NEWSLETTER

March 2000

Operational Research Society of New Zealand (Inc.), PO Box 6544, Wellesley St. Auckland, New Zealand
http://www.esc.auckland.ac.nz/Organisations/ORSNZ/

EDITORIAL

Returning from a period overseas always presents the opportunity to reflect on the positive aspects of our lives in New Zealand, and how we might seek to create greater good by learning from what others do.

Since I have just returned from leave, sandwiched between the 29th and 30th annual conferences of the Decision Science Institute, at Las Vegas and New Orleans respectively, I would like to offer some views specifically related to our US sister operation.

My lasting impressions about the DSI and its conference relate to its catholic nature, embracing not only OR/MS academics and practitioners, but others from various fields of management, marketing, accounting etc; and its provision of workshops: doctoral, professional development workshops, case-writing and even workshops on TOC and other half/whole day sessions on for example the use of spreadsheets in the teaching of OR/MS.

DSI presentation sessions are organised so that "discussants", who receive advance copies of papers, can review and offer their constructive comments on papers following presentations.

Case sessions are organised similarly, so that discussants can prepare to provide constructive feedback on presented cases – in a collegial, supportive and non-competitive manner.

There are prizes for "innovative educators", best case and best papers in specific streams – the intention being to signal worthy contributions across a wide range of scholarship.

However, these latter two points, relating to recognition and support, contrast with my impression of life within universities, where, especially within the UK, and driven by the regular Research Assessment Exercises, publications in "top" international journals have become almost the only basis of recognition and reward for individuals and departments, driving academics into self-seeking, non-collegial, careerist behaviours.

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Publication dates: March, June, September, December
Deadline for submissions: on the 15th of February, May, August, November (for following month's issue)
Send submissions as word attachments by email to Production Manager, Tricia.Lapham@vuw.ac.nz

This leads to the question of what do we want as members of ORSNZ? As a professional body, we seek to be a supportive community, and our conferences have in the main, provided a suitably non-threatening, but challenging environment for the critical exchange of ideas.

I believe we can do more by endorsing and adopting some of the best practices of the DSI. The organisers of this year's Wellington conference welcome your opinion on these matters. It is appropriate that we should get your input to help decide whether and how to use the conference to provide us with suitable opportunity to develop ORSNZ even more as a supportive professional community.

JOHN DAVIES, Victoria University of Wellington, e mail: John.Davies@vuw.ac.nz

ORSNZ HANS DAELLENBACH PRIZE

To honour the considerable contributions of Emeritus Professor Hans Daellenbach to OR/MS in New Zealand, the ORSNZ has established the ORSNZ Hans Daellenbach Prize. The purpose of this award is to elicit, recognise and reward outstanding examples of management science and operations research in New Zealand, and to encourage their dissemination in the international literature. Candidates for the prize must be members of ORSNZ. The prize is accompanied by a (NZ)$1,000 honorarium, and winners must give a plenary address on the relevant work at the ORSNZ Conference in the year of the award. The Daellenbach prize is awarded every two years at most. The next Hans Daellenbach Prize is due to be awarded at the 36th Annual ORSNZ Conference in 2001.

Application Process:

Applicants should send the ORSNZ Council a one-page or two-page typed summary that describes what they have accomplished, in enough detail to let the selection panel judge the appropriateness of their work for the competition. Entrants will be expected to report on a body of innovative OR/MS work in New Zealand, with international recognition as evidenced by publication. Citations of publications supporting the application should be included in the summary, and copies of the relevant papers should also be forwarded with the application.

Nominations for the award may also be forwarded by members of the ORSNZ, in which case Council will advise the nominees that their names have been put forward, and invite them to consider applying. In order for the nominees to have sufficient time to put together their applications, any such nominations should be sent to Council at least one month before applications close.

Any work that has been done in recent years is eligible unless it has already been recognised by a Daellenbach Prize. Anyone is eligible for the competition except members of the judging panel.

