



# The Irish Ergonomist

Newsletter of the Irish Ergonomics Society

<http://www.irishergonomics.com>

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*Contributions needed: articles, book re-views, upcoming conferences etc.  
Send to :*

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## Feature Personality:

### **Dr. Tom O'Connor MIES**

Physicist and Occupational Hygienist



Dr. Tom O'Connor is well known in the field of occupational health and safety in Ireland from his role in the education of many EHS professionals, especially in Occupational Hygiene. He obtained an honours B.Sc. in Physics and an M.Sc. in aerosol Physics from UCD. After a spell of research in the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies he moved to UCG and was awarded a Ph.D. in 1961 for research on marine aerosols. He spent a year [1963-64] as a Fulbright post-doctoral fellow in the Department of Industrial Hygiene in the School of Public Health of Harvard University in Boston where he first became involved in Ergonomics and Occupational Hygiene.

On returning to University College Galway, he was a lecturer in Physics until his official retirement in 1996. In 1985, in conjunction with another Fulbright Fellow, Professor Parker Reist of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, NC, he began a series of seminars and short courses on aspects of Occupational Hygiene, particularly on local exhaust ventilation, clean rooms and air quality measurements. In 1991 he worked closely with Professor M.E.J. O'Kelly and Enda Fallon in Industrial Engineering and

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Professor Cecily Kelleher in Health Promotion, in establishing new full time postgraduate courses for an M.Sc. in Occupational Health and Ergonomics and a Higher Diploma in Applied Science [Occupational Health and Hygiene]. Tom was responsible for the Occupational Hygiene sections of these courses and much of the administration activities in the earlier days. He was also involved in running short courses for the modules of the British Institute of Occupational Hygienists (now incorporated as the Faculty of the British Occupational Hygiene Society), which enabled many to obtain professionally recognized qualifications in Occupational Hygiene. These modules now include one on Ergonomics Essentials, which Tom took and passed with credit in November 2004. He still contributes to these courses although, since November 2003, the main lecturing duties in Occupational Hygiene have been taken over by Dr. Marie Coggins. He was very involved with the establishment and development of the Occupational Hygiene Society of Ireland and served a term as President in 1993 – 95.

Providing services and support to the communities and industries in the West of Ireland has always been one of Tom's concerns. Through participation in the activities of the National Irish Safety Organisation (NISO), he has organised and lectured in about 40 Occupational Health and Safety Foundation Courses in Counties Galway, Mayo and Roscommon over the past 15 years as well as in many seminars and other courses. He also made use of funding under the EU STRIDE programme to establish what is now the Air Quality Technology Centre in NUI, Galway. This provides a nation wide consultancy service to industry, public bodies and individuals. Tom has been a regular attendee at many of the activities of the IES and as a physicist interested in the workplace environment he helps to bridge the gaps between the disciplines of Ergonomics and Occupational Hygiene, Engineering and Science, to the benefit of both.

Dr. Tom O'Connor MIES  
NUI, Galway,

## IES NEWS

### **The Tim Gallwey Prize**

The IES has to thank Professor Tim Galley for his very generous donation of the IES Award for Excellence



IES Award for Excellence

#### **Aim:**

- To encourage and reward excellence in Ergonomics knowledge

#### **For:**

- The best Masters Thesis in Ergonomics in a taught Masters course in Ireland

#### **Adjudication:**

- By a sub-committee of the Irish Ergonomics Society where:
  - Ergonomics academics are in the majority
  - These academics are from more than one academic institution
  - There is at least one non-academic member

#### **Ethos:**

- Improvement of work situations comes mainly from applying Ergonomics in the field
- Taught Masters courses are the main route for entry into professional work of this kind
- Research degrees are aimed mainly at Research and Academia

## Irish Ergonomics Review 2006

### Invitation & Call for Papers

#### **Irish Ergonomics Society Annual Conference**

*"The mobile office and ergonomics challenges"*

Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2005

Time and venue to be confirmed

#### **Introduction**

Each year the Irish Ergonomics Society holds an annual conference in conjunction with its AGM at which recent research developments in Ireland are presented. Due to the continued pace of development of Ergonomics/Human Factors research in Ireland, and the continued development of the society, it is appropriate that research presented at the annual conference is recognised accordingly. All papers presented at the conference are requested to adhere to strict format guidelines. In order to ensure the papers are of sufficient standard for publication, the papers will be peer reviewed before being accepted. In recognition of the high standards requested of authors, accepted papers will be reproduced in a book of proceedings that will be recognised as peer reviewed papers for publication purposes. Presenters will be entitled to a 50% reduction in the conference registration fee.

