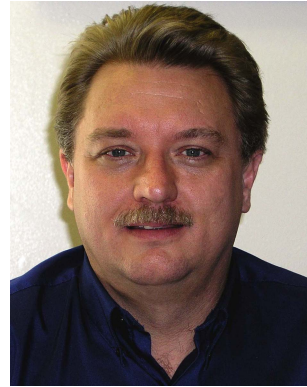# From the Editor-in-Chief:

December 2013

Journal Publication of Conference Papers

Recently, the publication of material in conference papers in peer-reviewed, archival journals has been a topic of great debate. Historically, say before 2000, the distribution and accessibility to conference papers were limited to those individuals who attended the conference or worked for institutions that purchased the proceedings. Furthermore, the peer-review process for conferences was often weak or nonexistent. Collection and distribution of the papers, collection of the reviews, and management of the whole process with the web-based tools of the time made implementing a peer-review process for a conference difficult. Thus, short-cuts such as the review of extended abstracts were often used in place of a review of the completed paper. Hence, given the significant differences in accessibility and peer-review, journal publications served a much different purpose than conference papers in those days and the question of duplicate publication was less of a question than it is in 2013.

Since 2013, the situation has changed significantly. Conference papers are now readily available electronically via IEEE Xplore or other web-based archiving systems. Thus, conference papers and journal papers have similar accessibility today. Also, the availability of web-based tools for managing the peer-review process and the desire for better conference papers have pushed most conference organizers to obtain peer-review of full manuscripts. Hence, what are the differences between the papers published in conference proceedings and those published in a peer-reviewed journal? How should JAIF policies reflect the situation of today?

Papers published in most conference proceedings are quite different than papers found in JAIF and most IEEE journals. First, a conference paper has passed a single review with an accept/reject decision and little or no verification of the requested changes. On the other hand, a (meaningfully peer-reviewed) journal paper has passed multiple review cycles with the reviewers and editors verifying that the referees' comments have been addressed adequately before it is published. The peer-review process of a journal ensures that the paper is of high quality and usually leads to a better paper and that reflects positively on the authors. Also, the length of

a conference papers is often limited so that the peer-review can be accomplished in a timely fashion. On the other hand, a journal paper can be longer and it will often include a more thorough review of the related literature and presentation of the contribution.

The JAIF editorial board has reviewed the policies of other journals and is establishing the following policy concerning the publication of material previously published in conference papers.

While direct submission of a conference paper by its author to JAIF is not acceptable, submission of an appropriately enhanced version of the manuscript is acceptable. Declaration that a manuscript has similar content to previously published conference papers is expected at time of submission and this will not affect the appropriateness of the manuscript for journal publication. The submission to JAIF is expected to include at least 30% new material or be an integration of multiple conference papers into a comprehensive treatment of the problem under study. The overall quality of the submission to JAIF should be better with respect to quality of the explanations, literature review, derivations, examples, and illustrations. All associated conference papers should be cited in the submission.

This policy is very similar to that followed informally by the JAIF Editorial Board. The Operations Manual for JAIF has been updated to formally reflect this policy.

William Dale Blair
Editor in Chief