Timetable :

Nomination deadline	March 31, 2001
Application deadline	April 30, 2001
Presentation and award announced	June Newsletter, 2001
Award ceremony and keynote address	ORSNZ Conference, 2001

NEWS FROM AUCKLAND

THE 34TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF ORSNZ 99

December 10-11, 1999 -The University of Waikato

With a subtitle of "OR in the New Millennium", the 34th Annual Conference of the Operational Research Society of New Zealand held at the University of Waikato on December 10th and 11th, was always going to be special. And indeed it was. It was the first ORSNZ conference to be held at the new date in December, and the last of our conferences of the 20th century. The Waikato organising committee made sure that we entered the next millennium with both style and substance, with a very memorable and rewarding conference.

The opening address by Professor Bryan Gould was encouraging in indicating that our work is of immense value to the wider community, even if the nature of it seemed to be poorly understood. Making our contributions more publically recognized is itself a challenge for us for the next millennium, but recognition and appreciation come from understanding, and the real challenge for us and others is to contribute to the development of a nation that is numerate and analytical enough to enable this.

What form will OR/MS take in the new millennium? This was the subject of a number of talks at the conference beginning with the plenary address of Professor Mike Rothkopf. Professor Rothkopf, in a fitting finale to a successful tour of New Zealand as a 1999 ORSNZ Visiting Lecturer, confronted this question by looking at the historical development of the subject as an indicator to its future. An obvious lesson is that nearly all forecasts will be wrong. However the past can help us by identifying essential features of OR/MS that has enabled it to grow. What has been essential about OR/MS in the past is its ability to meet and tackle complex decision problems. If this feature is preserved, then the ability to attack new challenges and new problems will be a strength of OR/MS as we enter a very uncertain future.

The second plenary address was a special talk given by Professor Hans Daellenbach organised as a special tribute to honour him on his recent retirement. This talk also chose to review the future of OR/MS by looking at its past, but in the spirit of the multi-media age made use of a virtual (verbal) time machine. In a series of entertaining historical vignettes he reminded us of some of the important milestones of OR/MS. These are all exciting inspiring stories that we should continue to circulate and tell our students. In true Daellenbach style, the narrative was cleverly constructed, and ended with a characteristic twist. (A transcript of the address is included elsewhere in this edition of the Newsletter).

The third of the plenary addresses was given by Professor John Taplin. His talk gave an overview on simulation models for traffic flow. This seems to be a subject of somewhat neglected importance in the New Zealand OR/MS community. However this situation should not be allowed to continue, as traffic congestion is becoming increasingly wasteful. Professor Taplin presented a comprehensive and complete overview of the state of the art of traffic simulation models. An interesting observation by him was the rise of microsimulation (in which every vehicle is modelled individually) as a means of modelling complex interactions between vehicles. This is I believe an interesting trend that we will see emerging in other fields of OR/MS modelling. I was particularly impressed by the papers by Gary Horne and Michael Lauren at the conference on the military application of microsimulation.

Equally impressive were the Dynamis Young Practitioner papers. The presentations were all professional and understandable – the senior members of our fraternity should observe closely. However what impressed me most was the maturity and confidence with which the candidates addressed and answered questions, some of which were curly enough to leave this reviewer embarrassed for an answer. The winner of the prize, with a talk on optimising the changing of felts on paper machines, was Catherine Hicks from the Department of Engineering Science at the University of Auckland, and runner up was Bert Chen from the same department.

The prizes for the best paper by a young OR/MS practitioner were awarded at the PHB-Hagler Bailly Banquet held at Bryant Hall on the Waikato campus on Friday evening. The dinner was an enormous success, with excellent food accompanied by some good music, and humorous speeches. A spot prize event to encourage banqueters to mingle was a new innovation that we expect will catch on.

The other main innovation of 1999 was a panel discussion for the last session of the conference. With the stated aim of predicting the future of OR/MS in 2040, the prospect of speaking (or listening) at this discussion should have scared most participants away. However everyone showed up to hear John Scott from Waikato ably lead a lively and amusing debate, at which he adjudicated as master of the hypothetical between devil's advocate Grant Read and the rest of the panel – Vicky Mabin, Les Foulds and Andy Philpott.

