

**IEEE Robotics and Automation Society AdCom Meeting Minutes  
Victoria, B.C.  
Sunday Oct. 18, 1998**

**LIST OF ATTENDEES**

T. Fukuda, President; Co-Chair, Micro Robots & Cellular Robots Tech. Comm.  
G. A. Bekey, Past President; Chair, Nominations Comm.  
D. E. Orin, Vice President for Finance  
K. Kosuge, Vice President for Member Activities; Chair, Int'l Affairs Comm.; etc.  
Y. F. Zheng, Vice President for Technical Affairs; Program Chair, 1999 Conf.  
A. A. Maciejewski, Secretary; Chair Constitution and Bylaws Comm.  
R. A. Volz, Editor of Transactions  
K. P. Valavanis, Editor of Magazine  
R. Snyder, Managing Editor of Magazine  
W. R. Hamel, Chair, US Member Activities, Trans. Mechatronics Treasurer  
N. Caplan, Chair, Conference Board  
S. Sugano, Co-Chair, Meetings Comm.  
G. Giralt, General Chair, 1998 Conf.; AdCom member  
P. Dario, Prog. Chair, 1998 Conf.; AdCom; Co-Chair, Medical Robotics Tech. Comm.  
H. Akeel, General Chair, 1999 Conference  
B. Carlisle, General Chair, 2000 Conference  
O. Khatib, Program Chair, 2000 Conference, AdCom member  
T. Tsubouchi, Co-Chair, Education Comm.  
H. Moraff, Co-Chair, Long Range Planning Comm.  
A. A. Goldenberg, AdCom member  
A. Kusiak, AdCom member  
R. C. Luo, AdCom; Chair, Sensor Integration & Fusion Tech. Comm.  
A. K. Bejczy, AdCom member  
J. D. Crisman, AdCom member; Co-Chair Human-Robot Interface & Coord. TC  
H. N. Koivo, AdCom member  
V. J. Lumelsky, AdCom member

S. Yuta, AdCom member

K. Y. Goldberg, AdCom member

H. Hashimoto, AdCom member

C. S. G. Lee, AdCom; Chair, Conf. Liaison; etc.

B. K. Ghosh, Chair, Sensor Guided Manipulation in Automation Tech. Comm.

B. Benbrook, guest

## 1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The meeting was called to order by President Fukuda at 8:00 a.m. A motion to accept the agenda and the minutes of the May 17, 1998 AdCom meeting without any changes was passed by the AdCom.

## 2. REPORT ON STATUS OF THE SOCIETY

Fukuda reported to the AdCom on some of the items that were discussed at the last TAB meeting (Attachment A).

## 3. VICE PRESIDENT FOR TECHNICAL AFFAIRS REPORT

Zheng, Vice President for Technical Affairs, provided a report on the activities of the technical committees (Attachment B). He opened by commenting on the Distinguished Lecturers Program and announcing Pradeep Khosla as the most recently appointed lecturer. He also once again thanked Suguru Arimoto and George Bekey, who resigned in the past year, for their contributions to the program. He then announced the appointment of John Leonard as a Co-Chair of the Underwater Robotics Technical Committee and gave a brief overview of some of the more active technical committees, including the Auto-ID, Micro Robot and Cellular Robots, Sensor Integration and Fusion, and Underwater Robotics Technical Committees. He then reminded the AdCom of the new policy for replacing inactive technical committees.

## 4. VICE PRESIDENT FOR MEMBER ACTIVITIES REPORT

Kosuge, Vice President for Member Activities, opened his report (Attachment C) by providing detailed membership statistics, broken out by region. He pointed out that total membership was up by about 3-4% over last year and that region 8 (Europe) had a dramatic increase. He also reiterated the importance of our student membership, noting that student membership jumped by more than 500 members (to a total of approximately 2000), compared to the same time last year. He then reviewed some of the actions being taken to increase membership, including the offer of free membership to new members who join at our conferences.

