Report to the SAS Executive Committee and Governing Board

Peter R. Griffiths, Journal Editor
September 25, 2009

Applied Spectroscopy has run smoothly since the last Governing Board meeting in October, 2008, despite the change in editors, several associate editors and many of the editorial board. On July 1, I took over from Joel Harris as Editor-in-Chief, Mike Blades has taken over from Paul Farnsworth as Editor, and LeNelle McInturff has taken over from Jenny Jensen as the journal's Editorial Assistant. LeNelle and I spent a very productive two days with Jenny and Joel in June learning the ropes and the transition was remarkably seamless. The new associate editors are David Hahn, John Kalivas, Rich Mendelsohn, Yuki Ozaki and Zhong-Qun Tian, with Neil Everall remaining; several of them have all served already as associate editors for some new submissions and reviewers. Katherine Bakeev, Arne Bengtson, Antonio Carlos Bento, Rohit Bhargava, Paul Farnsworth, Naoki Furuta, Kathy Gough, David Griffith, Pavel Matousek, Jurgen Popp, Rick Russo and John Wright joined the Editorial Advisory Board. Max Diem, Detlef Gunther, Katrin Kneipp, Carol Korzeniewski, Bernhard Lendl, Curt Marcott, Larry Nafie and Mike Pelletier will continue on the Editorial Board. This group of top-quality scientists represents many of the important spectroscopic disciplines and the geographical regions from which most of our manuscripts are submitted. Enormous thanks are due to the people who served previously. Besides Joel and Paul and others who moved into other editorial roles, these were José Broekaert, Bonner Denton, Ted Eyring and Hiro-o Hamaguchi (Associate Editors) and Robin Garrell, Akbar Montaser, Mike Morris, John Olesik and Jeanne Pemberton (Editorial Advisory Board.)

In 2008, 1 accelerated paper, 174 regular articles, 14 spectroscopic technique papers, 12 Notes, and 6 Focal-Point articles were published. The total number of articles printed was 207, which is not significantly different from the previous four years (see table at the end of this report.) The number of manuscripts received for review was 356, which represents an increase of 40 from the average of the previous four years, indicating the continuing vigilance of the editors and reviewers in requiring that papers be of excellent quality. The rejection rate for *Applied Spectroscopy* increased to 44% in 2008, a figure that is consistent with top quality journals. Comparisons with previous year's statistics are included on the attached table. Although the number of Focal Point review articles published increased to six last year, no Focal Point articles were published for the first half of 2009. However, Focal Pont articles will be published in the September, November and December issues, thanks to the efforts of the Focal Point Editors, Ben Smith and Rina Dukor. The number of review articles has a significant effect on the Impact factor of the journal and it is important that at least six Focal Point articles should be published each year. To this end, I have asked John Chalmers to join Rina and Ben as a Focal Point Editor and he has agreed to do so. With John's influence, I hope that we will increase the number of European authors writing Focal Point articles. Suggestions for new topics and authors from any member of the Society are always welcome.

The value of the Impact Factor (*IF*) is internationally regarded as a measure of the quality of a scientific journal. The *IF* is a measure of the frequency with which the "average article" in a journal has been cited in a particular year. The Impact Factor for 2008 is determined by the ratio of the number of citations in 2008 to articles published in *Applied Spectroscopy* in 2007 and 2006 (835) to the number of articles published in those years (405). Thus the *IF* for 2008 was 2.062. This number indicates a gradual increase from previous years (1.902 for 2007, 1.879 in 2006, 1.868 in 2005, and 1.848 in 2004.) (These data were taken from ISI's *Journal Citation Reports*.) However, the Impact factor is still significantly lower than the values for more specialized spectroscopic journals, such as the *Journal of Raman Spectroscopy* and the *Journal of Analytical Atomic Spectroscopy*. Stimulated by an important letter from Pavel Matousek, the Associate Editors and members of the Editorial Board are looking into ways of increasing the *IF* above 2.5.

Despite the relatively low Impact Factor, the articles in *Applied Spectroscopy* do have immediate impact as reflected in *Citation Reports'* Immediacy Index of 0.208. This index indicates that 20% of the articles in the journal are cited during the same year in which they are published. The citation half-life of the journal is currently 8.1 years. This metric means that scientists continue referring to our papers for many years following publication.

The two biggest problems that I have encountered in the 3+ months that I have been Editor-in-Chief of the journal have been getting top-quality scientists to agree to review more than one or two papers a year and actually receiving reviews within one month of the manuscript being sent out. There is also a problem in getting uniformly well thought out reviews, especially from scientists in developing nations. For example, the journal is receiving a greatly increased number of high-quality manuscripts from mainland China, but the quality of the reviews from this country is not always high. I believe that it is unfair to bombard scientists in the more developed nations in North America and Europe with manuscripts but have not yet come up with a better approach. Again, any suggestions as to how to ameliorate this situation would be greatly appreciated.