To summarise, this was an excellent conference. The Society is grateful to the organisers and the sponsors for making this happen. The conference was informal and not overwhelmingly large, and provided a good snapshot of a lot of the innovative OR/MS work being carried in New Zealand. I hope that practitioners continue to come to this conference, and are not discouraged from giving talks. It was great to hear Graeme Everett talk about the practical difficulties of implementing his steam plan optimisation model, and listening to the good work being done by Viago Ltd. It would be wonderful if we could hear more talks about the OR/MS being done in PHB/Hagler Bailler. My urge to all our members and others is to continue the momentum and come to Wellington this December (provisionally 1st and 2nd) for the ORSNZ 2000 Conference.

ANDY PHILPOTT, University of Auckland, email:a.philpott@auckland.ac.nz

DAELLENBACH BECOMES HONORARY LIFE MEMBER OF ORSNZ

At the 34th Annual Conference of ORSNZ in December, Emeritus Professor Hans Daellenbach was granted an Honorary Life Membership of ORSNZ in recognition of his contributions to OR/MS in New Zealand over the past thirty years. The recently retired Daellenbach came to New Zealand at the end of the sixties, and rapidly established Operations Research as a subject at Canterbury University. He was appointed to a personal chair in 1988. Professor Daellenbach has had a huge influence on the development of OR/MS in New Zealand, through his original thinking, his forthright articles in the literature, his tireless efforts in promoting ORSNZ, and his legacy of rigorously trained OR/MS professionals that have been educated in Canterbury's Department of Management and its forerunners over the past thirty years.

ANDY PHILPOTT, University of Auckland, email:a.philpott@auckland.ac.nz

AIR NEW ZEALAND BECOMES EDELMAN FINALIST

In the first week of January this year, the rostering and scheduling group at Air New Zealand led by Professor David Ryan of the Department of Engineering Science at the University of Auckland were chosen as finalists in the 29th Annual Franz Edelman Competition awarded by INFORMS for achievement in Operations Research and the Management Sciences. Professor Ryan will give an address at a special session of the Spring meeting of INFORMS in Salt Lake City, May 7-10, 2000. The winner of the Franz Edelman Prize will then be announced at the conference. Finalist work will be published in the January 2001 issue of Interfaces.

Being named a finalist in the Edelman Award is a great honour for Professor Ryan and his group. The rostering and scheduling project at Air New Zealand, which has been running for 15 years and involved many postgraduate and undergraduate contributors, uses state-of-the-art integer programming techniques to construct tours of duty and rosters for air crew and cabin crew on Air New Zealand flights. The techniques developed have allowed the solution of previously intractable problems and have generated huge savings for Air New Zealand. In February last year Professor Ryan and his group were awarded the IPENZ Excellence Award for Information Technology and Networks Engineering.

Editor's note: I have also heard via the OR/MS international grapevine that Professor Ryan's keynote speech at IFORS in Beijing last year was first class! So we wish him all the best for the May INFORMS presentation.

ANDY PHILPOTT, University of Auckland, email:a.philpott@auckland.ac.nz

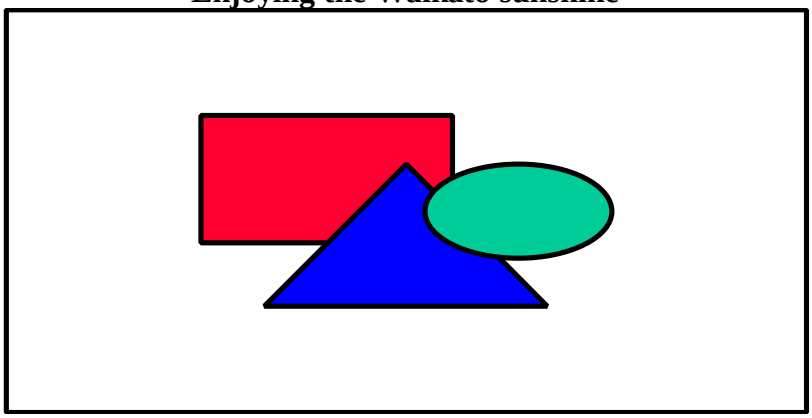
WAIKATO NEWS

THE 34th ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF ORSNZ AT WAIKATO UNIVERSITY

By all accounts the conference was a success. We had excellent plenary speakers, high quality presentations, a good mix between practice and theory, positive sponsorship, and the food was pretty good too. More importantly, there was (at least in the view of the conference chairman – who wrote this little piece) a considerable amount of mixing among the conferees and a sense of camaraderie. Circumstances prevented long time ORSNZ conferee Hugh Barr from attending this time, but we hope this instance will remain an exception. Some effort was made to publicize the conference internationally and we received a fair amount of overseas interest in the conference; and a few actually came. Eleven countries were represented in the final analysis. This publicity, which is quite inexpensive, helped to raise the profile of ORSNZ internationally.

