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Farewell From the IEEE Industrial Electronics Society Oversight Committee

In August of 2016, then-Vice-President of the Technical Activities Board (TAB) Jose Moura formed a committee—us—to oversee the IEEE Industrial Electronics Society (IES). One of Dr. Moura's charges was to write an editorial explaining the reasons why this was thought to be necessary. The editorial appeared in the February 2017 issue of both *IEEE Transactions on Industrial Electronics* and *IEEE Transactions on Industrial Informatics (TII)*. In brief, the IES Oversight Committee (OC) was created in response to the suspension of *TII* from Journal Citation Reports (JCR) due to publication irregularities and, most particularly, evidence of citation stacking. Citation stacking is defined as inflation of the impact factor through inappropriate encouragement of citations, but more broadly, it encompasses all sorts of manipulation of bibliometrics.

When our committee was formed, we knew the IES was a large and very healthy Society with reputed publications, successful conferences, and highly engaged membership. These characteristics made it even more critical to address the JCR suspension. Once the IES-OC began working with the IES leadership, we found common ground to move forward. Dr. Moura's charges to us, aside from that editorial, related to publications, administration, and governance.

Regarding the first, we found that the IES had selected Mariusz Malinowski, Leopoldo Franquelo, and Ren Luo to

senior publications posts. We were asked to vet these people and were pleased to see that such seasoned and energetic folks had been appointed. We would like to draw particular attention to the software tools that were being developed under Dr. Franquelo's leadership, tools not only for journal management but also for uncovering possible publications skulduggery, such as citation subornation and author cartels. We believe that these tools can be beneficial across the IEEE.

Relating to operations administration, the IES has followed our recommendation and engaged both publications staff at the IEEE (replacing out-of-house personnel) and a staff administrator. In our committee's joint experience, we have found that to have dedicated IEEE publications staff means consistent Society alignment with IEEE publication norms and initiatives. Also, a staff administrator lightens the load (the busywork) of the governing volunteers, provides feedback with respect to concurrence with IEEE policies, and provides corporate memory as volunteer leadership turns over. Our special thanks go to IEEE senior staff members Jayne Cerone and Laura Creighton for their behind-the-scenes efforts to make these positions happen.

The IEEE does not provide strict guidelines on Society governance structures, but even among the IEEE's swath, the IES was an outlier, with a very large Administrative Committee (AdCom) and perhaps a too-consistent set of faces. Our committee suggested alterations, with turnover stressed as

a primary goal. The IES leaders and members (you!) were proactive in making sweeping changes: voting to elect a portion of the AdCom, streamlined service from the Technical Committees, and with only those most participatory among the IEEE Senior and Life Members holding ongoing roles. Your Society has tuned its bylaws and instituted term limits at all levels. The IES AdCom is still quite large by the standards of the IEEE, but it seems to work well. We offer special thanks to past and present Society Presidents Kamal Al-Haddad and Xinghuo Yu, respectively.

Citation stacking was the root of the IES, issues. It seems to us that the IES is now as clean as—and now arguably cleaner than—many other IEEE units. We hope that the IEEE will work to counter bibliometric manipulation within all of its publications, which we believe is not widespread but does still exist. We have tried to carry that message, and we trust that the IEEE is receptive.

This editorial is a farewell from us to you. Several months ago, we began discussing how all of Dr. Moura's charges had been satisfied: we worked hard and so has the IES. Your leadership has been cooperative and proactive. Hence, we asked permission to disband early, and in February 2019, the TAB Management Committee agreed.

We will miss the IES volunteer leadership, your warmth and your dynamism. But we intend to keep in contact as members and friends. Thanks to all of those who were so helpful and welcoming!

