

## President's Annual Report 2001

Dear Colleagues,

this is my second report as your President - and as always in life there will be good news and bad news. Let me start with the bad news - so I can finish with the pleasant issues ;-).

SGSMP and SGBT had invited IUPESM to hold the World Congress on Medical Physics and Biomedical Engineering 2006 in Lausanne. The corresponding societies in Germany and UK had joined us to make this a European bid. This joint effort actually won the vote during the World Congress 2000 in Chicago, but Korea (a competing bidder) filed a protest on formal grounds, leading to a re-voting procedure. Whilst the IUPESM Congress Coordinating Committee (CCC) always stressed during direct discussions, that none of these procedural errors was our fault, but their own, their public announcements gave a different impression. This bias did not only reduce our chances to win the re-vote; more importantly it was felt that a fruitful co-operation with this CCC would be difficult in case Lausanne won the re-vote. On the other hand, a lack of co-operation would have put the success of this conference at risk - and a failure would surely have been blamed on the local organizers only. In order to avoid this risk, it was decided to withdraw our invitation under protest. This did not stop the CCC Chairman to keep spreading false information about the European bid - so possibly I'll have to report about this unpleasant issue next year again (in case you re-elect me as your President).

Fortunately the positive news are much more numerous ! Most importantly our certification scheme ("Fachanerkennung"), which now includes the proof of Continued Professional Development (CPD), was granted "full approval" during the EFOMP Council Meeting in Archamps in December 2000. Like our certification scheme itself, this approval is time limited and will be re-considered in 5 years. After we had decided on our rules, EFOMP has issued guidelines on CPD, which will have to be considered when reviewing our scheme; whilst this will result in some formal changes, the basic conditions will stay very similar. Out of 45 "active" colleagues with Fachanerkennung (i.e. not expected to retire within the next 6 years), 39 have voluntarily reported on their CPD during 2000: only in a single case a change in attitude is needed if the certification is to be extended after the 6-year CPD period - otherwise the results prove that the conditions can be met by any colleague taking her/his profession seriously. Four candidates passed the exams in November 2000 and were consequently granted "Fachanerkennung".

The board has met only twice since the last membership assembly. This was partly caused by timing problems, and on the other hand facilitated by modern communication via e-mail. Items discussed will be included in the reports on Working Groups and other activities below. Let me stress first the importance of the Working Groups, as the most direct way for our members to contribute to the success of our society: when considering the future development, it will be quite clear that especially younger colleagues need to be encouraged to participate and chair such Working Groups; there are several good examples - but more of them would be better ;-).

The WG with the longest tradition is "Medical Radiation Physics" (chaired by Jean-François Valley). The first of two meetings discussed IMRT, electron dosimetry, and recent dosimetry intercomparisons. The second meeting had new developments in brachytherapy (intravascular brachytherapy IVBT, and prostate implants) as main topic; as a consequence a very active sub-WG on IVBT (chaired by Hans-Peter Hafner) has already held two meetings, and is working on a recommendation for coronary IVBT.

The sub-WG "Quality Management in Radiotherapy" has not been active as a Working Group, but Stephan Klöck has organized an interesting one-day "Workshop on Quality Management in Medical Physics and Radiation Protection" in Münsterlingen in June 2001. I would like to thank him for this effort, and hope that this event will foster future activities of the group - which would include finding a new chairman to organize these activities.

The active Working Group on "Competencies and Responsibilities of the Medical Physicist" (chaired by Sergio Giannini) has triggered a much wider discussion on professional activities in Medical Physics. In addition to 4 group meetings all interested SGSMP members were invited to come to a forum in August to discuss aims and possible organizational structures to improve the standing of our profession in a changing environment. According to our statutes, professional issues are one of the aims of SGSMP, but there is certainly room for improvement. Leon André has accepted the task to co-ordinate a draft document on different alternatives, to be discussed briefly later during this assembly. As there will not be sufficient time for extensive discussion, the main purpose is to get younger colleagues interested in the topic, and convince them to contribute to such activities: professional activities must be intended to influence the future development of our profession, and will therefore mainly have an impact on the younger colleagues amongst us.

