Editorial

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We are pleased to inform our readers that, starting with this first issue of 2016, the *Rock Mechanics and Rock Engineering Journal* will be published monthly. This decision is taken together with our Publisher “Springer”, given the significant increase in the number of papers published, both as printed copies and on the web.

Our first commitment is that in doing this we will maintain the quality of our journal, something that we all desire. In order to achieve this goal, with this issue we are introducing a number of changes in the overall organization of the journal. Although, for the time being, the Editor and the co-Editors will remain the same, we are introducing the position of Associate Editors, with the intent to share our responsibility with younger people and inject new life into our Journal.

At the same time, we are increasing the number of members of the Editorial Board. In doing this, we try to be better represented worldwide and to better cover the topic areas of interest to our journal, with due attention to new and advanced studies in research and applications in rock mechanics and rock engineering. The commitment of each board member is that she/he will review 6–8 papers per year. We also realize that we are relying very much on the help of other reviewers; we would like to express our appreciation at this point and will, as done in the past, do so more formally by publishing a list of reviewer names in an early issue of the following year.

As noted in our previous Editorials, we also need to keep in mind a number of problems encountered in running our journal. The first problem is non-ethical behavior, as discussed in detail in 2014, in our Editorial on “Publishing Ethics”. Such problems may range from not mentioning

corresponding work by others, to publishing results that have not been sufficiently researched, to different degrees of plagiarism and to fraud. So far, our journal apparently was spared the most serious infractions. In this context it is important to point out that publishing overlapping material in different journals and resubmitting papers that were rejected elsewhere is only acceptable if specifically mentioned.

For this reason we require that authors together with their submission explicitly declare that:

- The manuscript has not been submitted to more than one journal for simultaneous consideration;
- The manuscript has not been published previously;
- A single study is not split up into several parts to increase the number of submissions;
- Proper acknowledgements to other works has been given;
- Consent to submit has been received explicitly from all co-authors;
- Authors whose names appear on the submission have contributed significantly to the work submitted.

Also, in order to safeguard the quality of the journal publications, Springer is continuously developing and improving our resources on publishing ethics, in line with the philosophy of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

There also are other problems, more specific to the work we publish, and one of these relates to numerical modelling. Particularly problematic is the fact that modelling rarely goes hand in hand with physical investigations in the laboratory or in the field. This problem was addressed in 2013, in our Editorial on “Manuscript using Numerical Discrete Element Methods”. The conclusion was to be restrictive if manuscripts simply present marginally modified applications of numerical models.

We are sure that our readers and authors share with us the spirit of the statements above. This will maintain and enhance the quality of our journal.

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