

## Welcome

Visual ergonomics is a diverse discipline. We have members residing in most continents of the world, from a range of professional backgrounds and working in a variety of capacities: academics, consultants and teachers.

Keeping up-to-date might be easy with colleagues in our own geographical area or within our particular work field, when our paths cross at conferences or other scientific meetings. But sometimes it can be eye-opening and professionally rewarding to discover others working in a similar field elsewhere in the world who may have a different perspective to our own.

One of the goals of the International Ergonomics Association is to advance the science and practice of ergonomics at an international level.

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide a forum for informing others within the visual ergonomics world about events or activities related to our discipline. There will be three editions

each year—August, December and April.

You are most welcome to submit to this newsletter short news items, including photographs, related to visual ergonomics activities. I look forward to hearing from you.

Jennifer Long  
IEA Visual Ergonomics TC  
Chairperson

### The IEA Visual Ergonomics Technical Committee

The IEA Visual Ergonomics Technical Committee was initiated by the Nordic Ergonomics Society ErgoVision network in 2008 and formally made an IEA TC in 2009.

Magne Helland (Norway) was the first chairperson. He was assisted by Hans Richter (Sweden) as co-chair and committee members Catherine Burns (Canada), Jennifer Long (Australia) and

Marino Menozzi (Switzerland).

At the IEA World Congress in Brazil in February 2012 our TC had its first meeting. This was very well attended—especially since it was scheduled the morning after the conference party. During the conference our TC also had two visual ergonomics parallel sessions and one joint session with the Work With Computers TC.

The current committee as of February 2012, are Jennifer Long (chair), Hans Richter (co-chair), Magne Helland and Marino Menozzi.



Hans Richter, Jennifer Long and Magne Helland at IEA 2012 in Recife, Brazil.

## Around the world

### APRIL 2012—Denmark

The FAS ErgoVision network meeting in Aarhus Denmark (April 25-26th 2012) was organized by the Scandinavian ErgoVision network. This is funded by the Swedish Council for Working Life and Social Research. Present at the meeting were Werner Osterhaus, Hillevi Hemphälä, Hans Richter, Camilla Lodin, Per Nylén and Allan Toomingas. Items for discussion included the progress of the visual ergonomics definition, a plan for writing a publication about the visual ergonomics definition, planning of sessions for the upcoming Nordic Ergonomics Society meeting in Stockholm, Sweden in August (<http://www.nes2012.se/>) and identifying resources in visual ergonomics within the Nordic countries.

## Upcoming Events

**Nordic Ergonomics Society Annual Conference, Stockholm, Sweden 19-22 August 2012 (Includes 4 parallel sessions on visual ergonomics)**

**International Ergonomics Association World Congress, Melbourne Australia 9-14 August 2015**

### MAY 2012—Sweden

The Swedish Social Insurance Agency (Försäkringskassan) hosted the REHSAM conference in Stockholm, Sweden on the 8th May 2012. Försäkringskassan administers social insurance and ensures that individuals receive benefits and allowances to which they are entitled. One of Försäkringskassan's research and development activities is sponsoring research aimed at preventing sickness and sick leave compensation claims. At this conference, Lars-Olov Lundkvist, Christina Zetterlund and Hans Richter presented the first results of a randomized control study aimed at reducing musculoskeletal complaints in low vision patients. Previous published research has shown that low vision patients (e.g. people with macula degeneration) are exposed to a number of risk factors which place them at a considerably higher risk of acquiring and developing musculoskeletal disorders, such as discomfort and pain. A preliminary cost-benefit analysis indicates that approximately 84 million Swedish crowns (equivalent to about 10 million EUR) can be saved in rehabilitation and sick leave costs if low vision patients are prescribed regular physical exercise. The presentation (in Swedish) can be viewed at YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-QW2tdfYFAk&feature=plcp>. See also <http://rehsamkonferens.se/2012/05/konferensdokumentation/>

### MAY 2012—Australia

Two events with a visual ergonomics theme were hosted by the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society of Australia (HFESA) in Canberra. The first was a joint even between ergonomists and optometrists to explore how the optometry and ergonomics professions can better work together to improve visual comfort in the workplace. There were 25 attendees at this evening event which included a formal presentation and a facilitated discussion led by Jennifer Long. The second was a one day seminar for ergonomists and safety professionals which included speakers on the topics of vision and ageing (Jennifer Long), dual source lighting (Shane Cohen) and computer display resolution (David Gazzard). This is the first time that a whole day event on the topic of visual ergonomics has been hosted by the HFESA in Australia.

### JUNE 2012—USA

The 2012 Marconi meeting, organized by Prof. David Rempel, was held on 9-10 June in Michigan. This year, the meeting's theme was office design, productivity and health. The main goal of the meeting was to discuss research in a friendly environment, with a view to making the research as practical as possible for industry. Attendees at the meeting included 12 researchers and 16 industry technologists/ergonomists e.g. from Microsoft, Apple and Dell. Hans Richter attended the meeting and gave a presentation entitled "Interrelationship between incident eye and neck/scapular area symptoms among professional computer workers". For more information about the OERC, see <http://www.oerc.org/>



Participants of the Marconi 2012 meeting in Michigan organized by the Office Ergonomics Research Committee (OERC).

### Focus on research

Hillevi Hemphälä, a PhD student at Lund University in Sweden, is an optometrist and is currently researching visual ergonomics within sorting facilities. In 2010 she published the paper "Vision ergonomics at recycling centres" (*Applied Ergonomics* 41: 368-375). More recently, she published "A visual ergonomics intervention in mail sorting facilities: Effects on eyes, muscles and

productivity" (*Applied Ergonomics* 43: 217-229). Some of you may have met Hillevi at the IEA Congress in Brazil when she presented on the topic of visual ergonomics in mail sorting facilities.

Hillevi says "The most important finding from my research is discovering a connection between eyestrain and musculoskeletal strain. There is a connection between eyestrain and incorrect spectacle lens power and a

connection between static workload and incorrect spectacle lens power. Individuals with eyestrain can benefit from lighting interventions. Musculoskeletal strain can be reduced with static workloads if people have the correct power in their spectacle lenses."

Hillevi will be finished her PhD within the next 12 months.

Good luck Hillevi.

**NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:  
30TH NOVEMBER 2012  
[jlong@visualergonomics.com.au](mailto:jlong@visualergonomics.com.au)**