COMMENTS

The staff of *Fusion Technology* (*FT*) is extremely pleased to publish this issue based on papers from the American Nuclear Society (ANS) Ninth Topical Meeting on the Technology of Fusion Energy. This is a most fitting continuation of publications in *FT* from this meeting series. We wish to acknowledge the considerable help provided to us in this endeavor by the conference organizers, including Dale Smith [Argonne National Laboratory (ANL)], General Chairman; Richard Mattas (ANL), Program Chairman; and Carl Johnson (ANL), Publications Chairman. Their cooperation and encouragement were essential and made this publication possible. Carl and his staff played a particularly crucial role through receiving the original manuscripts and handling their review. This very time-consuming task forms the basis for the high quality of this issue. I believe that you, the reader, will agree with me that the results presented here clearly demonstrate the efficiency and success of Carl's effort. Thanks are also due to the editorial staff at ANS headquarters who processed the final manuscripts and formatted this issue.

Some comments about the review process are worthwhile. As done for other contributed papers, all manuscripts included here were critiqued by two reviewers. In many cases, at least one review was done before the meeting. Remaining reviews were handled by assignment at the meeting. Some people have told me that the fact that so many papers are handled simultaneously with part of the review superimposed on the meeting reduces the rigor of the review. Admittedly, some variability in rigor does result. However, based on my involvement in the process, I am convinced that most reviewers still take the time and feel the responsibility to maintain very high standards. Indeed, a significant number of technical questions were raised on papers in this issue, causing major modifications in some papers. Some papers were rejected outright. Thus, my view is that while the process is not perfect, it provides quite thorough screening. That ensures that a high quality is maintained in this publication (and, incidentally, contributes to the quality of the meeting).

The papers in this issue should be of strong interest to the fusion community. This is a crucial stage in fusion research and development. Both magnetic and inertial programs are looking forward to and have begun designs for next-step facilities. A number of papers deal with these issues, as well as the analysis of various components for such facilities. One difference from past meetings is an increase in papers on inertial confinement fusion, reflecting increased activity in that area following the recent national-level reviews that resulted in positive conclusions about progress in the physics understanding for laser/target interactions. This has provided increased motivation for pushing forward with technology development.

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