



ISE Newsletter

Quarterly newsletter of the
INDIAN SOCIETY OF ERGONOMICS (ISE)

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Editorial Board Members

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Forthcoming National events

- ☞  To be held at the National Institute of Industrial Engineering (NITIE), Vihar Lake, Powai, Mumbai. Contact: Dr. A.De, Mail: amitabhade84@yahoo.co.in

Forthcoming International events

- ☞ 2003 IEA conference "Ergonomics in the Digital Age" to be held in Seoul, South Korea. Visit <http://www.iea2003.org/>
- ☞ XXVII International Symposium – ISSA – Construction Section to be held in Lisbon Portugal during 22-2 October 2003 Visit: <http://www.idict.gov.pt/aiss2003>
- ☞ 1ST International "Health and Safety in Transport" to be held in Paris, France email: laa@biomedicale.univ-paris5.fr
- ☞ Silver Jubilee Congress of Indian Association of Sports Medicine to be held at Amritsar in Dec. 2003.

More conference details inside

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* From the Editor

Dear ISE members, it has been decided that each newsletter issue will focus on one institute or organization of excellence in India and its ergonomics activities during the last 10 years. All the members are requested that they should provide details of their work and their institutional contribution in the field of ergonomics (in broadest sense) to the editorial board as soon as possible (with photographs).

* Your Opinion

Code of Ethics

Every professional society should have some code of ethics that can be referred to by the members in situations of dilemma or controversy. This matter was discussed among some members through e-mail. It is hoped that all the members will participate in this debate or conversation in the electronic media so that can express their views and these views are shared among others. This is required in the best academic and professional interest of the society. To initiate the thinking process some starting point is always required. A draft ethical guideline which can form a starting point is given below:

Members should write their comments on this aspect to ind_ergonomics@yahoogroups.com (by email). Please become a member of the **ind_ergonomics** group if you are not already a member. [Refer details in the ISE Newsletter, Vol. 6 No. 3, Page 4 – Web based Ergonomics discussion group]

DRAFT ETHICAL GUIDELINE FOR THE MEMBERS OF INDIAN SOCIETY OF ERGONOMICS

Proposed by **Asis Goswami**

WHO IS A SCIENTIST ?

Possibly the best answer to this question was given in the book “Plato’s Republic” (Oxford University Press, NY 1962). It says “ Scientists are people of very dissimilar temperaments doing different things in very different ways. Among scientists are collectors, classifiers, and compulsive tidiers; many are detectives by temperament and many are explorers; some are artists and others artisans. There are poet-scientists and philosopher-scientists and even a few mystics”. To this description the following may also be added “ Of all the traits which qualify a scientist for citizenship in Republic of Science, I would put a sense of responsibility at the very top. A scientist can be brilliant, imaginative, cleaver with his hands, profound, broad, narrow - but he is not much as a scientist unless he is responsible” (The obligations of Citizenship in the Republic of Science, Minerva, 1976.).

WHY IS AN ETHICAL GUIDELINE REQUIRED ?

In performing his official duties (research and development) the scientist should follow some norms so that his or her conduct remains within well-defined professional limits. Tasks performed by different categories of persons from different scientific discipline may have

overlapping areas and may lead to internal conflict, professional disagreement, and unhealthy situations. This is undesirable for the smooth running of any organization or society.

If there is a norm (Code of organizational and scientific ethics) then scientists in the study and application of scientific concepts to any area of (including Ergonomics) can turn to it for guidance in professional conduct. Adherence to the Code is based on the belief that the scientists are self-regulated, critical thinkers who are accountable and responsible for their high competence in the practice and the delivery of concepts, ideas, and services.

In most scientific organizations and professional societies, the ethical guidelines that have been described relate to the following: (1) Relevance and need for excellence or principles of essentiality, (2) Values in science, (3) Response to violations of ethical standards and self assessment, (4) Conflicts of interest, (5) Experimental technique and treatment of data. (6) Publication and openness or principles of public domain, (7) Authorship practices, (8) Error and negligence in science or principles of institutional arrangement, (9) Misconduct in science, (10) Classified and unclassified documentation methods (11) Principle of voluntariness, informed consent, and community agreement, (12) Principles of non-exploitation, (13) Principles of privacy and confidentiality, (14) Principles of precaution and risk minimization, (15) Principles of professional competence, (16) Principles of accountability and transparency, (17) Principles of justice, (18) Principles of compliance. (19) Principles of responsibility, (20) Principle of continuation of learning, and (21) Endorsement of products/ideas that can lead to controversy.

Details of these points are available in “Ethical Guidelines for Biomedical Research on Human Subjects” published by Indian Council of Medical Research, India, 2000, and in “On Being A Scientist: Responsible conduct in Research” published by National Academy of Sciences, USA, 1995.

The questions:

(1) Must there be ethical guidelines for the ISE (and its members)? (2) If so, why? (3) Can the above points be adapted to our needs? (4) What alterations (if any) are needed to suit our specialized needs?

Let us discuss on the above points so that final version of the ethical guideline for Indian Ergonomists could be published in the next issue.

*** Minutes of ISE Executive Committee meeting**

1st Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Indian Society of Ergonomics (ISE) for the year 2003 was held on January 13, 2003 at the Physiology Dept, Presidency College, College Street, Kolkata 700 073.

Hari Pada Chatterjee Memorial Oration: It was decided that this would take place at the Dept of Physiology, Presidency College tentatively on 20th February 2003. An invitation letter would be sent by the President of ISE to Dr. Krishna Gopal Rampal of the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia for this purpose. The Physiological Society of India would co-sponsor the oration.