The timing of the conference was different, being in December, and the OR Council resolved that the 2000 meeting would again be late in the year. The 2000 conference will be held at Victoria University, Wellington, New Zealand. See Meetings calendar for details.

Enjoying the Waikato sunshine



Conference attendees

JOHN BUCHANAN, Waikato University, email: jtb@mngt.waikato.ac.nz

SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PAST AND FUTURE OF OR/MS

On the occasion of ORSNZ'99 at the University of Waikato I was asked to present my views of the past of OR/MS and of what the future might hold. For a while I toyed with the idea of creating a rich picture, capturing some of its major historical events. But I quickly filled a page with cartoon drawings and had not even reached the 70's schism between the hard-core math freaks and the soft-core systems thinking gurus. And there were still the dozens of exciting new math developments (some already destined for the dustbin) as well as all those fringe schools of thought that consider themselves part of management science - these methods, methodologies, and paradigms, such as Japanese quality control and Kaizen, SWOT analysis, TQM, FDP, Bus. Re-engineering I, II, and III, giving rise to a whole flood of fads, repackaging the same concepts in different wrappings, vying in quick succession for our attention and fortunately replacing each other equally fast. Also let's not forget the perennials, the survivors, such as Eli Goldratt's TOC, which went through several names and chameleon transformations, starting out as a computerized production scheduling technique (now referred to as 'small OPT'), then becoming an ongoing improvement approach ('big OPT'), and ultimately blossoming into biblical proportions, enveloping all human behaviour in organizations, including our marriages. Listening to some of its proponents I always have to pinch myself to make sure I did not stumble by mistake into one of those American evangelical happenings, where all our past and future sins will be stricken off the record if we only donate $20,000 to the movement. So I gave up on creating a giant rich picture on OR.

When I recently celebrated my daughter handing in her PhD thesis after many years of toil I mentioned my little dilemma, and she immediately suggested that if I wanted to be up-to-date I had to create a CAV. Did I want to be up-to-date? What a question! So, naively I asked, what is a CAV? A computer animated video, she answered, giving me a surprised look.

Naturally, as most brilliant ideas, it came a bit late to be implemented. (The curse of OR haunting me even in my retirement? The brilliant solution being ready after the problem lost its relevance?) But I wasn't willing to give up on such a brilliant idea. Isn't imagination and innovative ways of looking at the world one of the strengths of OR? So I decided to have recourse to one of my tools: Simulation. I was going to ask my audience to animate in virtual reality this CAV in the privacy of their own brains. They could make it as saucy and outrageous as they wanted. For best effect, all they really needed to do was to make themselves comfortable, lean back in their seats, close their eyes and just let the images rise in their mind as I talked. So here it is:

Let's skip the initial credits. Your first vision is 1912. Denmark. An old-fashioned telephone switchboard - you know, hundred of pegs hooked into a board, a bevy of pretty telephone operators with curly hair, plugging these pegs in and out and in and out, and this lanky Danish engineer trying to seduce them with Erlang distributions. Didn't he know that this was not the way to a young woman's heart?

Next, transport yourself into one of those smoky dance halls in New York, Chicago, or Philadelphia, the in-thing after WWI. You know, the swinging 20s! Women in pastel coloured, slinky, flat-look dresses, holding daintily a long cigarette holder, the smoke of the joint sinuously rising to the ceiling. A few couples dancing the bebop and the Charleston. The girls talking about their difficulties of procuring silk stockings, and there comes along Harris, another engineer, or was it Wilson, telling them that the most economic solution to all their 'stocking' problems was to be found in the square root formula.

