



# AMERICAN INSTITUTE of ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS

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Letter from Dr. E. L. Harder  
AIEE Vice-President for  
Science and Electronics

## THE EFFECT OF MERGER ON AIEE TECHNICAL COMMITTEES

Dear President Chase:

Some of the recent anti-merger or "please delay merger" articles appearing in the press have had as principle arguments, two objections. One of these is the assertion that the Technical Committees as we know them now will be abolished. Where this to be the case, I would be on the side of the objectors. However, I am certain that it is not intended for reasons presented below. They also object to the publication arrangement. This I feel can be worked out satisfactorily, but am not as competent to discuss, therefore, I want primarily to discuss the matter of the Technical Committees.

I have been asked by Dave Trucksess in my capacity as Vice-Chairman of the Technical Operations Department 1962-63 to handle the problems of merger of technical operations with IRE. I, therefore, speak in that future capacity when I say it is definitely my opinion and understanding that the technical committees will be combined with the professional groups almost intact. As such, they will be part of the professional technical group which will provide the excellent interchange for the national experts and the professional group which provides for the professional alignment of the large group of engineers interested in a particular field.

I have discussed this with Dr. Ernst Weber, who, I believe, will have a major influence on how this goes with respect to IRE and who was their member of the cognizant Two-Man Committee. He is of exactly the same opinion. This is as you might expect inasmuch as he is the founder of our Instruments and Measurements Division, which he developed from committee status to a division of several hundred members. He is very well acquainted with the activities of the technical divisions, committees, sub-committees and working groups of the AIEE. It is quite as apparent to him as to me that these perform an extremely useful function and one that scarcely overlaps the IRE professional group operation at all. In other words, we agree that the professional technical group will consist essentially of the professional group in an area combining with the AIEE technical committees in that area, but that since there is very little overlap in the phase of the activity which they handle, the new professional technical group must necessarily encompass both activities.

As an example of this, the Computing Devices Committee of the AIEE including its sub-committees and working groups now contains several hundred members. There is a large well-working organization of what I choose to call national experts in the computer field. The IRE Professional Group on Electronic Computing has several thousand members and publishes a transactions. It is run by a small board of national experts. Both it as well as the AIEE provides four members on the Board of AFIPS which runs the Joint Computer Conferences (ACM also provides four members). Neither the Chairman of the PGEC, Wally Anderson, nor the Chairman of Computing Devices Committee, Claude Kagan, can see any substantial overlap in their operations. There is great need for combining however, so that the IRE members can get into the technical committee work and so that AIEE members can enter naturally into the professional group operations.

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If the merger goes through, these two organizations have already planned at least one good way in which this might be done. This would be for them simply to agree upon a mutually acceptable senior member of the profession to chair the joint meetings in which the Executive Committees of the two present organizations would meet to coordinate the activities.

The merger would at least have the beneficial results that the IRE would not go ahead with the formation of separate technical committees to compete with the AIEE nor would the AIEE go ahead with separate technical groups to compete with the IRE professional groups. Both of these will certainly take place if the merger does not occur.

Thus these two operations will merge together smoothly, with almost immediate transfusion of members into the activities of their prime interest.

It seems to me the whole Power Division could function substantially as it does now but as a professional technical group. In this case, the transactions publication would be essential by a continuation of the Power bi-monthlies.

The Power Professional Technical Group would then consist of the technical committees as we know them now and all of the people who are getting the Power bi-monthlies. I believe they would have to take on some of the duties performed by the Publication Committee or the Publication Department in determining the policies and making the arrangements for the transactions associated with this group. However, this would give them quite complete freedom to determine their publications as best meeting the needs of their group and not limited by conflicts with the publications needs of other groups.

Thus, it appears to me that if the merger goes through, the way is well in sight to combine AIEE technical committees with IRE professional groups to make professional technical groups in the cases where both exist now as in Computing Devices, as well as in the cases where only the AIEE committees exist.

Sincerely yours,



E. L. Harder, Vice President  
for Science & Electronics

Copies to:

Members, TOD Committee  
Chairmen, Technical Committees