Ten Goals for IEA - Revisited.
Martin Helander, President of IEA, 1994-1997

In 1994, at the beginning of my term as President, I suggested ten priorities for the work of IEA (Helander, 1995). At the end of my term I revisited these goals. Several were achieved during my term. There were also some long term policies which IEA should consider for the future.

1. **IEA is the only global organization in ergonomics and must take a global responsibility.**

IEA must support ergonomics globally. Partnerships with other international or regional organizations are important for collaboration, such as United Nations, the European Union, and ASEAN. Few of them employ ergonomists. Their awareness must increase and IEA may look for opportunities to train employees of these organizations. I taught a course in Ergonomics to Employees of UNDP in New York City. They were interested – however naïve about the tools and methodologies that are available to an ergonomist.

During 1996-1997 our contacts with ILO and WHO improved. This is partly because some new officials at ILO and WHO are supportive of ergonomics. IEA also benefited from the joint publication with ILO of Ergonomics Checkpoints in 1996.

One problem in maintaining contacts with international organizations has been their frequent reorganizations, shifting levels of funding and change of personnel. We can, therefore, not wait for them to take the initiative. Rather, IEA must aggressively keep approaching UN and other organizations and present proposals.

2. **IEA must continue to support ergonomics in countries where it has been neglected.**

There are two reasons. The first is simply that we want to help. We can help these countries by expanding their knowledge of ergonomics through training and education. The second is that IEA wishes to recruit more members. In order to do so, one must first help in creating the necessary infrastructure and organization of ergonomists in the country. An ergonomics association must be organized.

During the period 1994-1997 IEA training activities increased: Courses were held in: Colombia (two courses), Hong Kong, Indonesia, Lithuania, Latvia, Malaysia (three courses), South Africa (five course), and Thailand (two course). Some of these were in corporation with ILO and WHO. The IEA Committee for IDC's, chaired by Kamiel Vanwonterghem, was responsible for these activities.

IEA can also stimulate ergonomics by supporting conferences in strategic locations, where ergonomics is underdeveloped. Today, there are only a few activities on the large continents of Africa and South America. Through the help of the Brazilian and the South African Ergonomics Societies, IEA has been able to stimulate interest in neighbor countries.

Our book donation program has flourished. It is now organized as 10 library
depositories in IDC's around the world. The student chapter of HFES at SUNY Buffalo, NY took an initiative to collect books from HFES members. This was extremely successful, and we are very grateful for their initiative. To sustain this program, we need more donations of current textbooks and volumes of journals.

3. **IEA must remain at the forefront of technological and scientific development.**

   The Science and Technology Committee (Chair: Holger Luczak) carries the main responsibility. The committee organizes 16 Technical Groups, which arrange conferences, symposia and meetings of expert groups. New technical groups were proposed by federated societies and by interested individuals. Inactive technical groups were dissolved.

   During the time period 1994 - 1997 IEA sponsored 17 conferences around the world - about 6 per year. Many of these were held in IDC's. All of them were attended to by members of the IEA Council and the Executive.

   The Technical Groups helped in soliciting papers by organizing paper sessions for the IEA Congress in Tampere. About half of the papers were sponsored by Technical Groups.

4. **IEA must disseminate information about ergonomics on a global scale.**

   The newsletter Ergonomics International, (edited by Stephan Konz), has been distributed quarterly as a section of the journal Ergonomics as well as via Internet. It is also mailed to about 250 individuals around the world.

   The Publication and Promotions Committee established the "IEA Press" with the main objective of making conference proceedings available at low cost.

   The IEA Journal of Ergonomics Research will appear as a refereed Web journal. It was established for a similar purpose as IEA Press: to make information available at low cost - particularly to IDC's.

5. **IEA must facilitate global communication among professionals.**

   1994-1997 was the time when global communications exploded thorough the Internet. IEA was well prepared, and we established immediately effective e-mail communication among members of the Executive. For the future it would be desirable if all Council members would have an e-mail account. This would simplify communication around the world.

   An IEA Web page was established. IEA Federated Societies and Sustaining Members should link themselves to this page. By organizing all Federated Societies, the IEA Web page can become the most comprehensive Internet source of Ergonomics information. In the future IEA may try to organize an international register of E-mail addresses to ergonomics professionals.

   The first Web conference in ergonomics, the CybErg conference, was organized by Curtin University, Australia, and was a great success.

6. **IEA must continue its leadership role in developing guidelines for educational accreditation and professional certification.**
Draft guidelines for certification of ergonomics professionals were developed by the Education and Training Committee (Chair: Margaret Bullock). The final guidelines were published in 1999. The guidelines will continue to evolve as the field of ergonomics changes.

7. **IEA must increase its budget and seek new sources of funding.**
IEA relies on volunteer work, and for that reason it is possible to accomplish much at little cost. Current funding is provided by member societies, by donations, and by income from conferences. Our annual budget is insufficient. For the future we must seek additional sources of revenue, more substantial donations and trust funds from individuals, sustaining membership fees from international corporations, grants for research and development, profits from publications, and so forth. Lack of funding restricts IEA activities, and makes it difficult for IEA to sustain its international role.

Ian Noy designed a Donors brochure

8. **IEA Council members must be given opportunities to help with IEA business, for example by doing special projects.**
Some council members are already active on committees, but there are many opportunities for special projects of limited duration. I encourage Council members to bring up new initiatives where they would like to be involved. One very important activity is listed below in 9.

9. **IEA must actively recruit new members.**
In particular, the number of Sustaining (company) Memberships must be increased. These validate IEA as important to industry and creates opportunities for international collaboration. The membership fees make a valuable contribution to IEA budget. This activity rests with the Policy and Development Committee (Chair: Ogden Brown Jr.)

The IEA Fellowship was instituted.

10. **IEA must promote an international debate on the goals of ergonomics.**
Ergonomics is practised differently in many parts of the world. To develop a common understanding, IEA must lead a global debate on the goals and means of ergonomics.

Ergonomics must be explained or packaged, so that the message is easy to understand for non-professionals: The purpose of ergonomics is to design systems that enhance productivity, safety and user satisfaction (Helander, 1997). With a clear message, we can effectively promote ergonomics.

References:
