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As chairman of the Technical Activities Council I would like to take this opportunity to describe some of the things that are happening within the Technical Activity Committees. There are currently eight TACs—Composite Material, Residual Stress, Transducers, Strain Gages, Modal Analysis/Dynamic Systems, Structural Testing, Optical Methods, and Fracture. The Fracture Committee is further subdivided into several subcommittees including fatigue, elastic/plastic fracture, composite fracture, dynamic fracture and fragmentation.

The Modal Analysis/Dynamic Systems Committee is currently making a real effort to expand its activities to attract a large number of scientists and engineers within the modal-analysis community into SEM. These individuals, at present, do not have their own technical society, and have no one journal in which to publish the results of their research efforts. This TAC has been very active in organizing and presenting sessions at both spring and fall national SEM conferences. Their aim is to increase the membership in SEM and their TAC to the extent that the Society will devote a section of EXPERIMENTAL MECHANICS to this area, or begin a new publication in this field.

A new subcommittee has recently been formed within the Fracture Committee. The Subcommittee on Fracture of Concrete and Rock was initiated at the 1984 Fall Conference held in Milwaukee. In this instance it is hoped that SEM will be able to draw upon individuals within the SEM fracture community to extend their expertise in rock and concrete. The new group is working closely with other societies in an effort to marry the techniques of experimental mechanics with problems encountered in these materials. The subcommittee is planning a significant session at the Grenelefe, Florida conference, scheduled for November 17-20, 1985.

A new publication—Technical Activity Committee News—was initiated in January to keep SEM members aware of TAC activities. The Society recognizes that strong TAC participation will greatly strengthen the overall society. To that end, it has added a new staff member at headquarters, Doris Thackrey, who will support and publicize TAC activities.

SEM also recognizes the valuable input that these committees can have on insuring quality papers and sessions at national meetings. For the upcoming Las Vegas Spring Conference most of the papers to be presented were reviewed in extended-abstract form by representatives of the various TACs. This effort is being strengthened for the 1986 New Orleans Spring Conference. A committee of three individuals from each TAC will review those extended abstracts within their areas. This will result in the core of papers at the New Orleans meeting being based on 'refereed' abstracts. Along with this change, the Society now requires that completed papers be received prior to a specified date well in advance of the conference (April 1). Papers not received by that date will not be presented. Hence all papers presented will be in the conference proceedings. These measures have been taken to improve the quality of the technical sessions and the proceedings.

I urge you, if you are not already a member of at least one TAC, to join one and participate fully in its activities. The current strengths of our TACs are due to a limited number of individuals. Support of the TACs by a fully participating membership will strengthen them by a quantum leap. True membership is not free. It will cost you time and effort, but the technical repayment from that expenditure will be well worth it.

William L. Fournery
Chairman
Technical Activities Council