



Editorial

As new editor of JORS I would first of all like to congratulate Graham Rand on his excellent stewardship over the last six years and also to thank him for his help and support during my induction period.

JORS is a truly international journal, as the following table demonstrates.

Source of JORS Papers 1993–1995

	%
United Kingdom (UK)	35.0
Europe (excluding UK)	8.3
North America	30.1
South America	2.5
Pacific Rim (PR)/Australia/NZ	12.9
Asia (excluding PR)	10.7
Africa	0.5
Total	<u>100.0</u>

In addition JORS is the most highly cited OR journal outside the USA (1994 figures, the latest available) and I believe we give an excellent service to authors and a regular and prompt delivery to subscribers. I hope to be able to continue this success story and also to investigate any additional ways of further speeding up the publication process.

I am only the fifth editor of JORS during the last 25 years and the third practitioner. The whole of my career has been spent in OR: nearly 30 years in industrial OR, including over 20 years as manager of a large OR group, and 4 years as a part-time independent consultant, mostly as an academic researcher. This has given me a useful insight into the motivation to publish: academics *have* to publish in order to develop their careers, whereas practitioners derive little benefit and so rarely attempt to do so. As a consequence the exciting and successful work which I know is being carried out by OR practitioners, at least in the UK and no doubt elsewhere, is vastly under-represented in OR journals.

JORS covers and will continue to cover a wide range of subject matter relevant to the OR community, including reviews, surveys, methodology, developments in and applications of both 'hard' and 'soft' OR. Already more practice-oriented papers are published than in most, if not all, comparable journals and I wish to continue the policy of giving priority to case studies and applications of OR. I also recognize the importance of theoretical developments: practitioners need new methods to replace those they have developed, implemented and handed over, where appropriate, to their clients. However new methods must

be applicable to real problems, or potentially real problems, not to invented problems or be dependent on unlikely assumptions! I would like theoretical papers to have some links to the real problems they seek to resolve. Also I do not believe that case studies have to contain novel developments in order to be publishable, so long as context information is included, particularly on implementation issues, and there are useful lessons to be learnt. Even if a case study does contain new methods and/or developments of existing ones I do not believe it is usually enough to state: "our method showed a saving of x% compared to the current one" without some discussion of the current method and any practical issues arising from the introduction of the new one. I shall be updating guidance to authors and referees accordingly.

How can more applications oriented papers be stimulated? Practitioners make up a majority of the OR Society membership and are mainly interested in case studies and applicable new developments. Can they be motivated to write more papers? Whilst I published some papers when a practitioner, the task of writing up the results of a recent research study for publication has reminded me of the effort and rigours required! Perhaps OR managers will take up this challenge by allocating some group resources to writing up at least one case study for the Journal. I will be doing a little discrete persuasion.

An alternative approach that I would like to encourage is partnerships between academics and practitioners: practitioners solve lots of practical problems and academics have the incentive to publish. Whilst this is perhaps oversimplistic, for example, most academics would wish to be involved in deciding the method of approach to be used, I believe that over a period of time such partnerships could become a fruitful source of case study material.

During the period of my editorship electronic developments may transform the way journals are delivered. We are keeping abreast of developments. Already the OR Society has a web site (<http://www.orsoc.org.uk>) giving up to the minute news and information to the OR community, whilst the Stockton Press site (<http://www.stocktonpress.co.uk/jors/index.html>) gives information about the Journal, including the contents of the current issue.

You will notice a change in format in this issue, from single to double column setting. This enables us to utilise more effectively the larger page size, which was introduced in the last volume. We can now accommodate approximately an additional 10% of text material per page. As a consequence there are some minor changes to manuscript requirements—see revised 'Information for Contributors' at the end of this issue.

In summary I wish to publish more applicable papers and to continue to publish high quality theoretical papers and technical notes. I also wish to continue to give a quality service to authors, referees and readers. After a few months in the job I already appreciate the support of referees (upon which such journals are entirely dependent), the associate editors Tony Christer and Roger

Hartley, the editorial assistant Christine Faulkner, members of Stockton Press and the international advisory board; many thanks to all of them for the current support they give. I look to them to help ensure the Journal's successful future.

John C Ranyard