Invitation would be sent to the Indian Science Congress Association, Institution of Engineers (India) and Indian Institution of Industrial Engineering – Kolkata Chapter.

Annual conference 2003: Confirmation is expected soon from Prof. Amitava De regarding the NITIE being the conference venue for the next annual conference in December 2003. Suitable locations and accommodation are being identified, in case the annual conference 2003 is to be organized in Kolkata.

ISE website: The executive committee welcomed the idea of launching a website, but expressed reservations about the estimated costs. It was suggested that some alternate cheaper options as well as some sponsorship possibilities would be explored, and the matter would be discussed again in the next meeting of the executive committee.

New members: Dr. K.Kathirvel of the Tamilnadu Agricultural University has become a member of ISE with effect from January, 2003.

* **Announcement**



The National Institute of Industrial Engineering (**NITIE**), Vihar Lake, Powai, **Mumbai** has kindly consented to host HWWE-2003, the National Conference of the Indian Society of Ergonomics on **11th and 12th December 2003**. For further details, contact: Dr. A. De at NITIE.
eMail: amitabhade84@yahoo.co.in

* **Job opportunities**

Professor Arun Garg writes that around November 2002 he has been awarded a large research project in ergonomics. This is a four year epidemiologic study on risk factors for carpal tunnel syndrome as well as other hand/wrist musculoskeletal disorders. The Dean's office has offered a 33% Research Assistant for this study. This support will pay tuition as well as provide about \$800/month for a student who would like to pursue a Ph.D. or M.S. in Industrial Engineering with specialization in Ergonomics. He/she can start effective August 2003.

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* **Nomination for IEA Treasurer**

The Indian Society of Ergonomics feels honored to nominate Professor **Shrawan Kumar** for the Honorary Post of Treasurer of the International Ergonomics Association for the block 2003-06. This has been intimated to Professor Waldemar Karwowski by our Hony. General Secretary in March 2003.

* **Forthcoming conferences:**

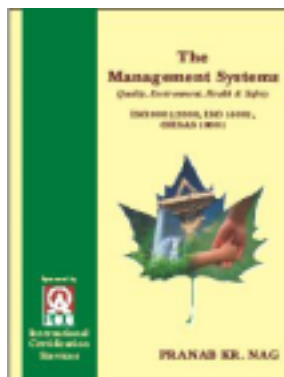
The 7th International Scientific Conference on Work with Computing Systems, WWCS 2004 (formerly known as Work With Display Units, WWDU) will be held in Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia, from 29 June to 2 July 2004. The theme of the conference is "Bridging Diversity at Work". Kuching (= cat) on the island of Borneo is an excellent escapade for your 2004 vacation.

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The 1st International Meeting of Science and Technology of Design, Senses and Sensibility – Linking Tradition to Innovation Through Design, is going to be held on 25-26 September 2003 at the IADE – Visual Arts, Design and Marketing Institute in Lisbon, Portugal.

The organizing committee is calling for papers in theoretical, development and practical implementation in all areas involving design, with an abstract deadline of **21 April 2003**. Please see the information in the official site: <http://www.iade.pt/sst/>. All papers will be included in conference proceedings – made available to delegates attending the conference.

* **Books**



The Management Systems

Quality, Environment, Health & Safety
ISO 9001:2000, ISO 14001, OHSAS 18001

Dr. Pranab Kr. Nag

January 2002, Pages 700, Price \$ 125.00 (Hardbound)
ISBN: 81-87099 -15-1

This book focuses on the principles and practices of quality, environmental, and occupational health and safety management systems. The book is an integrated approach to quality, environment, health, and safety, and is designed for use as a reference book for external and internal auditors, and for organizations preparing to pursue certification of their management systems. Structured auditing checklists and self-assessment guidelines have been provided towards the implementation of QMS, EMS and OHSMS.

* News

“Plague” of Ergonomic Proportions

Calling ergonomics “the next plague of the homebuilding industry,” the Building Industry Association of Washington’s (BIAW) newly-elected president, Randy Gold, vowed to kill ergonomics during his reign at the association. “Next year, I am going to push for this association to run an initiative to roll back ergonomics... An initiative repealing ergonomics is winnable, and it is vital to the future of the homebuilding industry,” Gold was quoted in a *Seattle Daily Journal of Commerce* article. The BIAW has long been fighting the state’s ergonomics standard and has also filed a separate lawsuit regarding the cost of compliance and the formation of the standard.

Ergonomics Today™ - November 20, 2002

Backpacks may not be source of pain for kids

Amidst all the flack surrounding kids and their too-heavy backpacks, two studies presented at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) in New Orleans suggest that backpacks may not be to blame for childhood back pain after all.

In one study, Dr. David Skaggs of the Children’s Hospital of Los Angeles interviewed 1,546 children between the ages of 11 and 14 years old and found that more than one-third of the children said they experienced some back pain that they could attribute to their backpacks. However, Dr. Skaggs noted that the mean weight of the subjects was a little over 120 pounds (56 kg) while their backpacks weighed less than 10 pounds (4.3 kg), or less than eight percent of the children’s body weights. The AAOS has recommended that backpack loads carried by students be limited to 15 percent of a child’s body weight.

“One possible interpretation is that these kids are couch potatoes anyhow and that they are a little bit wimpy. Maybe these kids need more weight-bearing exercise to strengthen their back muscles,” Skaggs said during a question and answer session at the AAOS meeting.

Another study presented at the AAOS meeting reported that fewer than one percent of children who regularly carried school books in backpacks related their back pain to the weight of their packs.

Ergonomics Today™ - February 14, 2003