#### **Scope**

Basic and applied research papers are welcome from all areas relating to Ergonomics and Human Factors. In addition papers are welcome that address the specific theme of the conference. It is envisaged that these papers will also be complimented with presentations from postgraduate students in ergonomics.

#### **Proceedings**

Papers will be reproduced in a book of proceedings titled "Irish Ergonomics Review 2006" edited by L.W. O'Sullivan and S. Chan. To provide for consistency within the book of proceedings, and future proceedings, it is vital that authors adhere to the format guidelines. Proceedings will have an ISSN number and will be available internationally through the British Library.

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### **Gallwey Prize**

This is the first year that the Gallwey prize will be awarded for the best Masters Thesis in Ergonomics in a taught course in Ireland. Individuals who wish to be considered for this award should notify the conference organizers when they submit their paper. Further details of the prize and the evaluation criteria are available from the IES website or the Secretary.

Submission of papers and deadline

If you wish to submit a paper it is necessary that you notify Leonard O'Sullivan ([Leonard.osullivan@ul.ie](mailto:Leonard.osullivan@ul.ie)) with the author(s) names and title of the paper by February 15<sup>th</sup>.

### Deadlines

Intent to participate with paper title

February 15<sup>th</sup>

Final paper

March 10<sup>th</sup>

### **Conference organisers:**

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Please see Web site for further information

### **Membership Issues:**

#### **Membership Certificates**

The Society has issued new certificates to all fully paid up members. If you have not received a certificate and you are entitled to one, please contact Dr. Leonard O'Sullivan  
Email: [Leonard.O'Sullivan@ul.ie](mailto:Leonard.O'Sullivan@ul.ie)  
Tel: +353 61 234249

#### **New Members**

The IES would like to welcome the following new members to the Society:

Thomas Waldmann - Fellow  
Nuala Hehir - Member  
Anna O'Brien - Member  
Kathleen Treanor - Member  
Stephen Hehir - Associate member

### **IES Archive**

The Manufacturing and Operations Engineering Department in the University of Limerick has kindly made a filing cabinet available for the purpose of an IES archive. This will be for the storage of historical documentation for the Society, including meeting minutes, chairman reports, finance reports etc. As the individuals who take on roles in the Society change from time to time, it is appropriate that these records are retained in a safe central location. Those who may still have old official records in their possession from previous roles in the Society are invited to send them directly to the Society Secretary where they will be archived.

### **IES Working Group news**

#### • **Ergonomics in School Group**

Sara Dockrell reported that she expects the group to commence a new study on ergonomics in schools in the coming weeks.

#### • **Standards Working Group report**

ISO/DIS 11079 Ergonomics of the thermal environment -- Determination and interpretation of cold stress when using required clothing insulation (IREQ) and local cooling effects.

This standard is up for review in the next 2 months. If you are a practising professional and familiar with this standard, we invite you to participate in a review of it. For further details please contact the Society Secretary.

The 15th Plenary meeting of CEN/TC122 Ergonomics will take place in Ireland in May 2007. The dates and venue are yet to be decided.

#### • **The National Workplace, Health and Well-being Strategy**

Leonard O'Sullivan reported that this group is now progressing well. He envisages that the IES will hold a consultation in the spring whereby professional ergonomists will be invited to share their views on current priority areas and challenges for ergonomics in Ireland for the strategy.

This group will be very active during the next six months. The final strategy document is due for publication in September 2006.

### **The Web page**

The details for valid paid Members has been posted on it. Please check and make sure that this information is correct. There are also areas where the editor would welcome suggestions, especially for the information section. Contributions are

welcome. Contact the web editor.