Your next image: an upstairs parlour in one of those patrician houses in Berlin, the correct, stiff and formal German high society of the late 20s. 1928 to be exact. Monocled gentlemen still sporting black waxed mustaches, 20 years after the British gave up on that idea. Well-endowed Brunhildes of Wagner's 'Die Götterdämmerung'. Hans Von Neumann watching two card players pit their bluffing skills against each other. Hans suddenly touching his forehead, excusing himself and rushing to his oak desk and writing his famous paper: 'Die Theorie der Gesellschaftsspiele', or for you lot who only know half a dozen German words, like Weltanschauung, Gestalt, Angst, Abseil, and Wienerschnitzel, often seen in butcher stores as 'Weinerschmitzel', you just witnessed the birth of Game Theory. Dantzig claims that he owes much to the mathematics of von Neumann.

The scene now darkens. You walk down a deserted street on a dreary, humid Moscow winter's night in early 1939. For economy reasons, only every third street lamp is lit. This is Stalin's dark ages. You enter one of the imposing palaces, a bit run down now, walk up the wide staircase and down a dimly lit corridor. You enter a small cramped room, illuminated by only a bare 25-watt bulb, hanging on a crooked wire from the flaking ceiling, and see Kantorovich busily writing a paper on linear models. What you don't know is that these are the first blooms of linear programming. And then you briefly flash forward some 20 years, the same bleary office, Kantorovich now a graying gentleman in a rather threadbare suit. Absent-minded, he opens the bottom drawer of his old desk to look for something, not really remembering any more what it is, and what does he find? That paper of 1939, showing that he invented the single most powerful tool of OR. Alas this missed proof of the superiority of Communist science comes after Dantzig had already gotten all the glory for it in 1947.

Then you go back to a stuffy WW II bomb shelter in London. A group of scientists from various disciplines huddle over a table to work out ways to sink German U-boats. Every few minutes they stop briefly, look anxiously to the low ceiling and listen to the faint eerie whistle of a V2-bomb hurtling overhead, assured that as long as they can hear it, they know they are still alive. Next, the Atom bombs to end all wars, a short-lived peace and the beginning of the cold war. Dantzig trying to help the US airforce with their transportation problems, re-inventing LP, and despairing that it would take a lifetime to find the optimal solution to any real-life sized problem. In fact, to comprehend the enormousness of his problem, see yourself, arms outstretched like Batman, flying around a 20-storey skyscraper, its sides covered completely by thousands upon thousands of equations needed to represent the problem. And then you find yourself suddenly in utter darkness, sweeping to the distant light at the end of the tunnel, into a room containing the first scientific IBM computer, with thousands of valves the size of light bulbs, the machine leaving just enough space for the operator to squeeze along the walls. But people, this is the needed breakthrough, the hope for all future math programming. Lo and behold, this machine is capable of solving a 10 source by 20 destination problem in about a day of computing. You get the picture.

To cut a long story short, fast forward to the year 2048. Mi Young Wu is beamed from her galactic starship to the ruins of Los Angeles, the latest historic theme park of Disneyland. She materializes inside the former UCLA in front of a dilapidated building. Over a door is a sign, saying 'Department of Operations Research'. She wonders what it means and calls up the remote information bank to which her brain is permanently hooked on, and asks for an image of what the encyclopaedia Universalis shows for the term. What flashes up in her mind? 'Operations research, also known as "operational research" or "management science", was a scientific movement that flourished in the second half of the 20th century as an approach to decision making. It was based on the fallacy that optimal solutions to decision problems in fact existed. It attempted to express problems mainly in quantitative form, using computationally inefficient, slow, and cumbersome methods to derive pseudo-solutions. Some of their ideas have been integrated into the hardware and software of present-day electronic brain enhancer attachments. Its simpler ideas, such as systems thinking and mutual causality, have become part of primary education.'

HANS DAELLENBACH, University of Canterbury,
e-mail: h.daellenbach@mang.canterbury.ac.nz

STUDY TOUR OF NEW ZEALAND

Sixteen students in Industrial Engineering and Management Science from the Eindhoven University of Technology, The Netherlands will be in New Zealand for 3 months from April 2000. Anyone interested in offering any of these students practical work place training please contact on
email:E.S.Beurskens@stud.tue.nl

DITCH THAT NERDY IMAGE!

