EDITORIAL

Annals of Occupational Hygiene Performance, 2014

Volume 58 of the Annals of Occupational Hygiene, published in nine issues in 2014, demonstrates the continuing importance and on-going development of the science of assessment and control of risks to health at work.

In 2014, the trend of increasing numbers of articles continued, reaching a new peak of 278 submissions, including 237 original research articles. Among the 254 papers for which final publication decisions were made, 101 were accepted, giving us a rejection rate of 60%. This relatively high rejection rate helps assure the highest quality of papers appear in the journal and is thus good for readers and the journal.

In Volume 58, we published 86 research papers and reviews, and an additional two commentaries. A content analysis of our research and review papers show the Annals to be very strong on exposure assessment (36%), measurement (19%), exposure controls (6%), plus personal protective equipment (15%) and the basic sciences underlying occupational hygiene (9%). Aerosols made up 51% of the agents addressed, with 16% tackling chemicals, 11% physical agents and 9% bioaerosols. The editorial team coordinated the collection of 615 peer reviews from 364 individuals, representing the untold hours of high-level scientific work and enormous commitment made by all of our contributors.

Of the two commentaries published, one addressed the growing importance of heat stress indicators as climate change increasingly impacts working conditions globally; the other discussed a new model of occupational hygiene training through the Occupational Hygiene Training Association, which is now working closely with the British Occupational Hygiene Society (BOHS) to expand and increase their effectiveness. Editorials focused on the evolving use of job exposure matrices, assessment of bioaerosol exposures and the continuing need for progress in controlling crystalline silica exposures, among others. Our historical strength in assessment of aerosols, especially fibres, is now demonstrated through a large number of papers addressing nanomaterials, an important emerging technology and potential health risk.

Our time for papers in review has been monitored using a 6-month running average, giving the mean (median) time to a first decision of 35 days, whereas time to reach a final decision (after revision and re-review) was 87 days. The publishers, Oxford University Press (OUP), have begun reporting author feedback, which we hope will provide valuable feedback to enable us to improve our systems and response times further.

The Annals is circulated to all BOHS members, institutions and libraries, and via academic consortia agreements offered by OUP giving a circulation in excess of 6000 for each issue. In 2014, 1277 not-for profit institutions in 35 developing countries obtained free online access. The average number of full-text downloads per month increased by 20.4% to 31 699, up from 26 328 per month in 2013.

North America and Europe remain the strongest geographic areas for submissions of original articles, reviews, commentaries and short communications at 26% and 30%, respectively.

The Annals journal impact factor (JIF) for 2013 was 2.068, slightly down from the 2012 level of 2.157. Our JIF ranking among other journals classified as 'Public,
Environmental and Occupational Health’ has continued to rise and is currently 56 among 160 journals, and 52 out of 87 journals classified as ‘Toxicology’.

With the continuing increase in submissions over the past year, we look forward to providing the occupational exposure sciences community the best science available dedicated to the assessment and control of health risks at work.

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