### ***Training Course***

Due to the enthusiastic response to the presentation given by La Touche Bond Solon Training, Ireland's leading legal training company at our 2005 AGM and in response to demands from members, the Irish Ergonomics Society wish to announce they are running the forthcoming course:

### **"Ergonomics & The Law"**

**Date: 10<sup>th</sup> February 2006. 9.30 am to 5.00 pm**

**Venue: Intel, Leixlip, Co. Kildare.**

**Cost: €250.00 pp**

Delegates attending will learn about :

- Your accountability in law
- Your duty of care
- What constitutes negligence?
- The importance of your records
- Records - Do's & Don'ts
- How to store and manage your records
- What constitutes an excellent report
- How to assess the quality of your reports
- Who has the legal right to access your records/reports?
- How your records and reports are used in legal proceedings
- Working with Solicitors and getting paid
- Implications of a Subpoena
- Your status as a witness in court

Places are limited so early booking is strongly advisable. Bookings can be made by sending the Booking Form enclosed with your remittance to Ms. Deirdre Casey, La Touche Bond Solon Training, 22, Lower Baggot Street, Dublin 2. No booking will be accepted without a Booking Form and payment. Cheques must be made payable to: The Irish Ergonomics Society. On receipt of your booking you will receive confirmation of your place with the pre-course requirements.

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## What's happening out there:



International Ergonomics Association

### INTERNATIONAL ERGONOMICS ASSOCIATION

The news letter can be accessed electronically on the web address [Http://www.iea.cc](http://www.iea.cc)

*Enda Fallon* is the IEA representative.



### *Leonard O'Sullivan*

FEES has been very active over the last year on a number of initiatives including the appointment of a EUTF (European Task Force) which will have the responsibility for liaising with EU bodies etc. on matters relating to Ergonomics. This is a positive step for ergonomics.

Four working committees (web committee, meeting committee, standards committee, and EU task force committee) have been founded, to help the Executive Committee to fulfil the tasks of FEES. The committees are almost ready to start, but they need still more people. The standards committee is working on various areas associated ergonomics standards in Europe, e.g., what standards do we have, how are they used by ergonomists, how to improve the quality of the standards. Kamiel Vanwonderghem has been appointed the Ambassador for FEES on the EU Task Force Committee.

The FEES web site has been established as an important communication channel. It has been updated and further developed by web manager Dietmar Gude. Among other things, an email list for web managers and a secured forum for registered members from the societies have been prepared, to enhance the communication between FEES and the societies.



### *Bridget Masterson*

Bridget has been appointed as the new IES representative at CREE.

Bridget has reported a number of activities from CREE including a recent report (July 2005) by Petra Breedveld and Jan Dul In collaboration with the Centre for Registration of European Ergonomists (CREE) which describes for the first time the demographics, employment, ergonomics work, successes, acceptance, and sources of information of European ergonomists, certified on the basis of criteria set by the Centre for Registration of European Ergonomists (CREE). Most certified ergonomists are external consultants. They experience their work as successful, and reach both social goals (like more comfort and better work satisfaction) and economic goals (like less human errors and more productivity). A total of 10 hypotheses were tested. The report can be read at [http://www.ergonomics.ie/international\\_cree.htm](http://www.ergonomics.ie/international_cree.htm).

### Health and Safety Authority news:

#### *Frank Power*

New Guidance on the Management of Manual Handling is now available from the HSA Website at [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie)

An exact date for the publication of the new Regulations has not yet been set, but the Public consultation process is now completed.

The IES is working with the HSA and a number of other groups on the National Workplace, Health and Well-being Strategy.

