Strategies 2007 of EASTS-ISC

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January 5th, 2006

International Scientific Committee of the EASTS

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CONTENTS

1. Promoting horizontal expansion of participants

As the human network among researchers in the region has been steadily developed in the last decade after the inauguration of the EASTS, the needs of submitting papers to journals with established reputation on their quality have been rapidly growing as mentioned above. On the other hand, busy experts in the practical world of transport do not always put importance on their papers to be published as "refereed papers", and often feel tiresome about the long and complicated process of review. As the matter of fact, the participation of practical experts in the EASTS conferences was quite limited up to now. They might potentially hope to submit more practical and empirical papers in rather shorter lead time.

Since we can doubtlessly provide fruitful outcomes of transport to the people only by exerting efforts based on the deep cooperation of academicians and practical experts, it is strongly expected for the prosperous future of the EASTS to restructure the process of submission, review, and publication of papers by considering the needs of the experts in practical worlds.

By the way, papers were *vertically* classified into journals and proceedings up to now only by whether they passed the review process or not, and the lead-time from submission to publication was commonly 13 months for both. Considering the upper mentioned background, they might be rather *horizontally* classified by setting differences in the submission-deadline, and in the procedure and the extent of review, etc.

2. Improving the procedure of paper review

Papers, which *would* be submitted for the conferences, were firstly screened by reviewing their submitted *abstracts* into three categories; A (papers to be reviewed as journal papers), B (as proceeding papers), and R (to be rejected). This seems to be somewhat contributing for saving energy

to be paid for full paper review and for estimating the scale of the conferences in prior to some extent. However, we hesitate to say this review-procedure of abstracts, which were mostly just overall summary, or sometimes just introductory description of still unwritten papers, was absolutely appropriate, effective, and fair. Moreover, this abstract-review itself brought heavier load to ISC of and longer lead-time to authors.

We propose the following amendment of the paper-review procedure after considering these factors comprehensively.

1) Abolishing the procedure of abstract-review, and starting paper-review simply from submitted full papers. Deadline of paper submission should be different being dependent on whether the author intends to submit refereed paper or non-refereed paper.

2) Especially for the entry of refereed papers an entry sheet for the qualification should contain not merely administrative information but also the points which authors claim the significance of the papers to be reviewed.

3) Papers not being accepted as refereed papers may be contained later in the proceedings when authors hope so.

Hard copies of the abstracts of all papers were handed to the participants of the conference. We propose to cease this service on condition that the CD-proceedings covering all papers are distributed, since distributing abstracts seem not very helpful for participants though it requires considerable costs and labor. It will not be disadvantageous since many participants already bring their own PCs in. A few common PCs and payable printing services might be prepared in the conference for the convenience of participants.

3. Organizing the structure of ISC effectively

Really very large energy has been paid for reviewing papers by ISC members, by reviewers and by the ISC-secretariat. Each ISC member took care of one or some of narrow topic-fields. Since all the communication and information were managed by the ISC secretariat in a *centralized manner*, the quantity of information processing in the secretariat became significantly large, and the risk of confusion increased divergently once there happened some troubles such as the delay of the submission of report from reviewers, etc. ISC members also paid large amount of efforts to accommodate three reviewers to each papers other than themselves.

It is required to re-organize current rather *centralized* structure of ICS into more *decentralized* or more *grouped* style, and to make the system more manageable and more robust by the following means in order to improve the review works more efficient and more effective.

1) Making 10 to 20 topic-groups in ISC by field. Each topic-group contains 4 to 6 relevant ISC members. Appointing chiefs (and deputy chiefs if necessary) to each groups.

2) Consigning to the topic-group chiefs 30 to 60 papers for review. Then the chiefs assign these papers to the topic-group members who will be the first reviewer of assigned papers, accommodate two more reviewers to each paper by consulting the first reviewer, and collect the results of review from the first reviewers, and provide the final results to the papers.

3) The chiefs of the topic groups keep rigorous communication with the ISC secretariat in each step of review.

In order to save money and labor, it will be significantly effective to <u>computerize and digitize jobs of all paper management procedure from submission to publication, including jobs of sending paper drafts to reviewers, and sending the results of review and suggestions for amendment to authors</u> for which we depended on costly and time-consuming physical postal delivery service up to now. Special attention, of course, should be paid to ensure the security throughout the procedure by consulting some specialist firm in advance.

4. Setting publication time of EASTS journals clearly

It is essentially important for the prosperous future of the EASTS that its journal will get certified and listed in some International Citation Index. ISC must pay special attention on the system of reviewing and publication of the EASTS journal so as to realize this fundamental request as soon as possible. What is essentially required is still not very clear, however, it is obvious at least that the EASTS journal should be published very "periodically" in clearly prescribed time of the year as well as that the number of references from the EASTS journals is steadily accumulated.

Therefore, <u>the EASTS journals shall be published on the web in a clearly prescribed month, such as December, in odd years a few months after the EASTS conferences</u>. Papers to be published in the EASTS journal may be amended if necessary after the presentation in the conference.

Lead time till the publication should be shortened from present 13 months to at least around 8 months considering other ICI certified case such as TRB (5 months).

> There is an opinion that journals must be "annually" published for ICI certification; one after the EASTS conference another between the conference years. We need to discuss carefully the needs and the feasibility of this "annual" publication with Prof. Kazu MIYAMOTO (Musashi Institute of Technology), the specially appointed officer of EASTS in charge of ICI matters.

