I am happy to report that our business meeting in Houston was a success, despite the technical chair who yakked too much and cut into the social part of the meeting. We had over 30 attendees, both current members and non-members. Several of the non-member attendees indicated that they were planning on joining next year. The overall exchange of ideas was very good. Some of the more important discussion items are covered elsewhere in this newsletter.

What I wanted to briefly talk about is our progress. As a technical group, we are addressing the things that led to our being on probation. Membership is up from the beginning of the year and I am confident that this trend will continue. With this newsletter, we will have published 5 during the calendar year of 1999, a really prolific rate of publication. Hopefully, everyone has found the newsletter to be interesting. We have run a successful election for officers and we are beginning to build some momentum for better interaction between members. All and all, this was a successful year. I want to thank John Winters, Dennis White, Laurel Allender, Tom Enderwick, and John Shafer for all their outstanding efforts over the year on behalf of the SDTG.

To sustain and build on the momentum from this year, there are a number of actions that we need to take. I am confident that we will continue to meet the newsletter publica-

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Summary of SDTG FY99 Business Meeting

As stated in the Note from the Chair, the Houston SDTG business meeting was a rousing success. There was a good discussion of a number of topics. The following summarizes some of the more critical discussion items.

State of the SDTG – Financially, the SDTG is doing well. We started the year with a balance of $10,874. During the year we had dues of $755 and expenses of $1,055 which leaves us with a balance of $10,090. In terms of membership, we started the year with 141. As of 8/31/99, we had 157 members – showing positive growth. We published 4 newsletters, not including this one, which is very prolific for a TG.

Skills taxonomy – The SDTG has made more progress on the skills taxonomy than many of the other TGs, but we need to take it further. Kevin Bracken graciously volunteered to lead the continued development, but he will need help from others in the SDTG.

Resolution to provide financial support to an IEA2000 attendee – During the COTG meeting, a request was made for financial support for travel costs for IEA2000 presenters from developing countries. Essentially, many individuals from developing countries who are presenting papers may not be able to afford all of the travel costs. HFES is providing some financial assistance but also requested that the TGs explore whether they could also provide some assistance. A motion was put before the members attending the SDTG business meeting to “provide $1,000 towards travel costs for an IEA2000 paper presenter from a developing country with the stipulation that first choice for our support would go to someone who is presenting during a SDTG session. If there are none, then the support would be used as

Chairman...

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Chairman...
Business Meeting cont.

SDTG Website – Many of the TGs are developing websites and the COTG will be establishing a web server in early 2000 to host TG websites. This provides an opportunity for the SDTG to go on-line. A number of questions and issues were brought up during the business meeting regarding an SDTG website. These included the following:

- Content. How should we represent the SDTG on the web? What should the site link to other than HFES?
- Services. What services should the website provide such as list server, file down and uploading, discussion threads, etc?
- Lifetime email. The COTG is planning on providing a lifetime email address for members of TGs. Can there be aliasing to forward emails to one central email address for those with multiple email boxes?
- Maintenance. How and who should maintain the website?
- Need. Does the SDTG really need and want a website?

To fully address these questions, the SDTG needs a small working group composed of interested individuals to work with the newsletter editor and technical chair. In particular, we need individuals with good knowledge of web technology. Please contact Larry Avery if interested.

That hits the highlights of the meeting. Questions? Please contact either Larry Avery or John Winters.

Dr. Robert Waters of DOE is looking for volunteers to help the US TAG to the ISO Technical Committee 159 by reviewing and commenting on emerging standards. There are a number of standards that are under development, including:

- ISO 9241 - Ergonomic Requirements for Office work with Visual Display Terminals.
- ISO 14915 - Ergonomics of Human System Interaction.
- ISO 13407 - Human Centered Design Process for Interactive systems.
- ISO 11064 “Ergonomics for Control Centers.

Dr. Waters is particularly concerned with ISO 11064. This emerging standard is, in essence, a system development standard. Dr. Waters, as well as I, feel that the SDTG of HFES would be a good source for reviewers and provide the SDTG with an opportunity to have an impact. The review is primarily done by email. Interested members of the SDTG should contact Bob Waters at Robert.Waters@hq.doe.gov.
Welcome to this issue of the System Development Technical Group Newsletter! This publication is published bi-monthly to provide information to, and foster discussion among, the SDTG.

As a member of the human factors engineering department within a large company, I served as an internal consultant on a variety of projects. We would have primary projects in which we were members of a design team and we would also provide human factor support on an "as needed" basis. "As needed" can be translated into emergency phone requests. I was still new to my position when I received a call requesting information about the best color for a warning within a system interface. I began to explain that this was a complex issue and that the overall context of the system needed to be considered and that I could not give an answer until I looked at the system. After hanging up, the phone in the next cubical rang and I heard my colleague answer, "Orange will be the best." After I confirmed that it was the same request, he explained that the designers will make a choice one way or the other and more often than not a best guess based on basic human factors guidelines will improve the final design.

CHECKBOX

Submitted by Mike Paley

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
⇒ Join the ISO Technical Committee!
⇒ Member’s Meeting
⇒ Latest Dates for IEA 2000

Checkbox is a regular feature of real-life applications where human factors either was or was not implemented, and the results. If you have any stories - success or horror - you would like to share, send them in to john_winters@teambci.com!