

Editorial: 2020 Retrospective

At the beginning of this year, it might sound cliché to state that 2020 has been a challenging year. With no doubt, the events of the last months have tested our resilience, with many of our colleagues and their families around the world enduring difficult times. The dawn of the new year brings hope of improvement in a not too distant future.

Despite the difficulties such as reduced laboratory access, additional workload due to online-teaching transition and work-from-home arrangements, the activities of the Antennas and Propagation community have remained strong, as evidenced by the editorial statistics of the letters.

- 1) Number of submissions to the IEEE ANTENNAS AND WIRELESS PROPAGATION LETTERS (AWPL) has only slightly decreased by a few percents ($\sim 3\%$).
- 2) Average time from submission to decision remained at around 25 days in 2020 (see Fig. 1).
- 3) Number of papers with decision delayed beyond two months in AWPL continues to be very low (see Fig. 2).

Achieving such healthy editorial statistics is only feasible because of a dedicated team. I would like to wholeheartedly thank Ms. Claire Sideri, AWPL Editorial Assistant, and Ms. Camille Ventura, Journals Production Manager, for their spectacular support in all matters of the Letters operation. The Editorial Board consists of 41 Associate Editors who tirelessly volunteer their time and offer their expertise to ensure a prompt, thorough and selective review process. They are supported by a community of reviewers, who provide an outstanding service to AWPL, and by extension to the AP Society. The top performing Associate Editors and Reviewers are recognized on the AWPL website [item 1) of the Appendix], noting that performance is ranked based on a formula weighing the quality and number of review reports.

In 2020, the Editorial Board has welcomed new Associate Editors: Profs./Drs. F. Dagefu; S. Koulouridis; H. Lui; M. Pour; S. Zhang; and S. Yong Zheng. We are also grateful to the Associate Editors who completed their terms in 2020, Profs. C. Constantinou, L. Markley, and J. Song, and I take this occasion to highlight their significant contributions. I am also indebted to Prof. A. Abbosh who served as an Senior Associate Editor until February 2020 and consistently offered outstanding service.

We mourn the loss of our Associate Editor Prof. P. Mousavi and his family, who passed away in the plane crash in Tehran in early 2020. This is a terrible loss of an exceptional talent, colleague, and friend.

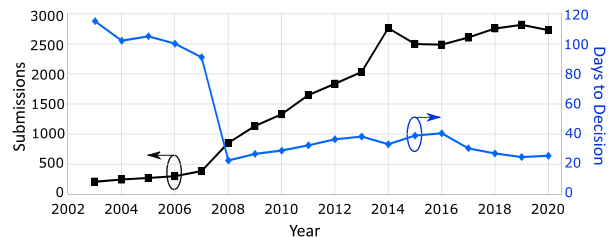


Fig. 1. Number of submissions and time from submission to decision (final numbers for 2020 are projected from data of December 1).

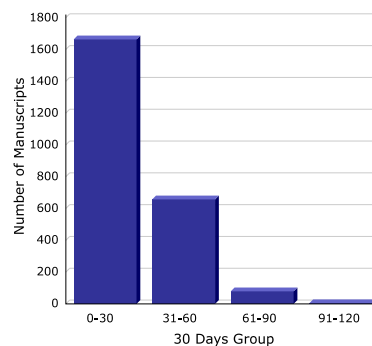


Fig. 2. Time from submission to decision in 2020 (January 1–December 1).

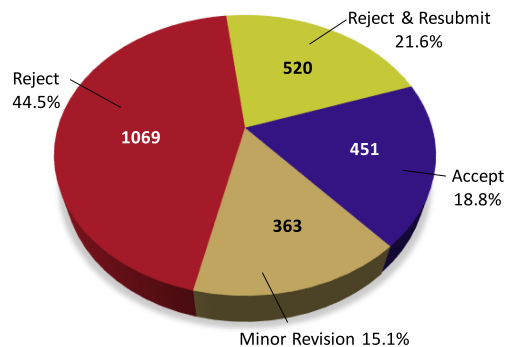


Fig. 3. Number of manuscripts by decisions in 2020 (January 1–December 1).

I. STANDING OF AWPL

AWPL remains one of the most read journals in the area of antennas and propagation and enjoys a high reputation. This is evidenced by well over a million article downloads and an impact factor which rose to 3.726 for 2019. These esteem measures are with no doubt due to a high threshold for acceptance. The selectivity of the review process is illustrated in Fig. 3, where the statistical distribution of all decision outcomes is displayed.

The award for the best letter published in AWPL in a given year is recognized by the Piergiorgio L. E. Uslenghi Prize. For

the year 2019, the AP Society awarded this prestigious prize to N. Simonov, S.-H. Son, and M.-H. Ka to honor their distinguished contribution [item 2) of the Appendix].

II. AWPL SPECIAL CLUSTERS

The 2020 special clusters received good numbers of submissions and were published in the November AWPL issue [items 3) and 4) of the Appendix]. My deep appreciation goes to the teams of Guest Editors for putting together these two very timely special issues.