Facilitation skills can greatly enhance an operational researcher's effectiveness

We OR/Management Science specialists tend not to have confidence in our people skills. We're good at handling data. We're analytical. We find it easy to get to grips with technology and software. On the other hand, we can be uncomfortable in unstructured situations, and we can become impatient with people who prevaricate or don't seem to act rationally.

Our lack of confidence in our people skills can lead to us seeking out and taking satisfaction on "back office" roles. We become the experts in techniques that are intimidating, in name and substance, to lesser mortals. From our point of view, they don't understand the intellectual challenges that we relish. They can't appreciate the intense satisfaction to be gained from the elegant simplicity of the model that emerges as our efforts bear fruit. From their point of view, we're anoraks and objects of fun:

Q. How do you tell the difference between an introvert and an extrovert OR scientist?

A. The extrovert looks at your shoes when he's talking to you.

Am I exaggerating? Yes, of course. But there's a grain of truth here. Why are we more successful in supporting the middle managers in an organisation, people with well-defined operational problems, than in supporting more senior management with their messy challenges? Why is our work and contribution so often poorly understood, under-appreciated and under-valued (check out the day-rates for contract work!)?

My response to these questions is clear from the above. I think it's about the way we approach people. And I think we suffer more from a lack of confidence than a lack of ability.

Our analytical strengths are based on thinking skills that I know can be used in simple conversation. My experience is that we can add enormous value for our clients by applying our analytical approach in the process of discussion with them. But paradoxically, in such a conversation, we need to see ourselves as facilitators of their thinking process rather than seekers of information to enhance our own understanding. So if we use our analytical curiosity to help our client to articulate and recognise what they know, and to identify what gaps or questions they have, we add significant value. It can also be liberating to us to know that in this process we don't have to have the answers (or questions!) in advance. And building confidence in this ability (that we already have) enhances both our flexibility and our effectiveness.

So increased confidence in our people skills, and a small shift in our approach, can bring substantial benefits. Switching on the exaggeration mode again, we'll become comfortable in interaction with the more senior (potential) clients with strategic, messy, ill-defined problems – and they will seek us out to help them to think. We'll be more ready to engage with the diverse stakeholders in a complex project, and less likely to become typecast as the technician to be kept in a back office. That work that has to be in the back office will be more transparent and accessible to our clients because we'll carry them with us throughout. We'll be better supervisors and managers, and more influential in our organisations. We can graduate from facilitative conversations with single clients, to acting as facilitators of a group process (perhaps using the problem structuring methods of soft OR with ease).

Some of you may think that this is not much of an exaggeration. As you might guess, it's my belief that there is a huge payoff from relatively basic facilitation skills (easily within the reach of most OR/MS practitioners).

Editor's note: While Rachel's article is intended in part to promote a facilitation course to be run by the ORS (UK), the general points seem just as valid for us.

RACHEL BODLE, **OR Newsletter, OR Society, UK, February 2000, page 30.** (Reprinted with permission)

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PRODUCTION RESEARCH SPECIAL ICPR-2000: FACING THE CHALLENGES IN THE NEW MILLENIUM - AUGUST 2-4, BANGKOK, THAILAND

SECOND AND FINAL CALL FOR PAPERS

It is with great pleasure that the International Foundation for Production Research and the Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand, invite you to attend Special ICPR - 2000: Facing the Challenges in the New Millennium.

The ICPR conference is regarded worldwide as the ranking conference in the promotion of research and teaching in the fields of Industrial and Production Research. It also serves as a forum to disseminate, to all branches of the service and manufacturing industries, information on the most recent and relevant innovations.

The conference has been hosted in alternate years since 1971. For the year 2000, the Foundation has decided to have a special conference to celebrate the new millennium. It will be organized by the Industrial Systems Engineering program of the Asian Institute of Technology.

The main focus of the conference will be on the changing arena of manufacturing in the new millennium, the issues and challenges for the technologies and academics. Because of its internationally in its constitution, outlook, and participation, the conference would provide an excellent forum for researchers, and industrialists to discuss, exchange, and promote their research ideas.

