

Newsletter ORAHS

November 2003



Introduction

Dear colleagues/friends! Please find here the autumn 2003 edition of our ORAHS Working Group Newsletter. With this newsletter we intend to give information on activities of the Working Group to its members and others who are interested in the Working Group. If you have any relevant information, or if you want to write a short contribution for the next newsletter you can send it to Sally Brailsford (scb@soton.ac.uk).

Agenda of coming meetings

January 18 – 21 2004

International Conference on Health Sciences Simulation, Western Simulation Multiconference, San Diego, CA.

Information: Sally Brailsford, University of Southampton, e-mail: scb@soton.ac.uk, or Ruth Davies, University of Warwick, email ruth.davies@wbs.ac.uk.

March 31 – April 2 2004

Fourth IMA Conference on Quantitative Modelling in the Management of Health Care Salford, U.K.

Information: Sally Brailsford, University of Southampton, e-mail: scb@soton.ac.uk

June 27 – July 2, 2004

Thirtieth meeting of the European Working Group on Operational Research Applied to Health Services (ORAHS) at Stockholm Gerontology Research Center Stockholm, Sweden.

Information: Mårten Lagergren, Stockholm Gerontology Research Center, e-mail: Marten.Lagergren@aldrecentrum.se

July 4 – July 7, 2004

EURO XX Conference
Rhodes, Greece

Information: ysiskos@unipi.gr

July 24 – July 29, 2005

Thirty first meeting of ORAHS
University of Southampton, United Kingdom

Information: Sally Brailsford, University of Southampton, e-mail: scb@soton.ac.uk

July 24 – August 5, 2005

EURO Summer Institute on “OR in Health”. University of Southampton, UK.

Information: Sally Brailsford, University of Southampton, e-mail: scb@soton.ac.uk

ORAHS 2003 Meeting in Prague *(report by Martin Dlouhy)*

The latest, already 29th meeting of the EURO Working Group "Operational Research Applied to Health Services" took place from July 27 to August 1 in Prague, at the Faculty of Informatics and Statistics, University of Economics. The statistics say that 48 participants from Europe, Japan, Canada and Brazil enjoyed the conference, and 16 accompanying persons enjoyed the social program. We heard 35 presentations, which dealt with very different topics, and all of them were excellent and interesting. They showed us how wide the area for applied operational research in health services is. The good news for the ORAHS family is that new young researchers presented their papers. Congratulations Arielle, Renata and Suchi! During the social program participants explored the city of Prague, visited the town of Cesky Krumlov, appreciated the chateaux of Nelahozeves, tasted wine in Melnik, and all that combined with very nice weather! A first picture shows the ORAHS group at the time of sunset in Melnik, where the rivers of Labe and Vltava come together. For the conference proceedings, which will be published approximately in Spring/Summer 2004, seventeen papers were submitted and are currently reviewed.



By coincidence, the organization of ORAHS conference was my last activity at the University of Economics in Prague. Two weeks after the conference, I left for the USA, where I will be a scholar at the School of Public Health, University of California, Berkeley.



My stay at Berkeley is sponsored by National Institutes of Health - Fogarty International scholarship. The objective of program is to provide one or two year public health training for post-doctoral scholars from the Czech Republic. A second picture shows myself in Berkeley. Well, I hope I will have an opportunity to present my research from Berkeley at the forthcoming ORAHS meetings.

Martin Dlouhy

ORAHS 2004 Meeting in Stockholm *(report by Mårten Lagergren)*

The ORAHS Working Group meets every year for one week in a different host country. In 2004 the meeting will take place in Stockholm, Sweden. Mårten Lagergren has just sent out the announcement for the meeting. He says “It is my pleasure to announce that the 30th meeting of the ORAHS group will take place in Stockholm at the Stockholm Gerontology Research Center June 27 - July 2, 2004. You are all cordially invited to what I hope will become a both interesting, instructive, inspiring and inforgettable week! The theme of the meeting will be: Quantative methods in aged care planning and operations. A website will be created in due course for information and registration. The programme will follow the traditional formula - now successfully tested at so many occasions. Very welcome to Stockholm and Sweden in Summer 2004! On behalf of the Swedish ORAHS organising committee, Marten Lagergren”.

ORAHS 2005 Meeting in Southampton *(report by Sally Brailsford)*

ORAHS 2005 will be held at the University of Southampton, in the south of England, from 24 to 29 July 2005. The meeting will be held in parallel with a EURO Summer Institute on “OR in Health”. EURO Summer Institutes (ESI) are an instrument EURO has established for encouraging good social and working relationships between young European OR scientists. The duration of an ESI is normally about 2 weeks, and ours will run from 24 July to 5 August. The main purpose of an ESI is to establish a network of outstanding young people who will continue to work together in the future. Participation can be considered an honour as it is limited to a group of 15 - 20 young people, who have some experience in the chosen field, and have written a paper which has not yet been published or submitted for publication. Each national OR Society can send one National Candidate. The ESI is free of charge to the participants - all travel expenses are paid for by the national OR Societies, and EURO covers most of the accommodation and conference costs. The organisers have to cover the remaining costs with the help of their National OR Society, and the UK OR Society has already promised us €3000. Public and private sponsors will also be approached, including the University of Southampton.