The topics of the 2021 clusters are now announced through the call for papers available in [item 5) of the Appendix]. The 2021 special clusters will be dedicated to the following topics:

- 1) “Recent Advances in Antennas for Earth and Planetary Science,” with Dr. O. Yurduseven as a Lead Guest Editor;
- 2) “Antenna Considerations for Future Millimeter-wave and Terahertz Wireless Systems” with Dr. M. U. Rehman as a Lead Guest Editor.

The deadline for submission is March 31, 2021. Accepted contributions will be posted in “early access” as soon as the final files are received, with paginated publication of the cluster in the November 2021 issue of AWPL.

III. EDITORIAL MATTERS

AWPL aims at publishing high-quality novel contributions and places its emphasis on rapid publication. This is not incompatible with early dissemination of preliminary results in a conference, and IEEE recognizes the evolutionary nature of the publication process. It is, however, crucial that all previous related conference and journal papers are correctly cited in a submitted letter. The introduction of the letter should also clearly highlight a significant extension to previous publications. Failing to cite an earlier conference paper or a related journal paper of the authors will lead to direct rejection. In cases of simultaneous submissions, the article/conference contribution submitted in parallel must be disclosed and included as supple-

mentary material to the AWPL submission. Being transparent at submission time avoids any unpleasant ethical issues and is genuinely appreciated by the review panels. Transparency benefits the integrity of the review process and as such upholds the reputation and quality of the Letters.

At this time, I am looking forward to your contributions to AWPL in the new year and I wish you and your close ones all the best for a healthy and successful new year 2021.

CHRISTOPHE FUMEAUX, *Editor-in-Chief*
The University of Adelaide
Adelaide, SA 5005, Australia
christophe.fumeaux@adelaide.edu.au

APPENDIX RELATED WORK

- 1) “Outstanding associate editors and reviewers (July 2020).” [Online]. Available: <http://awpl.eleceng.adelaide.edu.au/news.htm>
- 2) N. Simonov, S.-H. Son, and M.-H. Ka, “Method for scattering of electromagnetic waves from the human body based on truncated Norton surface wave approximation,” *IEEE Antennas Wireless Propag. Lett.*, vol. 18, no. 8, pp. 1631–1635, Aug. 2019.
- 3) P. Rocca, A. Alù, C. Caloz, and S. Yang, “Guest editorial: Special cluster on space–time modulated antennas and materials,” *IEEE Antennas Wireless Propag. Lett.*, vol. 19, no. 11, pp. 1838–1841, Nov. 2020.
- 4) S. Zhang, X. Chen, A. A. Kishk, Z. Ying, and S. Kühn, “Guest editorial: Special cluster on 5G/6G enabling antenna systems and associated testing technologies,” *IEEE Antennas Wireless Propag. Lett.*, vol. 19, no. 11, pp. 1916–1919, Nov. 2020.
- 5) “IEEE Antennas and Wireless Propagation Letters 2021 Focused Clusters.” [Online]. Available: <http://awpl.eleceng.adelaide.edu.au/fspecial.htm>



Christophe Fumeaux (Fellow, IEEE) received the Diploma and the Ph.D. degree in physics from the ETH Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland, in 1992 and 1997, respectively.

From 1998 to 2000, he was a Postdoctoral Researcher with the School of Optics, University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL, USA. In 2000, he joined the Swiss Federal Office of Metrology, Bern, Switzerland, as a Scientific Staff Member. From 2001 to 2008, he was a Research Associate and a Lecturer with the Laboratory for Electromagnetic Fields and Microwave Electronics, ETH Zurich. Since 2008, he has been with The University of Adelaide, Adelaide, SA, Australia, where he is currently a Professor with the School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering. His current research interests concern antenna engineering, THz technology and the application of RF design principles to optical micro/nano-structures.

Dr. Fumeaux was the recipient of the ETH Medal for his doctoral dissertation. From 2011 to 2015, he was a Future Fellow of the Australian Research Council. He was the recipient of the 2018 Edward E. Altshuler Prize, the 2014 IEEE SENSORS JOURNAL and the 2004 ACES Journal Best

Paper awards. He was also the recipient of Best Conference Paper awards at the 2012 Asia-Pacific International Symposium on Electromagnetic Compatibility (APEMC 2012) and the 17th Colloque International sur la Compatibilité Electromagnétique (CEM 2014). More than ten of his students have received student awards with joint papers at IEEE conferences. He was the recipient of the University of Adelaide Stephen Cole the Elder Award for Excellence in Higher Degree by Research Supervisory Practice in 2018. From 2010 to 2013, he was an Associate Editor for the IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON MICROWAVE THEORY AND TECHNIQUES. From 2013 to 2016, he was a Senior Associate Editor and later the Associate Editor-in-Chief for the IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON ANTENNAS AND PROPAGATION. Since March 2017, he has been the Editor-in-Chief of the IEEE ANTENNAS AND WIRELESS PROPAGATION LETTERS.