For further information on H.S.A. activities see their Website at [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie)

## Events Diary:

### ERGOPRACT 06 SEMINAR: CALL FOR PAPERS

in english: .pdf version: <http://www.ergonoma.com/mailling/ERGOPRACT2006AppelcomEN.pdf>

Brussels, 29th, 30th, 31st March 2006

Developments in ergonomics and its practices

Initial announcement  
Call for papers  
Overview

Ergonomics is constantly changing. Considered from the 1950s onwards as a technology involving adapting working environments to humans, it is developing alongside transformations in workplaces and organisations. Nowadays, whilst it has not abandoned its initial aims, it is positioning itself as the applied science of human activity, and in particular in the workplace. The IEA (International Ergonomics Association) defined ergonomics in 2000 as the scientific discipline concerned with the understanding of interactions among humans and other elements of a system, and the profession that applies theory, principles, data and methods to design in order to optimise human well-being and overall system performance.

With the support of the scientific community, the aim of ErgoPract is to evaluate on a regular basis the practical and scientific questions that professional ergonomists face.

ErgoPract 06 promotes the discussion of various topics, on the one hand involving the contribution that ergonomics makes to changes and development in the workplace and on the other hand involving working methods and how they have evolved in order to improve and confirm diagnosis.

Changes in working conditions

Our conception of working conditions is changing just as working conditions themselves are changing. Recent legislation in European countries has been adapted to these changes and channels them. Whilst the idea of prevention is not being ignored, we are moving on to the wider concept of "well-being" at work. This change is coming about as we are moving on from

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an appreciation of working conditions focusing on material aspects such as workstations to a more wide-ranging, systematic approach, including work organisation, social networks and environmental factors.

In particular, the following topics will be considered:

- Changes in protection and prevention legislation, and its impact on developments in working conditions.
- How ergonomics has contributed to a reduction in working hours, part-time work and flexible working hours.
- A review of ergonomics in technology transfers, business relocation and teleworking.

#### The psychosocial aspects of work

Our conception of working conditions is changing just as working conditions themselves are changing. The stresses of work are no longer considered to be primarily linked to the physical or even mental aspects of any particular activity, but rather to the other subjective components present in the working environment and the organisation. In this area as well, legislation is changing and adapting to this common working reality.

In particular, the following topics will be considered:

- How legislation in the domain of subjective work stresses has changed.
- The contribution of ergonomics to questions of stress, harassment and violence at work.
- What stance does ergonomics adopt when faced with questions of suffering, motivation and satisfaction at work?
- What about the social consequences of ergonomics?

#### Repetitive work

One of the professional constraints that particularly interests Ergonomist and health-at-work professionals today is repetitive work and its effects on health, such as RSI (repetitive strain injuries), WRD (work related disorders), CTD (cumulative trauma disorder), OS (overuse syndrome) etc.. By focusing on work organisation, ergonomics aims to reduce the risks associated with repetitive work by alleviating and changing it.

In particular, the following topics will be considered:

- How does ergonomics propose to reduce repetitive work?

- What methods does it recommend for examining risk factors linked to repetitive work?
- Is the way in which we assess activities appropriate in terms of ascertaining how repetitive work affects health?

#### Ergonomics: evaluating and managing risk

In terms of developments in prevention and worker protection, we are gradually witnessing a shift from the notion of 'best-effort undertaking' to 'firm commitment'. The consequences therefore stand out in terms of an "open" evaluation of the risks to the health, safety and well-being of workers and the establishment of measures aimed at preventing or reducing them, rather than in terms of rules and recommendations that material objects have to conform to.

In particular, the following topics will be considered:

- How does ergonomics participate in risk analysis and in the prevention and reduction of these risks?
- What methods does ergonomics suggest?
- What work risks are of particular interest to ergonomics?

#### Ergonomics outside of organisations; product ergonomics.

The general public, just like company members, often discovers ergonomics through advertising, press articles or other media aimed at promoting the benefits of particular products. Is product ergonomics today an easy answer to certain problems posed by working conditions in companies?

In particular, the following topics will be considered:

- The way in which ergonomics is customarily used and abused in the domain of products.
- In particular, the image of ergonomics that is put across by these products?
- To what degree can products qualifying as ergonomic be seen as legitimate?
- What technical documentation should accompany products giving information about the ergonomic characteristics and the manner in which they have been integrated into the product?
- To what extent is the organisation that contributed to giving the ergonomic label to the product in question competent?
- What role should the ergonomic consultant play with regard to these products?
- Are the problems and risks to which

ergonomic products refer really ergonomic: are they real problems or not?