## 5. VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE REPORT

Orin, Vice President for Finance, provided a financial report (Attachment D) that included four items: (1) review of income/expenses for 1997, (2) 1998 budget, (3)

1999 budget, and (4) IEEE Book Broker Program. He opened his report by reminding the AdCom that 1997 was the best year ever with a surplus of \$312.1K, including an ICRA surplus of \$127.0K, and a significant income from investments (\$84.8K). He also noted that income from the MEMS conference and the Book Broker Program are now becoming significant and that we have reduced IEEE Administration and AdCom expenses. The net worth for 1998 is approximately \$1 million, including an estimated \$200K surplus from ICRA 98. The budget for 1999 calls for a surplus of \$92.8K with a \$46.3K surplus from ICRA and a \$142.8K surplus from the Transactions and Magazine.

Orin then reported in detail on the IEEE Book Broker Program. This program provides income to conferences by purchasing copies of the proceedings (the number is based on market research) at a price that is 110% of the cost of production. However, since 1996 the cost of the IEEE Book Broker purchase is a direct expense of the sponsoring IEEE Societies, resulting in financial exposure (even for Technically Cosponsored conferences). In 1996 the program had a net deficit, both for our Society and as a whole, however, it was primarily due to startup costs. In 1997, our Society had a net surplus of \$16K and there is a surplus projected for 1998. (Data from the Book Broker Program for all Society conferences is given in Attachment E.) Orin closed his presentation on the IEEE Book Broker Program by noting that the Conference Board agreed to take responsibility for being more active in Book Broker decisions.

Orin closed his report by bringing a motion from the Financial Activities Board to approve the following expenses for 1999: (1) \$5K for Member Activities, (2) \$17K for Rosalyn Snyder's position at the magazine, (3) \$500 increase for the International Affairs Committee (to a total of \$3.5K), and (4) \$800 for the Education Committee. The motion was unanimously passed by the AdCom.

## 6. VICE PRESIDENT FOR PUBLICATIONS

**6.1 Transactions on Mechatronics** Hamel, Treasurer of the Management Committee for the Transactions on Mechatronics, presented a report on the finances of the Transactions (Attachment F) which is doing very well. He pointed out that despite the additional expenses of a 50% increase in the page count from 1997 to 1999, there has been a healthy surplus due largely to income from ASPP. He closed his report by noting that the Robotics and Automation Society portion of the \$96.3K cumulative surplus through 1997 amounted to \$19.4K.

**6.2 Transactions on Robotics and Automation** Volz, Editor of the Transactions, began his report with a reminder that the Society's participation in OPERA (the IEEE program for on-line access to publications) was to begin in 1999. He requested that members provide him with feedback on the program and noted that it cost the Society \$12.5K per year to participate. He then presented a report on the status of the Transactions including statistics on submissions, review time, and page charges (Attachment G). He noted that the special section on Virtual Reality in Robotics was pushed back to the Feb. 1999 issue but that the special

issue on Manufacturing Design Systems was on schedule. He also pointed out that the quality of the Transactions has remained high with a very consistent acceptance rate and that there were only seven papers in review for over nine months. He then turned to a discussion of new procedures that were designed to reduce review time. In particular, the electronic distribution of abstracts was initiated in May. He then announced that they would soon be starting the electronic submission of reviews and paper submissions in PDF or postscript format. This prompted a discussion on the logistics of such an approach and on methods for evaluating its efficacy.

6.2 **Magazine** Valavanis, Editor of the Magazine, opened his report on the Magazine (Attachment H) by introducing Brian Benbrook of IEEE who will be the Managing Editor of the Magazine as of January 1999. He then discussed Snyder's proposed new duties at the Magazine. He noted that the Magazine was doing very well financially (\$29.9K surplus in 1998) and presented a status report on the current and proposed special issues. He closed his report by requesting volunteers for the Society web master representative to IEEE, noting that Snyder would initially be responsible for this activity.

6.3 **New Publications** Volz opened his discussion of a possible new Society publication by reminding the AdCom that new publications would not be included in ASPP for the first three years so that it would cost the Society approximately \$40-50K per year. He then raised the question of the content of a new publication noting that despite the appeal of a VR focus, the special issue on VR had difficulty in generating submissions. Finally, he pointed out that we are publishing only 1,200 pages and that the SMC Society was at 2,000 pages before expanding its publications.

## 7. RELATIONSHIP WITH SMC

Ghosh presented the report from the RA/SMC Cooperation Committee for Tarn, who is Chair of the committee (other members include Gruver, van Landingham, and Kawamura from the SMC Society and A. Koivo and Lumelsky from the RA Society). The committee is exploring cooperation through joint sessions at each others conferences, shared publications (e.g. SMC Transactions Part C and RA Magazine), and sharing the cost of IEEE services.

