

Acceptance Procedure for Archive Journals of AIAA

The Institute publishes seven archival journals. If an Editor-in-Chief of a journal believes that a paper should be submitted to a different AIAA journal of more suitable scope, a transfer will be recommended. In the journals, material may be published in one of the following forms: Survey Paper (broad review of literature in specific field), Full-Length Paper (including abstract), Technical or Engineering Note (short paper disclosing new, significant data or developments of limited scope), or Technical Comment (discussion related to a paper previously published by AIAA). For other, less frequently used types of documents, see the complete list available at <http://www.writetrack.net>. The following paragraphs explain the acceptance procedure for submitted material.

Evaluation of Manuscripts

1. The first step is an examination of submitted papers by the Editor-in-Chief. He or she first tests the manuscript according to the several criteria of subject scope, archival editorial style, apparent technical validity, topical importance, timeliness, relationship to prior publication, conciseness, appropriate references, and length. Papers that vary widely from the prescribed archival style (those written as speeches, ill-defined manuscripts, progress reports or news releases, or those strongly flavored with advertising or sales nuances) will not be considered for publication. If the English is difficult to understand, the author may be requested to rewrite the paper prior to technical evaluation. If the subject scope makes the paper more suitable to one of the other AIAA journals, the Editor-in-Chief may recommend a transfer. If, in his or her judgment, the paper obviously fails in the areas of technical validity and/or advance over prior publication, the Editor-in-Chief can reject it, giving the author the reasons for rejection, or request that the author revise it as a Note.

2. If it survives the tests at this point, the paper will be assigned to the Associate Editor for that journal who has most direct knowledge of the subject matter and of expert reviewers in the field. The Associate Editor then evaluates the paper according to the same criteria and, in most cases, has the paper sent to one or more reviewers in the field (usually two) for confidential review. The Associate Editor may, however, at his or her discretion, accept the paper without review, reject it giving explicit reason, or request that the author prepare it in a different format.

3. Considerable significance is attached to the review reports. Each reviewer is asked to judge the technical validity of the manuscript and the extent of its advance over work previously published. The reviewer is asked also for advice as to whether the paper merits publication in an archive journal. However, the decision to publish, to require major revision before publication, or to reject for reasons cited lies first with the Associate Editor and ultimately with the Editor-in-Chief. Reviewers often disagree with each other in their advice, and some reviewers tend to be too lenient (or too severe) in light of the technical faults they have found in a paper. Hence the publication decision is made by the technical editors.

The Editorial Decision to Accept or Reject

4. It may take six months or more after receipt of the manuscript to accomplish the evaluation and review steps discussed above. (When several AIAA meetings are closely spaced, it may take longer.) The Editors will inform the author of their decision (acceptance, conditional acceptance, or rejection) as soon as possible. In the case of rejection, the author will be given *specific reasons* related to the criteria enumerated above. In the

case of conditional acceptance, the required revisions will be clearly indicated. On some occasions, the Editors may anticipate a need for further reviews after revision; if so, the author will be notified.

5. The next step is up to the author. If the paper has been rejected or if extensive revisions have been requested that the author believes are incorrect or unwarranted, then he or she is entitled to submit a point-by-point rebuttal to the Editor's statement of reasons and the reviewers' comments. The rebuttal then is analyzed by the Editors, and a decision is made. In rare cases of a complex point of dispute, the Editors, at their discretion, may mandate additional reviews. In no case shall a paper go through more than two reviewing cycles before a decision is given. If the dispute still remains unresolved, then the decision of the Editor-in-Chief is final and overrides all other considerations.

6. It is the policy of the Editors to make sure that no unconventional hypothesis or original idea is throttled if there is a chance that such a paper might stimulate either progress or constructive controversy on a technical point. It also is a basic principle of the publications program of the Institute that all authors shall have an equal opportunity to have their papers published, provided they can meet certain objectively defined standards. However, the primary responsibility of the Editors is to maintain these high technical standards for the archive journals of the Institute. This commitment takes precedence over all other factors. Within the bounds of that objective, the following working policy has been adopted by the Editors.

Fair Procedure for Rebuttal by Author

7. In the confrontation between the rejection statement and the rebuttal statement, the decision goes in favor of the author if the dissenting reviewer's case is not clearly convincing.

8. Because promptness is the essence of fairness, an author who has received no decision on his or her rebuttal within three months is welcome to request an immediate explanation and status report on the paper. If the forthcoming report is unsatisfactory to the author, then he or she may request a prompt decision regarding either rejection or conditional acceptance. The Editor should make every effort to respond to this request in a maximum of four weeks.

9. By the same token, authors who are requested by Editors to revise their papers must make an effort to accomplish the requested revisions in the stated period, which normally is four weeks for major revisions, three weeks for minor revisions. If the author does not respond to our subsequent inquiries, the paper will be regarded as withdrawn. Normally, an author who has good reason to request a time extension will be granted such an extension.

10. A reviewer who feels strongly that a particular paper should not be published may be given the opportunity, if the Editor decides nevertheless to accept it, to write the criticism as a Technical Comment. The author then is allowed to write a closing response for publication in the same issue as the Comment.

Formal Acceptance and Publication

11. Formal acceptance will not occur until the author has complied with all of the revision requests (if any) made by the Associate Editor or the Associate Editor has accepted the author's rebuttal, and the author has prepared the paper in the AIAA archival style as described in "Manuscript Style and Format."

12. When a paper is formally accepted, it will be scheduled for publication in a forthcoming issue, and the author will be so informed. Survey Papers and Full-Length Papers normally will be assigned to issues in the order in which they initially were re-

ceived. Depending upon the number of papers awaiting publication and the projected size of issues, this may require that papers be scheduled several issues ahead. Items for the Notes and Comments sections will be scheduled for the earliest available issue. The Editor-in-Chief also may designate certain special-category papers for immediate publication.

13. Page proofs will be made available to authors for correction and release prior to scheduled publication. Authors should inform the AIAA Journals Department of any anticipated change of postal or e-mail address between acceptance and page proof time. Authors are expected to read and release their proofs in seven days or less.

14. To allow for late or non-release of proofs by authors and to provide the flexibility to meet issue-length and topic-mix constraints, issues will be overscheduled by about 25%. Thus, there will always be a certain number of papers held over for the next issue. Papers not published in the issue for which they were originally scheduled will have first priority for publication in the following issue.

15. All authors and co-authors will receive a complimentary copy of the issue in which their papers appear.

This policy was approved on 16 October 1964 by the Editors-in-Chief of the archive journals and by the Vice President-Publications, and revised in March 2004.