As noted by Joel Harris in his report for the EC meeting at Pittcon 2009, the production costs for the journal are staying below budget thanks to continued aggressive management of manuscript quality, length, and color page costs, along with control of error costs in proofs, figures, and production, thanks in large part to our Production and Composition Editor, Rebecca Airmet. Rebecca provides format-marked manuscripts electronically to Allen Press including equations, so that the papers are effectively typeset by her. This system allows a short time period between manuscript acceptance and print publication, currently only 2 months for regular articles in the journal. This speed puts *Applied Spectroscopy* in the category of a rapid-communication journal, even for our regular articles. Accelerated papers can appear in print within 5 weeks after acceptance. Allentrack, the electronic manuscript submission, reviewing, and tracking system at Allen Press, has also been running well. There are few complaints, and we receive a number of compliments from authors and reviewers alike. Response from Allen Press is outstanding. As an example, I requested that a place should be added to the manuscript submission web page where authors can include the names of up to four potential reviewers. This was added ONE DAY after I made the request!

Thanks to the efficient efforts of the Meggers Committee chair, Pavel Matousek, and his committee, the 2008 Meggers Award paper was selected and is "A New Method for the Time-Resolved Analysis of Structure and Orientation: Polarization modulation infrared structural absorbance spectroscopy" by Yongri Liang, Damien Mauran, Robert Prud'homme and Christian Pellerin of the University of Montreal {Appl. Spectrosc., 62(9), 941-947)}. Christian Pellerin will give a plenary talk at FACSS on this work and the paper is being recognized in a symposium at FACSS.

Our initiative for developing cooperative publication arrangements with the Optical Society of America (bundling of our library subscriptions, addition of *Applied Spectroscopy* to OSA's InfoBase web collection of OSA journals) became effective January, 2007. In 2007, we totaled 68,248 full-text PDF downloads of articles from *Applied Spectroscopy* through InfoBase. This number exceeded the 51,427 full-text article downloads that were provided through Ingenta that year. Since then, OSA distinguishes between "filtered" and "unfiltered" downloads. The "filtered" numbers have the activity of the OSA staff, Google Scholar, and CrossRef removed. (In the past, only unfiltered activity was reported.) In 2008, there were 63,148 filtered and 171,764 unfiltered downloads. Between January 1 and August 1 there were 41,893 (62,840) filtered and 80,265 (120,400) unfiltered downloads. (The numbers in parentheses are the estimated numbers for the entire year of 2009.) One reason the 2008 "unfiltered" downloads are so high is that OSA output new indexing files for Google throughout the year, and there are a large number of *Applied Spectroscopy* backfiles. Scott Dineen (Deputy Senior Director of Publications for OSA), who supplied me with this information, noted that *Applied Spectroscopy* papers have become an important part of their *Virtual Journal for Biomedical Optics*. More than 10% of *VJBO* content has

been from *Applied Spectroscopy* this year (accounting for 67 of VJBO's 659 articles published Jan-July). The reach of *Applied Spectroscopy* is being expanded, primarily through OSA's consortia sales efforts for Optics InfoBase (IB), as can be seen from the following statistics, the trend of which is expected by OSA to continue through 2010.

Year	IB consortia participants	Single site IB subscribers	Total
2008	486	87	573
2009	661	111	772

In 2008, our OSA-hosted article downloads have nearly doubled from last year's rate, totaling 63,148, compared with 48,370 delivered by Ingenta over the same period. OSA is more than doubling the electronic distribution of our content. This increased readership should improve our impact and citation statistics in the future; it should also bring more manuscript submissions to the journal.

APPLIED SPECTROSCOPY ANNUAL STATISTICS

	2003	**2004**	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	est. **2009***
Focal Point Articles	4	4	1	4	2	6	3
Accelerated Articles	7	2	2	2	2	1	4
Regular Articles	190	190	178	183	175	174	165
Spectroscopic Techniques	11	6	7	14	11	14	13
Notes	22	15	11	4	6	12	8
Correspondence	2	2	0	2	0	0	0
Feature Articles		1	2	1	1	0	0
Total articles printed	236	220	201	210	197	207	193
Rejected manuscripts	59	35	50	63	50	65	50
Returned manuscripts	23	43	30	54	75	90	63
Total rejected and returned	82	78	80	117	125	155	113
Papers received for review	315	298	292	321	352	356	323
Total A-pages	364	362	308	344	292	362	348
Total manuscript pages	1642	1536	1590	1526	1442	1430	1447

* Note: Except for the number of Focal Point articles (which are known exactly), the 2009 data are estimated by taking the data for the January through September, 2009 issues and multiplying by 1.33.