

Structure Reports **Online**: sustained growth and new developments for 2007

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Since its inception in 2001, *Acta Crystallographica Section E* has shown steady and consistent growth each year, attracting more authors and substantially more submitted papers. In 2005, 2996 papers were published, amounting to 7439 pages in PDF format. In 2006 we published 4440 papers in 9843 pages. In spite of this, publication continues to be rapid, with an average time of less than one month. The staff at the IUCr Editorial Office do a superb job in handling this torrent of papers, and we are very grateful to them.

In last year's editorial we listed the names of 12 new Co-editors who had just been appointed. More recently they have been joined by: Dr Ricardo Baggio, Comisión Nacional de Energía Atómica, Buenos Aires, Argentina; Professor Orhan Büyükgüngör, Department of Physics, Ondokuz Mayıs University, Turkey; Dr Louis Farrugia, Department of Chemistry, University of Glasgow, Scotland; Professor Guru Row, Solid State and Structural Chemistry Unit, Indian Institute of Science, India; Professor Allen Hunter, Department of Chemistry, Youngstown State University, USA; Dr Wolfgang Imhof, Institute of Inorganic and Analytical Chemistry, Friedrich Schiller University, Germany; Professor Uk Lee, Department of Chemistry, Pukyong National University, Korea; Dr John Low, Department of Chemistry, University of Aberdeen, Scotland; Dr Sean Parkin, Department of Chemistry, University of Kentucky, USA; Dr Damon Parrish, Naval Research Laboratory, Washington, DC, USA; Dr Masood Parvez, Department of Chemistry, University of Calgary, Canada; Professor Andreas Roodt, Department of Chemistry, University of the Free State, South Africa; Dr Victor Rybakov, Laboratory of Structural Chemistry, Moscow State University, Russia; Dr Helmut Schmalle, Zürich, Switzerland; and Dr Matthias Zeller, Department of Chemistry, Youngstown State University, USA. Three Co-editors have retired from the editorial board during 2006; these are Dr K. A. Abboud, Professor L. J. Barbour and Dr R. D. Gilardi. We thank them for their contribution to the success of the journal.

The web interface for the submission of manuscripts and files and for communication between authors and Co-editors, introduced during 2006, is now fully functional and there have been very few problems regarding its use. It has made editorial work much easier and more consistent, and it provides a firm foundation for further changes now being introduced.

Another new tool has been provided by the technical staff in Chester, *viz.* *pubCIF*. This provides facilities for the composition and checking of papers and has proved very popular with authors and Co-editors alike. We encourage its wider uptake; it can be downloaded from <http://journals.iucr.org/e/services/authorservices.html> and installed under Windows, Linux and MacOS. A description of the program will be published in due course.

At the 23rd European Crystallographic Meeting in Belgium and since then, there has been considerable debate about the future direction of our journal; you may have seen a reference to this in the article by the IUCr President in the latest *IUCr Newsletter*. This has been prompted by two pressures in particular. First, the journal is currently financially unsustainable in the view of the IUCr Finance Committee and the Executive Committee, because it generates very little direct income (most of its readers have free or very low cost access to it as a result of

subscribing to *Section C* or *via* consortial arrangements) and its production costs have been climbing steadily with its popularity. Second, as noted above, the submission of papers continues to increase without any sign of abating, and this is making life very difficult for the editorial staff, the Section Editors and existing Co-editors; we cannot just keep appointing more Co-editors and allow the journal to grow without limit.

The IUCr Finance Committee have asked those responsible for the journal production to examine the possibility of making the journal completely open access by the start of 2008; this would mean free access without any subscription or reader's fee, with the production costs being met by a charge to authors. In practice, this is the only possible way forward in financial terms; there are no viable alternatives if the journal is to continue operation. In this case, it is important to make the open-access charge as low as possible. This means reducing the production costs as much as we can. To satisfy these linked demands, we have been developing a new format for the PDF version of the published articles, so that fewer of the submitted results will appear in this format, the bulk of the material being available through new HTML and PDF supplements to the article, as well as *via* the archived CIF, structure factors, *etc.* The PDF version of the article will consist of the title, authors, key indicators, an *Abstract* (longer than most of the present ones, but with a length limit), a new *Related literature* section, *Experimental* data sections (*Crystal data*, *Data collection*, and *Refinement*), very brief table(s) if any at all, a chemical scheme, *Acknowledgements* and *References*. A small working party has recently reviewed the items that appear in the *Experimental* data sections, and some of these will be removed, not only in *Section E* papers, but also in *Sections B* and *C* for consistency; they will,

however, be fully available to readers in the HTML and PDF supplements and the CIF, together with many other items that have never previously appeared in the published article. The *Experimental* text sections and *Comment* will no longer appear in the article, but this information should still be provided by authors for inclusion in the HTML and PDF supplements; these arrangements will not need as much editorial attention and will also reduce typesetting costs. Figures will also be available through the supplements to the paper, but will not be included in the PDF version of the article. We stress that each publication consists of a complete package – the published article, HTML and PDF supplements, CIF, structure factors, graphics, and any other submitted supplementary files – and this represents a much richer collection of material than is provided by publishers of other journals.

The *Notes for Authors* have been revised to reflect these changes and are available from <http://journals.iucr.org/e/services/authorservices.html>. The necessary changes to submission, checking and editorial procedures are well advanced, and we expect the new style of publication to be introduced during March 2007, though there will need to be a transitional period when papers in both current and new formats will appear in the journal. It is intended that all submissions from late March will be handled in the new way and the current publication format will be used only for papers submitted before that date. The *Notes for Authors* give a full description of the new format and procedures, together with links to an example CIF and its resulting publication. We hope these significant changes will be understood and appreciated by all concerned, and that they will soon be welcomed as the advantages become apparent.