Reduction of Backlog and Electronic Submission of Papers

I am pleased to announce that ASME has given the *Journal of Mechanical Design* an additional page allocation to reduce the current backlog of papers to a reasonable level. The Journal presently has a backlog of over 200 papers, resulting in a delay of up to two years in publishing a paper after it has been accepted and typeset for publication. The Publications Committee and the Board on Communications of ASME have generously approved my proposal to temporarily increase the page allocation for the Journal over a period of one and a half years in order to reduce the backlog to a more acceptable level of six months. To avoid future backlogs, I have modified the paper review process (as described in my editorial in the March 93 issue of the Journal) to provide more stringent control on paper acceptance. These changes have been a strong factor in obtaining the (temporary) extra page allocation for the Journal. This will not only ensure that the Journal not develop a backlog in the future but will also provide better control over the quality of the papers accepted for publication.

At present, the steady state page allocation for the Journal is 700 pages per year, or approximately 100 papers. Starting with the September 1993 issue, we will be able to publish approximately 100 extra papers (700 additional pages) for the year 1993-94. There is also a projected allocation of 350 extra pages (approximately 50 papers) for the year 1994-95. This means that over the next year and a half, we will be able to reduce the backlog of papers to fewer than 50 papers (equivalent to six months) and therefore can guarantee, once again, timely publication of high quality papers in the Journal.

Starting with this June issue of the Journal, I am going to experiment with providing the authors the option to submit papers for consideration for publication in the Journal via electronic mail. Ideally, the entire review process could then be conducted over electronic mail, saving mailing time and cost and enhancing timely processing of papers. The procedure is as follows:

1. The initial correspondence as well as the paper itself (in LATEX format) should be submitted together to the following address:
   MechDesign@ucdavis.edu

2. All further inquiries and correspondence should be sent to either
   bravani@ucdavis.edu  
   or  
   aerafferty@ucdavis.edu

3. All further correspondence and submission of the paper to an appropriate associate technical editor and reviewers, except transmittal of the copyright form, will also be via electronic mail.

4. Once the paper is accepted, the authors will be notified by an associate technical editor to submit to the Technical Editor three hard copies of their revised paper with original figures for submission to ASME for typesetting and publication.

I hope that providing the option to submit papers in electronic form can facilitate faster processing of papers and enhance our ability to bring high quality papers into publication in a shorter time period.

Bahram Ravani  
Technical Editor