Papers are invited on topics including, but not limited to, the following:

Design for Manufacture	Concurrent Engineering
Rapid Prototyping	Production Planning Methods
Production Management	Production Performance Metrics
Operations Strategy	Human Factors
Quality Systems	Facilities Design and Location
Supply Chains	Business Process Re-Engineering
Manufacturing Technology	Computer Integrated Manufacturing
Flexible Manufacturing Systems	Group Technology
Automation of Production	Measurement and Control
Materials Handling and Robotics	Jigs and Fixtures
Engineering Materials	Forming of Engineering Materials
Special Cutting Processes	Fabrication of Materials
Cleaner Production	Enterprise Resources Planning
Human-Computer Interaction	Enterprise Modeling/Integration

Important Diary Dates:

Submission of 150 word Abstract in English	February 15, 2000
Notification of Acceptance	March 31, 2000
Final Manuscripts	May 14, 2000
Registration	May 30, 2000
Conference	August 2-4, 2000

Abstracts and Manuscripts: Abstracts should be sent to the Chair, by email, fax, or airmail at the contact information provided below. Full papers should not exceed 4 legal size pages. Conference Proceedings will be provided in a CD-ROM, with the abstracts in printed form.

Outstanding papers will be published in special issues of International Journal of Production Research and International Journal of Production Economics.

Fees: Registration	(before May 30)	US$300
(includes all lunches, dinners, and banquet)	(after May 30)	US$350
Accompanying person (dinners and banquet)		US$ 60

Conference Venue: At a five star hotel in downtown Bangkok.

Accommodation: The usual rates for Bangkok hotels range from $35 to $150. Special prices (expected rate is $70) will be negotiated with the hotel where the conference will be held.

Conference General Chair: Prof. Mario T. Tabucanon

Contact Information:
Dr. Nagen Nagarur (Chair- Special ICPR-2000) Phone:+66 2 524 5683
ISE Program, Asian Institute of Technology Fax :+66 2 524 5697
P.O. Box 4, Klong Luang, Pathum Thani
email: nagarur@ait.ac.th Thailand 12120

Announcement and additional details can be obtained at http://www.ise.ait.ac.th/icpr-2000

GREETINGS FROM ADELAIDE!

Well I am sitting in my hotel room, looking out over Adelaide's night sky, and trying to think of Auckland Branch news! Fortunately, armed with the internet this is not too much of a problem.

Auckland University welcomes two OR Lecturers to the fold with Dr Golban Zakeri making a return to the Engineering Science Dept, from the US, and Dr Matthias Ehrgott arriving mid-February from Germany. Currently, three international visitors to the Department are lined up. Dr Natashia Boland is visiting Engineering Science from the University of Melbourne for 6 weeks, Dr Oli Madsen is visiting from the Technical University of Denmark, also for 6 weeks, and Dr Mikael Ronnqvist returns for a three-week visit from Sweden.

The CORE Management Systems office in Auckland has been fairly empty with two of our consultants currently working on-site. Our work in the areas of forestry, fisheries and electricity market modelling continue to keep us busy. For myself, it has been particularly interesting being located in the thick of load shedding disputes here in Adelaide, especially when it is revealed that during rolling blackouts, South Australia was exporting power to Victoria. That, combined with the 15 degree drop in air temperature as you walk down Rundle Mall, due to the open access, heavily air-conditioned shops, makes for quite a challenging (read befuddling) environment.

KEVIN BROAD, AUCKLAND BRANCH CHAIRPERSON, email:kbroad@phb.co.nz

CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENT

The 35th annual conference of ORSNZ will be held at Victoria University of Wellington on 1-2 December 2000. School of Mathematical and Computing Sciences and School of Business and Public Management will jointly host the conference. More details will be announced in due course. For queries, please contact Dr Yu Hayakawa; e-mail: Yu.Hayakawa@vuw.ac.nz; phone (04)463-5669; fax: (04)463-5045.