- What recourse does a company have if it has acquired a product that is qualified as ergonomic, but if the anticipated positive effects do not appear when it is used or if it even produces the opposite effect?

A number of topics tackling the general theme of ErgoPract but that do not fit under any of the sub-headings above will nevertheless be considered by the scientific committee .

Here are several examples of such topics:

- How ergonomics in companies has developed.
- How actors in the industry have changed their methods and practices.
- Independent Ergonomists, consultant Ergonomists, employed Ergonomists?
- Ergonomics and older workers.
- Ergonomics and technological development: is ergonomics still specifically active in IT?

#### Record of proceedings

A complete record of proceedings for ErgoPract 06 will be published in hard and electronic copy in time for the start of the conference and will be distributed to participants.

#### Practical details

Venue: the Tour and Taxis site in the centre of Brussels.

Adjoining event: Ergonoma European trade show 2006.

Organisation: CREIFBET (Ergonomic wellness at work research, study, information and training centre) in partnership with the Ergonoma journal and CREATIC (research centre for applied Ergonomics in ICT) at the Université Libre de Bruxelles.

Participant registration rights: €475 (registration before 1st February 2006 - €525 after this date) including participation in all the sessions, a hard copy of the record of proceedings (+ CD-ROM) as well as refreshments during the breaks.

#### Additional information, secretariat

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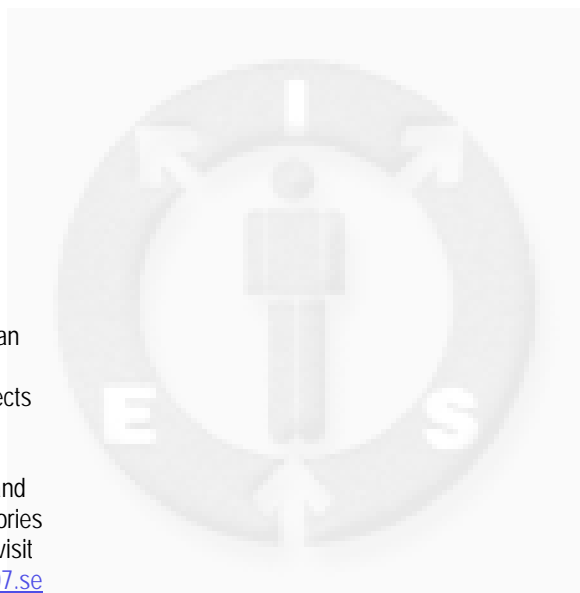
2006, ERGONOMA 2006  
international tradeshow Thurn & Taxis  
Brussels Belgium March 29 - 31, 2006  
The international meeting place for  
ergonomics users and practitioners ergonomic  
furniture, equipment and accessories for office  
and industrial  
Workplaces services and consultants -  
designers - professional bodies

please pre-register for free at  
[http://ergonoma.com/site/ergonoma\\_en/  
articles.php?lng=en&pg=5](http://ergonoma.com/site/ergonoma_en/articles.php?lng=en&pg=5)

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***Invitation to the international  
conference  
Work with Computing Systems,  
May 21-24 2007 in Stockholm,  
Sweden***

Main theme: Computing systems for human  
benefits  
The conference will deal with human aspects  
on hardware, and software, with work  
organisation and labour market; the  
conference is open both for researchers and  
practitioners, and papers from both categories  
are most welcome. For more information visit  
the conference website at: [www.wwcs2007.se](http://www.wwcs2007.se)  
Welcome to Stockholm in May 2007!



The Ergonomics Society of Sweden is  
supporting the international conference Work  
With Computing Systems (WWCS) in  
Stockholm, Sweden, 21-24 May 2007. The  
conference will focus on the important  
ergonomic issues at computer work.

Christina Jonsson  
President of the Ergonomics Society of  
Sweden, ESS

**Letters to the Editor**

Air your voices in letters and opinions on any  
ergonomics related subject or respond to  
articles in the newsletter.