IEEE R8 Secretary Report October 2013   Ali El-Mousa

100th R8 Committee Meeting in Madrid
- A very successful event as indicated by the numerous positive feedback messages that were received.
- The meeting was attended by 160 representatives.
- Included very well attended R8 subcommittee meetings, technical society representative meetings and new volunteer orientation sessions.
- The unapproved minutes of the meeting can be found on the Sarajevo meeting web page.
- Social program was greatly appreciated. Deep appreciation goes to Spain section for their dedication and hard work.

R8 OpCom Meeting In St. Petersburg
Opcom, with all members in attendance, had a face to face meeting in St. Petersburg during July 2013. Over two days, intensive discussions, reviews and planning sessions took place. As a result, 41 action items were formulated. Section vitality issues were dominant during the discussions.

Best practices
- A new system for section reporting for R8 meetings was introduced. It is hoped that it will make things easier for both section chairs and our communication coordinator to prepare the necessary reports.
- Continuous improvements are being made to the R8 web site despite the shortcomings of the system being used through the IEEE.

Points of concern / Topics for future discussion
- Many sections still fail to update their web sites.
- Many sections who have had elections and therefore new leadership fail to inform IEEE through Vtools officer reporting tool about this. This is of great importance as this is the only way for all concerned officers and staff to realize that changes took place.
- Sections are not submitting their reports for the R8 meeting on time. This is a serious issue that needs addressing by all concerned.
- Delayed attention to the requirements for obtaining a Visa by many attendees. This causes delays in the process of registration and causes unnecessary headache to all concerned parties.

Miscellaneous
- For the first time, subsections have been asked to submit reports to the R8 meeting. These an be found on the R8 server.
- I attended the UKRI Student Branch congress as representative of OpCom in Bath, UK in early September. The meeting was very well organized and executed. A major accomplishment was to revive dormant student branches and also encourage the formation of new ones. Several sessions and discussions revolved around this issue. I perceived an excellent impact on attendees. The social program was good and allowed good opportunities for personal interaction. The host university (University of Bath) was very attentive and was represented by the vice chancellor.
- I also attended the Egyptian Engineering Day 2013 in Cairo Egypt. Despite the unfortunate situation in the country, the Egypt section through its volunteers managed to hold an excellent event over two days in late September. Over 9000 visitors attended the different sessions, presentations and graduation project displays. Two ministers attended the opening ceremony amid large live media coverage. IEEE was center stage and I delivered a speech. Two hundred and fifty volunteers were involved in the preparation of the event which also included several different competitions. Well-known companies were present and used the event for recruitment and they also were sponsors. Media coverage continued after the event and I was interviewed by news agencies.
- I would like to thank my colleagues in OpCom and our R8 communications coordinator for all of his efforts.