

Report on Activities of GfA

during IEA-Council Meeting on August 31st and September 1st, 2002 in Santiago/Chile

On behalf of the President of the "Gesellschaft für Arbeitswissenschaft" (Board cp. Fig. 1) some activities may be mentioned which during the past and in the future hopefully will contribute to the fostering of Ergonomics as a science and a profession.



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Fig. 1: GfA Executive Board

The Gesellschaft für Arbeitswissenschaft is not a country based but rather a language based society with about 650 members from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland – despite the fact that meanwhile, e.g., SwissErgo has become an IEA Federated Society.

Every year, 2 conferences are organized, whereby the **Spring Conference** principally is a more scientifically-oriented event in order to provide a forum for young ergonomists and work scientists, and the **Fall Conference** is more practitioner-oriented. The **last conference** in February this year was held in **Linz/Austria** and was dedicated to the topic

Ergonomics in a Pluralistic Society

with more macro than micro ergonomics contributions. The topic of the forthcoming 2-day Fall Conference (in September) is

Modern Concepts of Ergonomics Office Design and Prevention.

The **forthcoming Annual Spring Conference** in the year **2003** will be held in Munich on May 7th - 9th.

On occasion of the **50th Anniversary** of the Foundation of our Society it will be a joint International event together with the **XVII. Annual International Occupational Ergonomics and Safety Conference**. The conference will also host the **Kick-Off Meeting** of the **Federation of European Ergonomics Societies (FEES)**, i.e., a network or regional group of re-united societies that are already federated members of IEA. The conference (with papers in English and German) is being planned around the theme

Ergonomics: Quality of Work and Products in Enterprises of the Future

and is expected to attract participation from all over the world. An **International Scientific Advisory Committee** meanwhile has been established comprising more than 50 renowned experts in the field. Flyers and the conference homepage – www.munich2003.com – provide more information in detail, e.g., the abstracts and full paper deadlines (October 15th 2002; February 15th 2003).

But organizing this conference does not mean that there will be no efforts to contribute substantially to the **IEA Triennial Congress in Korea**. Flyers of the 2003 IEA Congress have been distributed together with the Journal Z.Arb.wiss., and, of course, a notice has been published in our **Ergonomics Journal** and the **Society's Newsletter**. Probably not just the German **Chairs** of some **IEA Technical Committees** (*Agriculture: Landau; Human Reliability: Bubb*) will contribute special sessions and papers but also a couple of colleagues who did so in San Diego 2000 or Tampere 1997. Some of the active members of the GfA – as may be known – have permanently contributed to IEA congresses since the early eighties.

Concerning the **Maastricht Congress** in the year **2006 co-operation** has been documented between

- the Nederlandse Vereniging voor Ergonomie,
- the Belgian Ergonomics Society, and
- the Gesellschaft für Arbeitswissenschaft

by letters signed by the Presidents of the Societies.

The **role of the GfA** as a **partner** in organizing the XVIth Congress of the IEA will consist, e.g., in

- participation in the programme committee and
- facilitating (arranging) technical visits (in industries and research centers)

in Germany.

Furthermore, the GfA will help to attract exhibitions and sponsors, and, of course, will provide any other suggestion that will benefit a great congress. Yet, to hold one of the Annual German Conferences as a **special multi-session symposium** will be a problem, due to the date. 10th to 14th of July is within the German holiday period and does not coincide with the traditional dates for our Spring and Fall Conferences. There have been made already suggestions for a **joint meeting in autumn** of this year in order to clarify practical cooperation and to write down a To-Do-list for the preparatory phase. Prof. Holger **Luczak**, Head of the Ergonomics Institute of the University of Aachen, which is close to Maastricht, has been nominated as an **intermediator** between the Dutch, the Belgian, and the German Ergonomics Societies.

Finally, it may be mentioned that an **Ergonomics Educational Project** has been brought forward a further step. Until now we do not feature master courses in Ergonomics at the universities. Work Science or Ergonomics in Germany is traditionally rooted in the Mechanical Engineering Departments of Universities or more recently in the Mechanical Engineering with Business Administration curricula. Primarily it is intended to convey the fundamental knowledge (in limited contact hours) which is necessary to utilize existing design possibilities in the "man-work" system (cp. Fig. 2), whilst taking the human characteristics, abilities, needs, and limitations of people into consideration.

