing to note a downward trend in the number of papers coming from funded programs such as the Space Shuttle. I encourage potential authors in these areas to prepare and submit papers for consideration. Your work is important to others in the same and related areas.

In this issue appears a list of indispensable people — our reviewers for the past year. Without the time and effort volunteered by them the archive journal system could not exist. We again extend our thanks to them.

In closing, I am pleased to note that Dr. R. H. Woodward Waesche of the United Technologies Research Center has joined the masthead as Associate Editor. He has filled the vacancy created by the retirement of Dr. Francis W. French, who held this time-consuming, grueling position for six years. Such service is beyond what the society should expect of one man and, in thanking him for this tenure, I wish him great enjoyment and success with the time that is being returned to his busy schedule.

Donald C. Fraser  
Editor-in-Chief