The two Working Groups on Dosimetry Recommendations, namely for Low and Medium Energy X-Rays (chaired by Horst Nemeč) and High Energy Electrons (chaired by Jean-François Valley) have completed their work. The Recommendation Nr.9 (X-Rays) has been printed, and the Recommendation Nr.10 (Electrons) needs only few editorial changes before going to print. I would like to thank the chairmen and all group members for providing us with such useful guidelines for our work in radiotherapy. A related report is "Etalonnage de chambres d'ionisation au rayonnement d'une source d'iridium-192 de haut débit de dose": this is not an SGSMP Working Group, however, but a IRA project (work in progress).

ROKIS (Radio-Onkologie-Informationen-Systeme) is a joint Working Group by SGSMP, DGMP, ÖGMP, SASRO, DEGRO, DFG (Deutsche Forschungsgesellschaft) and BAG, chaired by Peter Pемler. There have been 4 meetings (see also report in the SGSMP Bulletin 2001/1) and a first draft for the recommendation is planned for early next year.

The Working Group "Quality Control in External Beam Therapy" used to be chaired by Luca Cozzi, and is now co-chaired by Nicoletta Lomax and Uwe Schneider. Due to this change only 1 meeting has taken place, but considerable progress has still be made via e-mail.

The Working Group "Synchrotron Light Source" (chaired by Jean-François Valley) has met once to discuss the latest developments with the SLS project leaders.

Other Working Groups have been less active, some need new chairpersons due to retirement or other professional priorities of the previous chairmen. I can only urge all, but especially the younger members of our society to participate in these Working Groups, as they create the highest benefit for our society. Check <http://www.sgsmp.ch/wgroups.htm> for all our Working Groups - and which might be of interest for you.

Whilst mentioning our web pages - they are now also available under <http://www.ssrpm.ch/> - but unfortunately the French version of our start page is still missing: not only for this the webmaster would appreciate some more support from other members. As the contract to host the pages at Kantonsspital St.Gallen had been terminated (by the hospital), our web pages have been moved to André-Netline (<http://www.netline.ch/>).

Fortunately there has been no problem with another information channel for our members - the Bulletin: this is very nicely looked after by our two Bulletin editors, Roman Menz and Werner Roser. Also the SGSMP mailing list has been used increasingly by members other than the listowner himself.

Our national dosimetry intercomparison using mailed TLD has this year been organized by the team from St.Gallen for the first time: results are to be reported during the scientific session here in Sion. I would like to thank Hans Schiefer, who has done most of the work for setting up and organizing this service, but especially also Bernard Davis, Beatrice Reiner and the team at Zürich University Hospital, who had provided this important service from 1991 until 1999.

Meetings like the one here in Sion, organized by Jean-Yves Ray and his colleagues, are the scientific highlights of our society. The last meeting had been organized in Basel by Jakob Roth and his colleagues, and I want to both thank them and congratulate them for organizing a very successful conference. Educational seminars have also a long tradition with SGSMP: the seminar in Münsterlingen, organized by Stephan Klöck, has already been mentioned.

SGSMP has been invited to comment (and has done so) on BAG drafts "Who should wear a personal dosimeter", "Radiation protection measures for patients, staff and third parties in diagnostic radiology", and "Quality assurance for mammography units". Also our concern about therapeutic application of ionizing radiation on humans without involvement of radiation oncologists or medical physicists (especially with recent brachytherapy applications like IVBT or prostate implants) have been expressed in a letter to BAG, which was well received.

Several other activities could be mentioned here, but I want to come to an end now. The last "thank you" goes to Charlotte Lichtsteiner at Inselspital: she has taken over from Silvia Kleiner, and has been helping a lot with the every-day organizational problems of SGSMP, a task easily overseen by members not involved as directly as your President.

Wolf Seelentag