

Structure Reports **Online**: the birth of a new journal

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2001 brings with it a new venture in the publishing activities of the International Union of Crystallography and a further step of electronification, with the launch of *Acta Crystallographica Section E: Structure Reports Online*.

George Ferguson mentioned the possibility of this development in his 2000 editorial for *Section C*. The survey of crystallographers around the world brought an enthusiastic response to the outline proposals for a purely electronic journal, and the IUCr set up an editorial advisory board in collaboration with the Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre (CCDC) to make more specific plans. These culminated in the announcement of the new journal during the summer and our appointment as joint Section Editors. We have put together an initial team of Co-editors and are seeking to add to these as the volume of manuscript submissions grows. Submissions began to reach the Editorial Office in Chester even before the official opening date of 1 November!

Most of the submission and editorial procedures are now in place, though further enhancements are being made. These include a greater degree of automation in some of the checking and handling processes, and the provision over the coming months of tools for authors to make the production of their submissions easier. These, we are sure, will have the effect of making the journal even more attractive to authors, subscribers and readers, as well as reducing some of the tasks of Co-editors and the IUCr editorial staff. Keep an eye on our web pages!

The journal is already proving to be a rapid means of publication of crystal structure results across a wide range of inorganic, organic and metal-organic materials, and readers will surely agree that the final appearance of published papers in this first issue, in PDF and richly hyperlinked HTML formats, is very attractive. Reader services also include access to the complete diffraction data, the submitted CIF, and the full checking output. These facilities, together with a range of author services and other information about the journal are to be found on its web pages *via* [journals.iucr.org](http://journals.iucr.org) and the link to *Structure Reports Online*.

Indeed, apart from announcements in various newsletters and other promotional literature, you will find no paper versions of this journal except for what readers and authors choose to print for themselves. The journal is entirely electronic, right from the initial web-based submission of manuscripts, through the checking and peer-review process and communication with authors, to the provision of electronic proofs with a rapid turnaround, and ending with the online publication of articles and availability of reprints for downloading. This enables us to reduce production costs, speed up the whole editorial process so that articles can be published within one or two months of receipt, and provide the capability of including extensive graphics in publications, with as much colour as authors wish and even animations if appropriate. Articles are made available to readers as soon as the proofs have been checked and corrected, and are then collected together into a formal monthly issue with an assigned date of the first of each month; a selected structure is featured on the animated journal cover.

The launch of *Structure Reports Online* is a logical development of the previous electronic papers of *Section C*. With the formal separation of these two forms of publication, *Section C* now concentrates on printed reports containing one or

more structures and with a significant discussion of the results; its acceptance standards continue to apply. *Section E* will be the natural choice when single structures are to be reported, usually with less detailed discussion of the results (a *Comment* section is encouraged but not required). These may also fall outside the technical quality criteria of *Section C*; authors must explain how their scientific objectives have been satisfied at the level of precision of their reported structure. The inclusion of selected 'key indicators' for each report provides a consistent set of objective criteria for readers to form their own assessment of the suitability of each structure for particular purposes. The editors of *Sections C* and *E* work closely together to ensure a full range of publication options for structural reports, and may recommend the transfer of submissions between the two journals. Remember that access to *Section E* in 2001 is free for all subscribers to *Section C*, it is inexpensive in general, and there is a reduced rate for authors; full subscription information is available on the web pages.

We are grateful to all who have contributed to the successful birth of this latest addition to the IUCr family of publications, especially the many respondents to the original survey; the staff of the IUCr office in Chester, the CCDC and the Inorganic Crystal Structure Database in setting up the editorial procedures; the IUCr Executive Committee, Editor-in-Chief of *Acta Crystallographica* (John Helliwell) and Editor of *Section C* (George Ferguson) for their support and advice; and the authors who have so far submitted their work for publication. We look forward to the growth of the journal and a celebration of its first birthday at the end of this year!