5. Avoiding canceling of presentation and enriching the conference

Canceling of presentation occurred considerably (10-20% in Bangkok). This caused wasteful spending of valuable and costly space, time and human resources. In order to avoid this wasting, we propose the following measures:

1) Strictly requesting presentation of all papers to be contained in the EASTS-journal which is published in the web after the conference.
2) Placing only those papers on the final program and in the EASTS-proceedings (CD), of which the early-bird registration to the conference and the payment (credit cards) of the participation-fee are confirmed.
3) Even in unavoidable cases those who canceled the presentation without proper notice will be listed and reported to EASTS-ISC and EASTS-Board.

It is also expected to activate the discussion in the sessions in the conference. Avoiding ISC meetings as well as Board meetings being held during session-hours in the conference as possible

seems one of the minimally requested manners in order to leave both ISC/Board relating people who are responsible for the main activities of the society to attend the sessions.

6. Expanding the functions of ISC

ISC, which is the only one permanent scientific organization of the EASTS, is expected to expand its functions into those such as described in the followings in addition to the conventional routine-jobs of review and publication of papers, and organizing and programming the sessions and moderators, etc.

1) <u>Summarizing and appealing the needs and the expected orientation of transport and regional research</u> for the rapidly growing Asia.

2) <u>Fostering especially original research fields of the EASTS</u> in order to enhance the presence of the society among international competitors of transport studies. Following research fields, for example, seems those which the EASTS should tackle as its original coverage;
   - Asian city and transport with the context of Asian thought and lifestyle
   - Interregional economies and transport in the growing and integrating Asia's economy

   <u>In paper-awarding, it may be suitable to add a category of *enhancing Asia study*</u>.

3) <u>Setting up a *research-vision sub-committee* in ISC</u> to discuss and to make a report about the upper mentioned two items.

4) Appealing a few *special topics* of the conference, calling papers for them, and preparing special sessions for the presentation of them. It is needless to say that the deep and in prior discussion with the local conference committee is especially required. <u>ISC must take the leading functions in any scientific activities such as setting panel discussions or key-note lectures in the conference</u>. ISC should play a suitable role as the permanent scientific committee of the EASTS also on the arrangement and the management of ICRAs or IRGs.

7. Reinforcing human resources of ISC

ISC members have been contributing significantly to paper relating works, however, <u>it is strongly required to enrich its human resources as soon as possible in order to enhance the upper mentioned roles of ISC expected for the future of the EASTS</u>. <u>Younger generation and females</u> in transport or relating fields as well as the EASTS awardees are especially welcome as ISC new members. Consideration should be paid also for the fields other than civil engineering.

We propose to <u>recruit around 30 new members of ISC (now 43 people) from the EASTS members and to organize ISC in the spring of 2006 for the preparation toward the next conference</u>.

Followings are the requirement and the procedure of recruiting.

1) Requirement of new ISC members:
   - Being the EASTS members
   - Having five or more years of transport relating full-time working experience in research fields or in practical fields, after taking a title of either doctoral degrees or APEC engineers (or other professional title which officially certified as equivalent to APEC engineers).

- Having enough capability of reviewing papers and passion for the activities of the EASTS-ISC.

- Some desirable (but not definite) fields might be described in the recruitment.

2) Terms of ISC members:

- Four years (two conferences), re-appointable

3) Recruiting procedure:

- Recruiting publicly through the web of the EASTS, moreover asking existing ISC members to encourage promising candidates of their acquaintance to apply for.

- Making a *recruitment sub-committee* in ISC, and examine the candidates who applied with CV and one English-written refereed-paper.

Appendix: Organization of ISC

1) International Scientific Committee, ISC

2) ISC Chairman: appointed by the Board of the EASTS

3) ISC Members: appointed by the chairman

4) ISC Special Advisors to the Chairman, SAC: appointed by the chairman when required

Prof.Dr.Laurence Lan, and Prof.Dr.Toru Tamura

5) ISC Vice Chairmen: appointed by the chairman (one from ISC members of the next conference area)

6) Topic-Group(s), TG(s): set up by research field (10-20 groups)

7) Topic-Group members: 4-6 ISC members belonged

8) Topic-Group Chief, TGC: appointed by the chairman

9) Topic-Group Deputy Chief, TGDC: appointed by TGC when necessary

10) Sub-Committee(s): set-up temporally in ISC for some specific missions by the chairman when needed, for example:

Recruitment sub-committee

Research-vision sub-committee

Awarding sub-committee, etc…

11) ISC Secretariat:

12) ISC Secretariat Staff: appointed by the chairman. Full-time staff takes ISC membership, though not belonged to TGs.

Paper Management Team, PMT

Dr.Sano, Chief of PMT (Nagaoka Institute of Technology)

Dr.Kato (Univ. of Tokyo)

Ms.Saga (PMT Secretary for peak-time job)

Special Mission Staff, SMS:

Prof.Dr.Kumbota (Saitama Univ.) temporally in charge of recruiting

Prof.Dr.Nakamura (Yokohama National Univ.) temporally in charge of paper-review procedure

Communication System Manager, CSM:

Dr.Okamura (Yokohama National Univ.)

Adjutant to the Chairman, ATC:

Dr.Shimizu (Univ. of Tokyo)