



PREFACE

"Eusprig will never last beyond the first year" said a work colleague to me in July 2000 as he looked at a promotional pamphlet for our first symposium. 'Yes we will' I retorted and I am now so pleased to say Three years on 'I told you so'. But who would have believed it when we advertised our first symposium and waited nervously for people to show interest.

Perhaps one of the reasons we have kept going is that the main reason for our existence still exists. As Ray Butler, our first chairman pointed out in the preface to the first proceedings, Spreadsheet errors are still the rule, rather than the exception. Jobs and money are lost through business mistakes based on defective spreadsheet developments'. Ray's words ring as true today as in July 2000. We may not appear to be any closer to a solution to the general problem of errors but perhaps we, as EuSpRIG, are now bringing together more interested parties in the business and academic communities and starting to counter the perception of auditors that spreadsheets are not "proper systems", and by managers that spreadsheet developments are in some way trivial.

This year we have placed the emphasis on corporate risks because, in the end, this is where the spreadsheet errors have their effect - incorrect figures and interpretations leading to incorrect decisions affecting corporate welfare. And we have not been disappointed - this year we have received contributions from the UK, Austria, New Zealand and Canada. The message is being passed around the world and it is heartening to see people in both academia and industry responding and contributing to the general discussion. To this end, we hope that this years papers and management summaries will prove enjoyable and rewarding reading.

Yet again, we have received some excellent academic papers each of which has been reviewed by at least three referees with comments passed back to the authors. To encourage more input from professionals and practitioners we have this year encouraged the inclusion of management summaries in the proceedings. The message of the past two years has been that practitioners have plenty to say but not the time in which to write formal academic papers to be rigorously refereed; their preference was always to produce something shorter to be less rigorously vetted than formal papers. We have therefore this year included management summaries in the proceedings; we hope that this process will encourage more input from industry in the future.

Thanks are due to: Patrick Cleary and Ray Butler who have carried the burden of organising this symposium, The members of the EuSpRIG committee for their support, Friends and supporters from our sponsoring bodies for their belief in us, All the session chairs.

Thanks also to all of you who have contributed papers and management summaries for inclusion in the timetable - without you there **would probably be no EuSpRIG.**

Please - enjoy the symposium, spread the word, share the knowledge.

David Chadwick, Chairman, EuSpRIG
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