## 8. CONFERENCE BOARD REPORT

8.1 Caplan, Chair of the Conference Board, opened his report by presenting a proposed reorganization of the Board's structure. The Board would be broken into five units that report to the Chairman, namely (1) Financial Monitor, (2) Publications Support, (3) Conference Support, (4) Sponsorship and Inquiries, and (5) Records and Data. The detailed functions and operations of these units are outlined in Attachment I.

8.2 **1998 Conference.** Giralt, the General Chair for the 1998 Conference, opened the report on the 1998 conference (Attachment J) by noting that there were a

record 829 attendees. He was also very happy to announce that the European Grants Fund provided full registration for 35 participants. The conference had a total income of \$490K and expenses of \$285K resulting in an impressive \$205K surplus. Paolo Dario, the Program Chair for the 1998 Conference, then presented his report on the technical program (Attachment J). There were a record 962 papers submitted and a 62% acceptance rate. He noted that the thorough and fair review process resulted in a high quality technical program with both depth and breadth. The AdCom then expressed their appreciation to Giralt and Dario for all of their hard work that resulted in such an outstanding conference.

- 8.3 **1999 Conference.** Akeel, the General Chair for the 1999 Conference, gave a status report on the 1999 Conference to be held in Detroit on May 10-15 (Attachment K). He noted that all preparations are generally on schedule and he updated the AdCom on the extensive renovations being performed at the conference hotel. He announced that the banquet speaker would be Dr. Gustav Olling, an executive director at Chrysler, and that the base registration fee for members will be \$400. Zheng, the Program Chair for the 1999 Conference, then gave a brief update on the technical program noting that 777 papers had already been submitted and that he estimated a final total of over 900 submissions.
- 8.4 **2000 Conference.** Carlisle, the General Chair for the 2000 Conference, focused on three items during his update on the 2000 Conference to be held in San Francisco on April 23-27. First, he noted that all preparations were on schedule. Second, he reported that the budget called for a \$100K surplus based on 800 attendees. Finally, he discussed his plans for industrial outreach, including a program track and panel for the industrial community, a keynote speaker from industry, and targeted mailings to attract RIA, SME, etc., attendees.
- 8.5 **2001 Conference.** Caplan noted that there was nothing new to report on the 2001 Conference but that due to the economic crisis in Korea the Conference Board would continue to monitor the situation.
- 8.6 **2002 Conference.** Caplan announced that Hamel would be the General Chair for the 2002 Conference to be held in Washington, DC.
- 8.7 **2003 Conference.** Luo, the General Chair for the 2003 Conference, presented a very brief update on the 2003 Conference to be held in Taipei, Taiwan tentatively scheduled for April 29 - May 5. He is currently in negotiation with the Grand Hotel Taipei as the conference site. The conference will be held in conjunction with the Chinese Institute of Automation Engineers and in cooperation with the International Automation Show in Taipei.
- 8.8 **Later ICRAs.** Caplan gave a brief update on proposals for future conference sites, noting that 2004 was open, there was a proposal submitted to have the 2005 ICRA in Barcelona, and a proposal for Turkey as the site for the 2007 Conference.
- 8.9 **New Conference on Research Issues in R&A.** Bekey asked for feedback from the AdCom on whether there was interest in a small high-quality research

workshop to be held every two years. This prompted a rather lengthy discussion that was curtailed in the interest of time without reaching a consensus.

#### **9. MEETINGS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Sugano, Chair of the Meetings Committee, provided a report on the ten conferences that were recently approved in principal for Sponsorship, Cosponsorship or Technical Cosponsorship by the Conference Board, namely, conference numbers 98-14, 99-02, and 99-05 through 99-12 (see Attachment L). He also noted that only IROS'99 was approved for the Book Broker Program.

#### **10. NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Bekey, Chair of the Nominations Committee, presented the list of eleven candidates for the AdCom: R. Arkin, A. Erkmen, K. Ikeuchi, L. Joskowitz, P. Khosla, A. Koivo, A. Kusiak, K. Lynch, B. Siciliano, C. Weisbin, and J. Xiao and encouraged everyone to vote in the election.