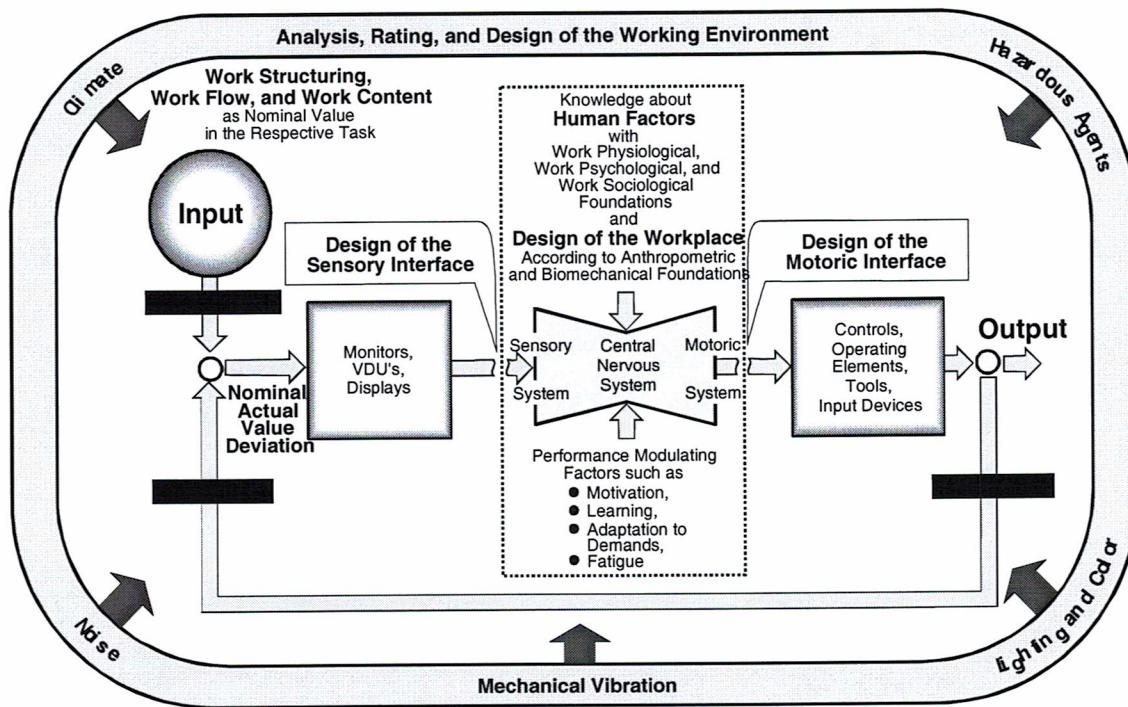


Fig. 2: Visualization of the Micro-Ergonomic Tasks of Work Science: The Adaption of Technologically Feasible System Elements in the Working World to the Human Factors in the Control Cycle "Work"

Of course, in order to optimize human well-being and overall system performance, e.g., tasks, jobs, and systems elements have to be made compatible with human characteristics. Yet, the wide field of micro and macro ergonomics (cp. Fig. 3) seldom can be covered by one professor in a curriculum of engineering study courses. On the other hand, the possibility to combine the various strengths of different centers of excellence offers an extraordinary opportunity for the development of a comprehensive qualification.

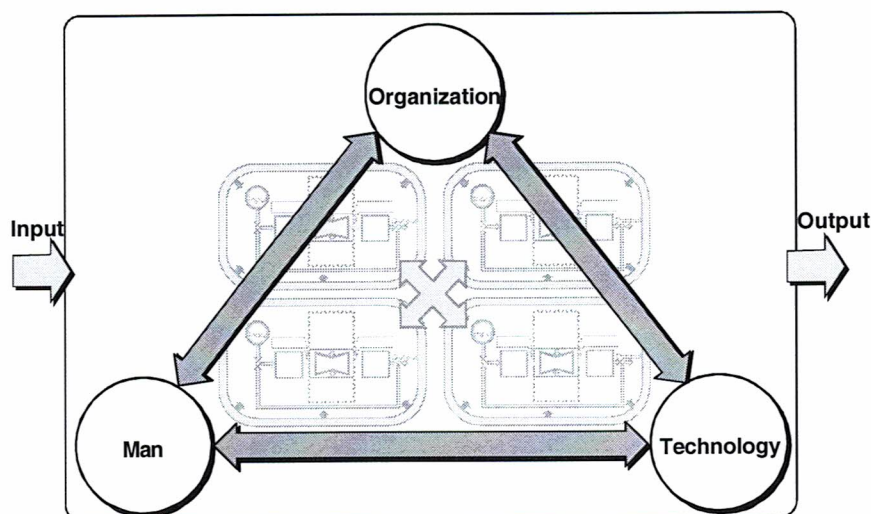


Fig. 3: Macro-Ergonomic Tasks in the Socio-Technical Design of the System "Man – Technology – Organization"

Therefore, the Board of the GfA decided to initiate a **Virtual GfA Academy** which allows **modular course offerings in the form of inter-university cooperation among ergonomics teaching and research institutes, enabling micro- as well as macro-ergonomic design competency in the system "man - technology - organization"** (cp. Fig. 4).

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GfA Academy

**Modular Course Provision
for
"Professional Ergonomists / Work Scientists"
with
Micro- and Macro-Ergonomic Design Competency*
in the System
"Man – Technology – Organization"**

*** Inter-university cooperation among ergonomics teaching and research institutes enabling professional ergonomics qualification and, among others, to fulfill the requirements for the certification of professional ergonomists according to CREE (Centre for the Registration of European Ergonomists)**


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Fig. 4: GfA Academy -Title

Among others, this **qualification for practitioners** will facilitate the possibility to fulfill the requirements for the certification of professional ergonomists according to the **Centre for the Registration of European Ergonomists (CREE)**.

Meanwhile a paper has been published in our Journal explaining this modular course provision in chapters entitled, e.g.,

- International and National Perspectives of the State of Ergonomics Education
- On the Legal-Normative Foundation of Work Science Practice
- Strategic Skills for Comprehensive Work Design
- The Interdisciplinary Design of a Systems-Ergonomic Training Program.

The provisional programme is also present on the website of the Society www.gfa-online.de or on www.mb.uni-siegen.de/GfA-Akademie/GfA-Akademie.pdf (in German). Meanwhile also an English version has been provided.

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