**Reviewer's report**

**Title:** Reviewer Agreement Trends from Four Years of Electronic Abstract Submissions

**Version:** 3  **Date:** 6 February 2006

**Reviewer:** Karen Shashok

**Reviewer's report:**

**General**
The revised paper focuses more clearly on the objectives and findings of this retrospective analysis.

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**Major Compulsory Revisions** (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

The title should be amended to something like "Reviewer agreement trends from four years of electronic submissions of conference abstracts." Apologies for not catching this in the first round of review!

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**Minor Essential Revisions** (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. **Abstract, Methods.** The second sentence should be edited to read something like "Reviewers used an on-line form specific for each type of study design to score abstracts..."

2. **Background, para 2, first sentence.** This new sentence should be edited to read something like "The goal of abstract review is to screen for submissions that are acceptable for inclusion in a conference program (in contrast to manuscript review, in which the abstract is checked to ensure that the content of the full text is accurately represented)."

3. **Background, last para.** "Based on this, the purposes of this investigation were to..." This sentence should be rewritten for clarity. What does "this" refer to? "This hypothesis", perhaps?

4. **Methods, next-to-last para.** near the top of page 9, "which occurs when assessments are numerically equal (10,11). This phrase should be rewritten to clarify the meaning of "numerically equal". Readers unfamiliar with ICC calculations will have trouble understanding this sentence as it is written now.

5. **Discussion, Conclusions.** The sentence "Results from this investigation suggest that over the last four years an electronic abstract submissions and review program has generated moderate agreement..." should be edited to mention specifically "the on-line conference abstract submission and peer review system developed by the CEAP Research Committee" instead of "an electronic abstract submissions and review program".

6. **Discussion, Conclusions.** The sentence "The goal of this, and other similar studies, should be to ensure that scientific merit is recognized and rewarded" is out of place in this paragraph. There is little connection between this broad policy-oriented statement and the rest of the text, and the study was not designed to test this proposal, so the statement should be deleted.

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

**What next?:** Accept after minor essential revisions

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.