CPLEX

MEETINGS CALENDAR FOR 2000 AND BEYOND

Western Decision Sciences Institute 29th Annual General Meeting, 18-22 April, 2000, Ritz Carlton Hotel, Kapalua, Island of Maui, Hawaii
Contact: Miles Nicholls, email:mnicholls@swin.edu.au or website:http://misnt.calpoly.edu/wdsi

INFORMS-KORMS International Conference, 18-21 June 2000, Seoul, Korea.
Contact: Professor Sang Hyung Ahn, email:shahn@snu.ac.kr

International DEA Symposium, 2-4 July, 2000, Brisbane, Australia
Symposium Convenor: Dr Necmi Avkiran. Department of Hospitality, Tourism and Property Management, University of Queensland, Gatton Campus, Queensland 4345, Australia.
Submission deadline: extended to 29 Feburay 2000. Registration fee: AUD300.00
Email: n.avkiran@mailbox.uq.edu.au **Web: www.uq.edu.au/financesite**

APORS 2000, Fifth Conference of the Asian-Pacific Operations Research Societies within IFORS, 5 – 7 July, 2000, Singapore. Details on http:www.comp.nus.edu.sg/~phuakh/apors
Contact Programme chair, Pual KH Phua, email:phuakh@comp.nus.edu.sg

MCDM XV International Conference on Multiple Criteria Decision Making, 10-14 July, 2000, Ankara, Turkey. Details: http://mcdm2000.ie.metu.edu.tr

EURO Conference, 16-19 July, 2000, Budapest, Hungary. Details
http://www.sztaki.hu/conferences/euro17/

Matrix Analytic Methods Conference, 12-14 July 2000, Leuven, Belgium.
Contact: Peter Taylor, email:ptaylor@maths.adelaide.edu.au or Malcolm Faddy, email: M.Faddy@math.canterbury.ac.nz

DSI, Orlando, Florida, USA. 18-21 November, 2000. Submission deadline March 1 2000.
Contact by email: dsi2000@bus.msu.edu

ORSNZ 35th Annual Conference, 1-2 December, 2000, Victoria University, Wellington, New Zealand
Contactby email:Yu.Hayakawa@vuw.ac.nz for further details

ANZAM Conference, 6-9 December, 2000,McQuarie University, Sydney, Australia
Contact by email: Dai Gilbertson@vuw.ac.nz

First International Congress on Intelligent Systems and Applications (ISA 2000), 12-15 December 2000, University of Wollongong, near Sydney, Australia.
Details on http://www.icsc.ab.ca/isa2000.htm

Returning from a period overseas always presents the opportunity to reflect on the positive aspects of our lives in New Zealand, and how we might seek to create greater good by learning from what others do.

Since I have just returned from leave, sandwiched between the 29th and 30th Annual conferences of the Decision Science Institute, at Las Vegas and New Orleans respectively, I would like to offer some views specifically related to our US sister operation.

My lasting impressions about the DSI and its conference relate to its catholic nature, embracing not only OR/MS academics and practitioners, but others from various fields of management, marketing, accounting etc; and its provision of workshops: doctoral, professional development workshops, case-writing and even workshops on TOC and other half/whole day sessions on for example the use of spreadsheets in the teaching of OR/MS.

DSI presentation sessions are organised so that "discussants", who receive advance copies of papers, can review and offer their constructive comments on papers following presentations.

Case sessions are organised similarly, so that discussants can prepare to provide constructive feedback on presented cases – in a collegial, supportive and non-competitive manner.

There are prizes for "innovative educators", best case and best papers in specific streams – the intention being to signal worthy contributions across a wide range of scholarship.

However, these latter two points, relating to recognition and support, contrast with my impression of life within universities, where, especially within the UK, and driven by the regular Research Assessment Exercises, publications in "top" international journals have become almost the only basis of recognition and reward for individuals and departments, driving academics into self-seeking, non-collegial, careerist behaviours.

This leads to the question of what do we want as members of ORSNZ? As a professional body, we seek to be a supportive community, and our conferences have in the main, provided a suitably non-threatening, but challenging environment for the critical exchange of ideas.

I believe we can do more by endorsing and adopting some of the best practices of the DSI. The organisers of this year's Wellington conference welcome your opinion on these matters. It is appropriate that we should get your input to help decide whether and how to use the conference to provide us with suitable opportunity to develop ORSNZ even more as a supportive professional community.

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