

# OFFICER'S REPORTS

## PRESIDENT'S POST

by Perry Wheless  
20 September 2001

***The Annual ACES conference is still almost six months away, but you should be aware that the 2002 conference may be affected by the attack of 11 September 2001 on the United States. Plan your conference trip accordingly.***

The Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) in Monterey, California, has been a terrific partner and gracious host for the ACES Annual Review of Progress in Applied Computational Electromagnetics series. Except for the first and tenth anniversary conferences, held at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and the DoubleTree Hotel Monterey, respectively, NPS has been our home. We, as a society, have chosen to base our conference activity at NPS, a government facility, and the arrangement has been very beneficial to ACES over an extended period of time. However, as ACES oldtimers know, access to NPS can depend on military alerts and security concerns. Last year there were no guards at the gates, and access was unrestricted. In prior years, most of us can remember guards and having to produce picture identification in order to gain access.

As a result of the extraordinary events of September 11, more stringent security measures are now in effect at NPS. With conference so far in the future, why bother you with these matters now? The reasons are twofold: (1) unlike past alerts, which arose and dissipated rather quickly, there is a general expectation that this situation is different and heightened security is likely to remain in place for an extended period of time, and (2) because a protracted condition of high security at NPS could seriously hurt our conference participation level and revenues, the ACES Board of Directors will need to consider contingency planning for future conferences.

**The Most significant security procedure now in place at NPS is a requirement that the name of *any visitor to the facility must be submitted for screening and approval at least 24 hours in advance.*** This may be relaxed or changed in some other way between now and March. At the moment, however, the most prudent path for planning purposes is to assume the current conditions will continue to apply at conference time. A person appearing for on-site registration at, for example, 8:30 am on Monday, would not be allowed access to NPS before 8:30 am Tuesday, at the earliest. This means we need to get the word out, in a big way, that **advance registration is critically important** this year! Clearly, there is the additional issue that our usual registration area inside the NPS compound may not be available for last minute walk-in registrants. Because these issues have just arisen, it will take some more time to identify an acceptable "on-site" registration area outside the NPS perimeter.

For future conferences, the recent developments may actually prove to be constructive. In earlier years, proposals to move the conference location annually were rejected by the Board of Directors because the Monterey location was a perennial hit, plus Dick and Pat Adler could minimize the considerable work of local arrangements for conference by staying at NPS. On the other hand, the decision to base at NPS has probably hurt our recruitment of conference chairs, as potential chairs could garner more support from their employer/institution for conducting a local, versus remote, conference. The Board of Directors will discuss this matter in their next meeting, an October teleconference, and a more substantial report on the status of these considerations should be available for the next ACES Newsletter. In the immediate future, for 2002, we presently believe our best response is to stay the course at NPS and operate as close to "traditionally normal" as possible. At the same time, recent events will cause us to re-think our conference priorities and procedures - a potentially positive development for the long term.

**Register early for ACES 2002.** Spread the word about the importance of advance registration to your CEM acquaintances who are potential registrants! Updates and news of significance will be posted under the Conference link on the ACES Web site, <http://aces.ee.olemiss.edu>. We expect another outstanding conference, and I look forward to seeing you there.