During the ESI every participant gives a presentation of her or his work as a starting point for discussion. Papers for a special issue of EJOR (the European Journal of Operational Research) are prepared during the ESI. We plan to include ORAHS papers in the special issue as well. EURO considers social activities to be an extremely important part of an ESI, as a means to encourage friendliness. The ESI participants will join in the ORAHS social events in the first week, and will have their own (rather more energetic) social activities such as hiking or ice-skating in the second week!

Several of the international speakers from ORAHS have already agreed to stay on for the second week to run tutorial sessions at the ESI. We have invited Ed Kaplan from Yale to be the keynote speaker at both meetings. Ed is best known for his work on HIV and AIDS and is winner of the 1992 Franz Edelman Prize, the 1994 Lanchester Prize and the 2002 INFORMS President's Prize. During the first week, ESI participants will be able to attend some ORAHS sessions but will also have their own sessions.

Hopefully, this will introduce a lot of "new blood" to ORAHS, building on the recent trend at Prague of encouraging PhD students to participate. The Organising Committee for the ESI are Dr Sally Brailsford, Dr Paul Harper, Prof Chris Potts (University of Southampton), Dr Chris Sherlaw-Johnson, and Dr Martin Utley (University of London). The ESI Programme Committee consists of the above, plus Prof Ruth Davies (University of Warwick, UK), Prof Jan Vissers (University of Eindhoven, The Netherlands), Prof Marion Rauner (University of Vienna, Austria), Prof Vanda de Angelis (University of Rome, Italy), and Prof Michael Carter (University of Toronto, Canada).

Southampton is a vibrant and lively city on the south coast of England, about 75 minutes from London by train. Its rapidly growing airport has flights to many European destinations. The cathedral cities of Winchester, Salisbury and Chichester are nearby and it hosts one of the region's largest shopping centres. The scenic Isle of Wight (a possible idea for the day trip?), the ancient "New" Forest, historic Portsmouth with the Mary Rose and HMS Victory, and the beaches and shops of Bournemouth and Brighton, are all within easy reach. Home of the Titanic, the QE2 and the new Queen Mary 2, Southampton is still a premier port and its bustling marina regularly plays host to major international yachting events. We hope to see everyone here in 2005!

EURO- info

EURO has an extensive website with information on EURO conferences and EURO Working Groups. The EURO vice-president 2 in charge of the Working Groups is Professor Chris Potts, Faculty of Mathematical Studies, University of Southampton, who is not only *ex officio* a member of our working group, but has already attended some of our meetings (the 2001 meeting in Vienna and the 2003 meeting in Prague). For more information about EURO, see www.euro-online.org. A new version of the website has become available since December 2001. Working Groups can now update their own information, and annual reports of Working Groups can be printed from the site directly.

Web-site news (*report by Sally Brailsford*)

The ORAHS website has been updated this year by Sally's PhD student Korina Katsaliaki with additional information about ORAHS Link Members and Ordinary Members - please check if you are there, and if the details are correct, and email Sally (scb@soton.ac.uk) if they are not. The website address is: <http://www.soton.ac.uk/~orahsweb>. It is now possible to

email the entire working group at the address orahs-list@lists.soton.ac.uk. We welcome ideas and suggestions for the website.

Short communications

Karl Doerner and Marc Reimann, University of Vienna, are editing a Focused Issue on "Logistics of Health Care Management" for Computers & Operations Research. The aim of this focused issue is to collect papers dealing with topics relevant for the logistics of health care management. Applications in this area are characterised by the importance of customer service considerations, which include timeliness and quality of the service. From a broader perspective cost efficiency is necessary to ensure ongoing service in the long run, particularly as many service providers are non profit organisations. Topics of interest include but are not limited to:

- Logistics of perishable goods (e.g., transportation and storage of blood)
- Logistics of emergency services (e.g., ambulance relocation)
- Logistics of mobile home care units (e.g., assignment and scheduling for nurses and volunteers)
- Hospital location and planning models (e.g., personnel planning for weekend- and nightshifts)
- Logistics of vaccination programs (e.g., hepatitis vaccination in third world/developing countries)

The methodological focus of the special issue is on optimisation models and algorithms dealing with aspects of the problems discussed above. In particular papers at the interface of Operations Research and Computer Science are solicited. The deadline for submission is November 30, 2003. Manuscripts must be written in English and should be submitted in ps or pdf format to karl.doerner@univie.ac.at or marc.reimann@univie.ac.at. Formatting instructions for the submissions are available at <http://authors.elsevier.com/>.

