INNS mass email list policies :

Howell - *[Additions, deletions, corrections] to the following would be appreciated!*
(New details added since 04Aug2016 email to Pablo Estevez & Ali Minai are highlighted in green font ...)

Definitions :

HOLDER   -   INNS designate who [possesses, maintains] the overall INNS mass email list, and controls its distribution to **MASS EMAILERS**, for **SPECIFIC CONFERENCES** given the authorizations of the [INN, IEEE-CIS] Presidents.

MASS EMAILER   - the SPECIFIC individual who will be sending the mass emails

NON-[MASS EMAILER] - any individual who is NOT authorised to possess an INNS mass email list

SPECIFIC CONFERENCE - [WCCI, IJCNN, INNS-BDDL] conference-year specified in the authorisations. This determines which subset of the INNS mass email list that a **MASS EMAILER** receives.

Rational for this policy :

- The IEEE-CIS is particularly concerned about the over-use of emailing lists, which apparently is a nuisance for their members, and which reduces the overall effectiveness of their communications. The IEEE-CIS (monthly) and INNS (when produced) newsletters should also be considered as primary means of promoting the conference, as one of several means to reduce the mass emailing. The [WCCI, IJCNN, INNS-BDDL]-specific components of the list (as distinct from the INNS membership component, and other external sources of relevant emails), is not to be blended into other email lists or "databases" without the emailed confirmation of the IEEE-CIS and IJCNN Presidents.
- A considerable amount of effort and money has been invested by both organisations (especially the IEEE-CIS) in building membership and conference and expert email lists. The intent is to protect this investment, and the privacy of the information (for both societies, and for people whose emails are on the lists).
- Many mass email recipients are frustrated with excessive [spam, scam] emails, and get annoyed even if the subject of a mass email is pertinent to them. Requests to have emails from the list occur with virtually every mass email. The policies below are intended to reduce their "spam load" coming from us, and to protect their rights.
- Inappropriate use of the INNS mass email lists for other purposes (eg conferences, training programs, events) and organisations provides direct competition and "spam-" for [WCCI, IJCNN, INNS-BDDL], and may reduce the effectiveness of our own mass emails in the "conference environment", wich is quite competitive.

Distribution and possession of the INNS mass email lists :

- INNS mass email lists are NOT to be distributed in any format (electronic or other) to any individual or organisational contact who does not have the explicit permission to receive it, as authorized by the INNS and IEEE-CIS Presidents.
- The General Co-Chairs of a **SPECIFIC CONFERENCE** typically find Publicity Co-Chairs for its promotion, but won't usually be aware any specifics or policies regarding mass

emails.

- The INNS and IEEE-CIS Presidents, on email request from the **HOLDER** should approve of ONLY ONE **MASS EMAILER** per **SPECIFIC CONFERENCE** to receive the mass email list, who alone is responsible for the maintenance of the mass email list that he/she possesses for that conference-year. Note that this restriction also prevents distribution to **NON-[MASS EMAILERS]** of :
    - INNS & IEEE-CIS [Presidents, Board, Committee] members and any [administrative, managmeent] services company employees ;
    - Conference [Organising, Publicity, other] Committee team members
- **MASS EMAILERS** usually should :
    - have a track record of past [WCCI, IJCNN, INNS-BDDL] Organising Committee work for at least one conference; OR
    - have been on INNS or IEEE-CIS Committees or Boards; OR
    - are recommended by two people who fit at least one of he above categories.
- **MASS EMAILERS** must NOT distribute the mass email list to any other individual, without the email permission from BOTH of the [INNS,IEEE-CIS] Presidents for the specified individual.
- **MASS EMAILERS** must receive ONLY the sub-set of the overall list that is applicable to the conference that they are working on :
    - WCCI - full list, which includes the lists below as sub-sets (non-redundant)
    - IJCNN - for INNS IJCNNs, this lists includes the INNS-BDDL as a subset
    - INNS-Big Data, Deep Learning (INNS-BDDL) - for INNS-BDDL conferences
- Any sending of the mass email list will be in [public, private] key encrypted format, or via a secure shell (ssh).
- Obviously, should a **MASS EMAILER** no longer be able to do their mass emails, then approval of another individual to be the new **MASS EMAILER** must follow this same policy.