#### **11. AWARDS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Bekey reported for Klafter, Chair of the Awards Committee, on the IEEE Fellow Award and the Society's Early Career and Pioneer Awards. He urged all AdCom members to consider nominating their colleagues for the Fellow Award and reminded them of the requirements, i.e., Senior member for at least one year and at least five references from current Fellows. He also reiterated the importance of submitting nominations for the Early Career and Pioneer Awards since we have never given these awards due to never having more than one nomination in a year.

#### **12. SOCIETY INFORMATION ITEMS**

Fukuda provided information on two items of interest to the Society. First, the ITS Council was formally approved by TAB at their June meeting and that the Transactions on ITS will be included in ASPP. Second, an ad hoc committee composed of members from many different societies was formed to prepare a proposal for a Sensors Council. A draft Field of Interest for the council stated that "its activities shall be the theory, design, fabrication, manufacturing and application of devices for sensing and transducing physical, chemical, and biological phenomena, with emphasis on the electronics and physics aspects of sensors and integrated sensor-actuators."

#### **13. LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT**

Moraff, Co-Chair of the Long Range Planning Committee, provided a report on the discussions in this committee (Attachment M). The committee decided that the goal of the Society was to serve its members and through them to serve the world community. They identified three areas for serving its members: (1) through professional recognition, for example through awards and continuing education credits, (2) by facilitating professional engagement, both industry/academic and industry/industry, and (3) by identifying emerging technological trends and opportunities. These points prompted a lengthy discussion with general support for actions such as cooperative RAS/RIA

sponsored meetings to initiate the development of a strategic vision for effective deployment and acceptance of robotics and automation technology. Moraff closed his report with a recommendation that a plan be established to expedite the phase-out of hardcopy paper submissions, particularly to conferences, and enhance the utilization of electronic media.

#### 14. **CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Maciejewski, Chair of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, presented a report on the proposed changes to the bylaws concerning the creation of a Vice-President for Conferences and restructuring of the Conference Board (Attachment N). The AdCom will vote on adopting these changes at the next meeting.

#### 15. **EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT**

Tsubouchi, Co-Chair of the Education Committee, reported on the activities of this committee (Attachment O). Two events were proposed for ICRA '99, namely an Education Workshop and a Student Forum (consisting of a tour, panel discussion, and informal dinner for students participating in ICRA '99). He also presented an overview of other proposed activities such as a special issue in the Magazine, a lecture series on the internet, and a web site devoted to education.

#### 16. **INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Kosuge, Chair of the International Affairs Committee, gave a very brief report on proposals for "networking the world", including the Presidents Forum at ICRAs and funding to allow members from developing countries to attend ICRA and AdCom meetings.

#### 18. **NEURAL NETWORKS LIAISON REPORT**

Ghosh gave a report for Tarn, the Neural Networks Liaison, noting that the Neural Network Council was doing well financially, but that there had not been an AdCom meeting since the last RAS AdCom meeting.

#### 19. **RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

Yuta presented an update on the proposed agreement between our Society and the Society of Instrument and Control Engineers (SICE) and the Robotics Society of Japan (RSJ), reminding the AdCom that there was a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in place between IEEE and SICE (Attachment P). The proposed agreements call for: exchanging conference reports, avoiding overlap between conference dates, listing of society events in our respective publications, and establishing cosponsorship of conferences. Yuta then presented a motion to proceed with the agreements with both SICE and RSJ. The motion was seconded by Kosuge and unanimously passed by the AdCom. Yuta then discussed the status of the MOU with the Japan Robot Association (JARA) that was initiated by then-President Bekey (Attachment Q). He presented a motion to approve the MOU with JARA, i.e., give President Fukuda authority to sign it. The motion was seconded by Kosuge and, after a lengthy discussion,

unanimously passed by the AdCom. Fukuda then commented on the importance of such sister society agreements and presented information on other IEEE society agreements (Attachment R).

20. **NEW BUSINESS**

Bejczy posed several questions concerning the implementation of the proposed TAB program to provide publications to needy countries. After a lengthy discussion, it was decided that the Vice President for Membership would look into the specifics of the program.

21. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m. to convene next on May 11, 1999 in Detroit, MI.