

Editorial

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This Special Issue is dedicated to 16 selected papers presented at the Road Safety and Simulation Conference that has been hosted by the Purdue University in Indianapolis in September 2011.

We publish here blind peer reviewed papers on different topics all related to road safety, human factors, driving simulation, advanced technologies. I find this work is a remarkable compendium of the most updated approaches, methods, instruments and cultures, giving a good overview of the current and novel research in this field.

It is a great pleasure and it is an unusual honour for me to serve as Special Editor in this important occurrence. I take this opportunity with enthusiasm to acknowledge that I am very proud having co-founded the Conference for the first edition in Rome in 2007.

My first thought is for who, with me and a little circle of friends, for first did imagine RSS Conference: my father professor Carlo Benedetto. When we planned to organize RSS we were at the MIT in Boston with some researchers involved in driving simulation studies. It was the 2006. I would have never thought to arrive at this point. At the early beginning we programmed one Conference and we had not presumed that it would be a *first* Conference. At the Closing Session of RSS 2007 many attendees proposed to give a future to the Conference, to take care of this awareness of putting together psychologists, civil and electronic engineers, computer sciences experts, medical doctors, ... so much different backgrounds! So we established a Permanent Steering Committee and we have written procedures, methods, standards and resources, in a couple of words “how” and “when” going on with the conferences. In 2007 at the end of the Conference we have had one candidate organizer for RSS 2009, he was Stéphane Espié from the Inrets (France). This exciting adventure was started.

My father had a traditional background as civil engineer, his first researches were in the field of pavement design and road materials, then he concentrated his research on road geometry: in the first part of his life the topic of his activity was, in fact, the infrastructure. In a more mature age he gave a great contribution in the field of Environmental Impact Assessment, also playing remarkable and outstanding roles at an institutional level. Basically he

passed from the infrastructure to the protection of the natural systems where the infrastructure is developed.

Finally, in the last and very productive part of his life, he made all possible efforts to save lives, contributing to the road safety at a scientific level. His novel perspective was from the beginning to integrate different disciplines.

This is the main concept of RSS. The strategic and probably unique potentiality of the idea behind RSS is to involve *at the same level* persons with very different backgrounds.

At the end of the Conference RSS 2011 four candidatures for hosting RSS 2013 have been proposed. I believe that only this demonstrates beyond any uncertainty that the job we made during these years as Committee members and Conference friends is a great job.

On the Permanent Steering Committee decision the Next Conference RSS2013 will be hosted in Rome by the University of Roma Tre.

We estimate that every five minutes approximately 13 persons lose their lives on the roads all over the world. Engineers are familiar with numbers. But 13 is not a number. They were hearts that did beat, heads that did think, arms that have worked, hands that did play. I have a hope: my babies and all the children of this Earth could find safer roads, also thanks to the efforts of all these researches, they need it, they deserve this.