

## **Directions – August 2004**

*By Mike Wood*

Well, 6 years down the road and this is my last ‘Directions’ column for Protocol. My term as ESTA President finishes at the end of this year and I can honestly say I’m going to miss it. Although it can be quite a lot of work you feel very connected with the pulse of the industry. I’ve been particularly fortunate to have been in this position at a great time, with programs such as the TSP and the new ETCP achieving success and giving ESTA worldwide respect and credibility. Those programs were built and established by many, many people and I feel not a little bit lucky to have been in the Presidency when all their hard work came to fruition. I’d like to say thank you to all ESTA Members and staff for this opportunity and privilege, it’s truly been an honor.

I’m not going too far away though; you can’t get rid of me that easily. I now become immediate Past President. This is a really great job - you get to go to Board meetings and generally cause trouble and heckle without having any responsibilities. You can only imagine what a natural role this has been for Paul Vincent the last few years. This, I feel sure, is what the last six years have really been leading up to. Frank Stewart has been giving me private tuition in being curmudgeonly so now I feel ready and prepared for the role.

All this means that, this year, there will be an election for President along with other roles on the Board – please ensure that you use your franchise and vote. Ballot papers will be sent out in early October so please respond promptly before the November deadline.

Talking of the Technical Standards Program – this year the TSP reaches its 10<sup>th</sup> birthday. That’s 10 years of standards development specifically for the entertainment technology industry, 10 years of hard and detailed work by the working groups and 10 years of helping our industry towards safe working practices. Over 550 people have been directly involved in this process since its inception and almost 30 ANSI standards or guides have either been published or are in progress. Most importantly all this has been done within a consensus framework where direct competitors sit down together and resolve their differences for a common goal. That means the final standards are widely accepted – everyone has been involved in their development so everyone has equal interest in their success. Congratulations to everyone who has been involved since 1994.

This month also revealed more good news for the ETCP – the development fund campaign has now surpassed the \$600,000 level with recent significant donations from Electronic Theatre Controls (ETC) and Production Resource Group (PRG). We are now within reach of the goal of \$750,000 and a few more contributions will get us there. Please consider if you can help achieve this goal before LDI – it would be really positive to be able to announce that success at the ESTA Dinner. As has been reported elsewhere a contract was placed in July with Applied Measurement Professionals (AMP) to perform the job analysis and role delineation studies of both arena-style and permanent rigging and that work is now well underway. This job analysis is the foundation on which the ETCP can then build a viable, fair and legally defensible certification examination. Success here will keep the program on track for its scheduled release next fall.

So, it's farewell from this column and see you at LDI!