Use and maintenance of the mass email lists :

- The list is to be used for a LIMITED (8) mass emails per **SPECIFIC CONFERENCE**. For exceptional circumstances only, and only with the IEEE-CIS and INNS Presidents approvals, additional emails can be considered.
- The emails must ONLY be for the purposes of promoting the **SPECIFIC CONFERENCE** for which the **MASS EMAILER** is approved (either [WCCI, IJCNN, INNS-BDDL]), including its activities (for example Call for [Papers, Special Sessions, Tutorials, Workshops, Competitions], announcement of [events, activities, awards, Plenary speakers] related to the IJCNN.
- As per the law in many countries, and by IEEE-CIS and INNS policy, requests by recipients to remove their emails from the mass email list must be carefully obeyed. This is done, NOT BY DELETING their names from the mass email list (which is INADEQUATE - as multiple versions of the mass email lists, and sources of new emails, bypass the deletion protection), but by maintaining an up-to-date-list of requests to remove names. Note that problems still occur with perhaps 2 to 8 people, who repeatedly get the emails in spite of efforts to remove them. This is probably due to redirection from their alternate email addresses, which they haven't provided, or some other forwarding mechanism.
- At the end of their tasks, **MASS EMAILERS** must send their [updated, maintained] mass email list to the INNS designate who [possesses, maintains] the overall INNS mass email list (herafter referred to as the HOLDER). They must then destroy all [copies, versions] in their possession.

- [WCCI, IJCNN, INNS-BDDL] author email lists are a primary (but not sole) source of mass emails in the INNS lists.   For copies of [WCCI, IJCNN] author email lists, requests should go through Thomasz Cholewo or his replacement, as a long-term, stable contact who is familiar with the issues and the database.
- Very rough time estimates for the Publicity Co-Chair work include :
    - > 8 hours per mass email - drafting, getting feedback from OrgCom, update mass email list, remove requests list
    - ~150 hours total on publicity (includes writing & updating software to maintain email list, occasional problems with email server, inquiries, challenges, managing-developing publicity team, etc)

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People who have receive the INNS mass email lists include :

- Simone Scardapane. Publicity Co-Chair. INNS BigData-DeepLearn2018. Sapienza Uof Roma. Italy <simone.scardapane@uniroma1.it>, Simone took over the mass emails for INNS-BDDL2018
- Hendro Nurhadi. Publicity Co-Chair. INNS BigData-DeepLearn2018. Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember. Indonesia <hdnurhadi@me.its.ac.id>, while initially designated, Hendro did NOT do any mass emailings.
- José Antonio Iglesias, PhD student and Publicity Co-Chair for INNS BigData 2015
- De-Shuang Huang and Yoonsuck Choe, respectively General Chair and Program Chair for IJCNN 2015 Killarney Ireland, received the list following a request that was put forward to Xin Yao, then President of IEEE-CIS.
- Possibly Jennie Si for IJCNN2007 Orlando (actually I forget who and which year), albeit this was a much smaller list than the current accumulated list.

Note that I sent the list to Jose in ENCRYPTED format for protection, which should be a standard for any future distributions of the IJCNN list as well!

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INNS mass email list from other sources

As noted in the main text of this email above, the INNS also has a separate mass email list compiled from many other sources, and that is not subject to the IEEE-CIS restrictions, but we also are careful to limit its use and distribution, and to remove emails on request by recipients.   The other sources include the INNS membership list, and other [conferences, societies, mailing lists, publications] etc.   This separate list this year will probably be 1/2 to 2/3 the size of the IJCNN list (cumulative for several past IJCNNs), and there is of course considerable overlap between the two, as IJCNN emails often occur in other lists as well.

Note that I maintain the lists in a way that contents can easily be audited to ensure that policies are being followed.   I use a spreadsheet.

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Recent status of the "INNS mass email list" (before major updating soon)

The current numbers will be less than those below given attrition of the emails (probably by 10-20%) since they were last used. Of course, it is always possible to get new addresses by searches.

	WCCI	IJCNN	BigData
08Aug2017	22,595	16,886	7,120
07Nov2017	21,172	15,976	6,755
09Jan2018	20,553	15,433	6,532
12Jan2018	20,326	15,241	6,454
21Jan2018	20,261	15,186	6,436

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NOTE : This policy update is too draconian, and exceeds anything achieved in the past.   In practice, pragmatic shortcuts have been necessary, and actual results fall short of idea hopes (especially for list maintenance).   However, I feel that the material below is useful for two purposes:

1. It provides a default set of [processes, expectations, constraints, limitations] for those involved. For example, it's hard for a junior person (eg grad student) to say no to many individuals who may demand a copy of the mass email list. The policy doesn't provide a guarantee that the list won't be distributed inappropriately, but it does give the **MASS EMAILER** a strong basis to rejecting and REPORTING such demands, especially when combined with the approvals process.

2. It may serve as a policy starting point for a more secure, longer-term management of the INNS mass email lists, possibly through the management services company under contract to INNS, or even through Tom Cholewo, who has been a "permanent" Web reviews Chair" for IEEE-CIS, and that has given great stability to their system.

endemail