Rose Baker (University of Salford) and Paul Harper (University of Southampton) are editing a special issue on 'Mathematical Modelling for Healthcare Management' for the IMA Journal of Management Mathematics. The aim is to publish papers demonstrating the application of mathematical modelling to health care management. Papers should ideally have a significant mathematical content, and address healthcare management issues of topical interest. The mathematics should be innovative or original in the context of the problem it is addressing and/or represent a genuine application of interesting mathematics to healthcare management. The scope is: mathematical modelling, statistical analysis, or use of OR techniques. Healthcare management covers topics such as patient flow, performance monitoring, resource allocation, demand forecasting and modelling the effect of interventions among many others. The submission deadline is end of February 2004. Abstracts should be submitted before the end of December 2003. More information via Prof. Rose Baker (r.d.baker@salford.ac.uk) or Dr. Paul Harper (P.R.Harper@maths.soton.ac.uk).

Austrian Working Group on OR in Health. Marion Rauner founded – together with colleagues - this summer the Austrian working group "OR in Health Care" within the Austrian OR society. Margit Sommersguter-Reichmann from the University of Graz is the co-head. The first meeting will be scheduled on Jan 29th at the head organization of the Austrian social security companies in Vienna. We aim at linking this group closely to the German and European working groups in the health care fields.

Simulation Workshop. A two day simulation workshop in Birmingham - which includes health applications – will be held on March 23rd and March 24th 2004. Abstracts and papers are needed by the end of the November. See www.theorsociety.com and click on Conferences.

US panel of OR Scientist visits Europe. A panel of US OR Scientists visited Europe in the week from 2nd to 8th of November 2004. The purpose of the study, organized by the US National Science Foundation, was to clarify how operations research and management science techniques are best used to investigate, improve and manage a wide range of problems related to health care delivery at all levels. The members of the panel were: Prof. Francois Sainfort (Georgia Tech, chair), Prof. Diwakar Gupta (University of Minnesota), Prof. John Blake (Dalhousie University, substituting Michael Carter, who had to undergo surgery), Prof. Ronald Rardin (Nsf, observer). Visits were made to the London UK (where they met with Steve Gallivan, Martin Utley, Sally Brailsford, Ruth Davies, Paul Harper), Berlin Germany (Marion Rauner, Reinhard Busse), Rotterdam (Frans Rutten and Jan Vissers) and Fontainebleau France (Stephen Chick). The report of the panel will be presented in the workshop of NSF, as announced below.

NSF workshop on OR applied to health care delivery systems. The National Science Foundation (a US based governmental agency) has announced a workshop to gather information and disseminate it to government decision makers and the research community on the worldwide status and trends in OR as applied to health care delivery systems. The output of the workshop is a white paper intended to provide direction to the NSF about research opportunities and funding requirements for health care. All members of ORAHS are invited to attend the workshop. The workshop is scheduled for December 16, 2003 and will take place at the Agency for Health Care Research and Quality in Rockland Maryland. Full details on the workshop and registration forms are available at www.wtec.org/or/workshop. More information via John Blake (john.blake@dal.ca).

Ruth Davies Professor of Operational Research and Systems in Warwick. She sends us the following information on her new position. “I have started recently as Professor of Operational Research and Systems in the Business School at the University of Warwick. Warwick (pronounced without the second w – “Worick”) is a 1960s campus university on the outskirts of Coventry, built on Warwickshire farmland and reasonably close to the historic towns of Warwick and Stratford-on-Avon. The University, which has a full range of undergraduate and postgraduate courses, has grown in size from year to year. It has a large Business School and has recently established a Medical School. Ruth says that she currently is building links with the new Medical School and Teaching Hospital. She is maintaining her research in the use of simulation in patient disease modelling and has a continuing interest in the appropriateness of different modelling approaches to assess resource requirements and cost-effectiveness. She has already designed a new course for the MSc students called OR applications in Health and Community Services. Ruth is maintaining her links with the group at Southampton and hopes to take part in joint projects with Sally Brailsford and Paul Harper in the future. Suchi Patel, whom you will remember from the Prague meeting, has also transferred to Warwick to complete her PhD under Ruth’s supervision. Ruth hopes that colleagues from Europe, indeed from all over the world, will visit her there. Her address is: Warwick Business School, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL, UK, Tel: 44 (0)24 7652 2475, Email: Ruth.Davies@wbs.ac.uk. On behalf of the Working Group we congratulate her with the appointment and wish her success for the future.

Babies! Yes, identical twins for granddad Duncan. Little did Sally know, that her outcry for news for the newsletter (“promotions, meetings, new projects, babies, whatever!”) did raise a response from the southern hemisphere by Duncan Boldy . “I don't know if this counts, but as you mentioned babies, Ruth and I are about to become grandparents of identical twins. Feel free to include this vital information, should more OR type information be relatively boring and/or thin on the ground. Go Pompy! Duncan”.