



PREFACE

Our fourth conference and growing stronger.

That first meeting in March 1999 seems only a distant memory now when, on a cold blowy day in Manchester, Ray Butler, Pat Cleary and myself sat down to start Eusprig. But it could never have succeeded without the zealous efforts of everybody who later became involved the members of the committee and all those who submitted papers, reviewed papers, printed materials, travelled around and gave talks and those of you who wrote articles for the media. Thank you all.

Yet again, we have received some excellent submissions 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 continued the approach of last year and particularly encouraged the inclusion of management summaries and product demonstrations. We have recognised for some time that practitioners have plenty to say but often not the time in which to say it and without the resources to reference formal academic texts. Such submissions are therefore not subjected to such rigorous review as formal academic papers but they are definitely welcome.

This year we have placed the emphasis on spreadsheet quality concerning the wide range of different models from the ad hoc 'quick and dirty' to the more formal of corporate significance which are subject to organized quality control. Once again, we have not been disappointed for we have received contributions from the UK, Austria, Australia, Canada and the USA. It is good to see that the EuSpRIG message is slowly being passed around the world.

The EuSpRIG 2003 conference has become the climax to a year in which EuSpRIG committee members have again been active in spreading the word and, in many cases, have been 'invited' by other organisations to give talks. Last November, EuSpRIG members gave an invited talk at the IFIP conference in Bonn and later, in July, did the same at the INFORMS conference in Istanbul. At both of these formal conferences, the EuSpRIG events were well received. In addition, in March, a talk was given to the British Computer Society Software Quality Management Group in Southampton and received a mention on a local radio programme!

In addition, this year has seen the start of the EuSpRIG/ISACA Student prize. ISACA (Northern England) have agreed to sponsor a prize of 200 euros to the best student paper presented at a EuSpRIG conference. Students at higher education institutes and colleges throughout Europe are eligible for the prize which will be widely promoted in the coming year. Although too late for any entrants for this year, it is hoped that next year will see the first award of this prize.

We are indebted, too, to the other organisations who have given their support to this year's event. The ECDL Foundation (European Computer Driving Licence), who produce a recognised sought after qualification in basic IT skills, have taken an interest in our work perhaps this will lead to a closer liaison which may be useful for both organisations. Thanks also to the Irish Computer Society and to KPMG Ireland who have given their support.



Of course, I must not forget the many individuals who have helped make this conference possibly our best to date :

Patrick O'Beime, who has done so much to make this conference a success. Patrick has been so successful in gaining sponsorship, support and media coverage for the event without him, as our contact in Dublin, this conference could not have occurred;
Dean Buckner, of the UK Financial Services Authority, for agreeing to be our invited speaker for this year;
Patrick Cleary, for his help as EuSpRIG secretary, and his help on the organising committee;
Grenville Croll, for keeping in touch with all our contacts, and for travelling to events often at great distance and often with me as the only company!
Ray Butler and the ISACA (Northern England) committee for their continued support of EuSpRIG and their commitment to the EuSpRIG/ISACA Student prize;
Graham MacDonald, EuSpRIG Treasurer, for keeping his eye on the money and stopping us becoming overdrawn;
David Ward, of KPMG, for assistance in proof reading and preparing the proceedings; and
All members of the EuSpRIG committee, not forgetting Leon Strous of the Netherlands and Markus Clermont of Austria who help us be truly 'European'.

In addition, I must not forget perhaps the most important people of all those of you who have submitted papers to the conference, whether accepted or not, all of you have contributed to making this a successful event. You, along with all the delegates just coming along to see what we are up to, are the true backbone of EuSpRIG 2003 and without you there would probably be no EuSpRIG.

Lastly, I must say a big 'thank you' to Ray Panko for his personal endorsement of what we do. Ray has done so much for many years to bring the world's attention to the spreadsheet problem and to support fledgling groups, such as our own EuSpRIG, in their own endeavours. I doubt there is any one of us who has not visited his website and quoted his work in their own papers. Thanks Ray.

Please enjoy the conference, spread the word, share the knowledge and keep in touch.

David Chadwick, Chairman, EuSpRIG

University of Greenwich, June 2003