

**Bill Clegg      Newcastle University**

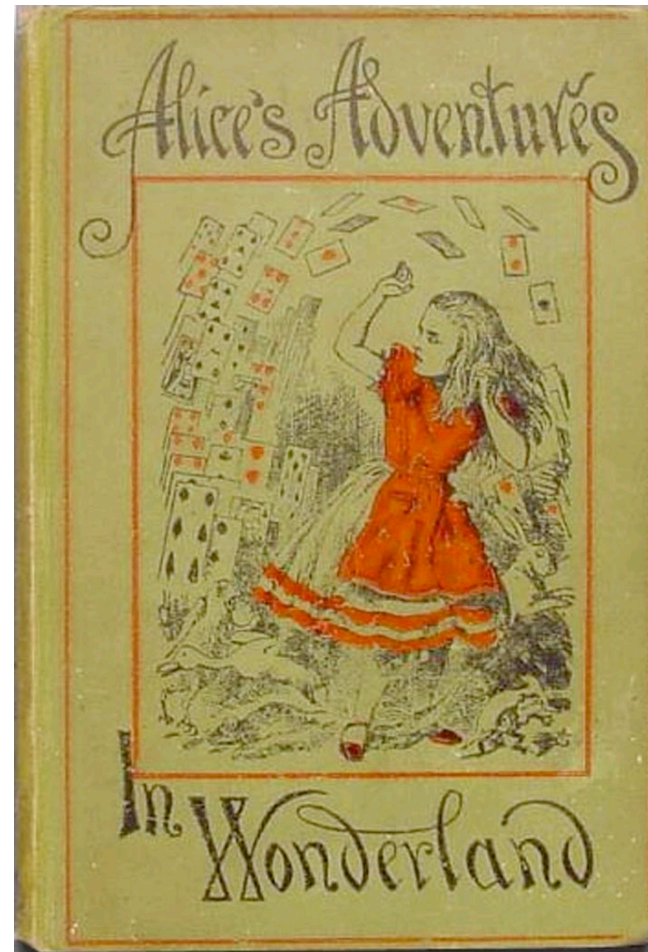
**Joint Section Editor of  
*Acta Crystallographica Section E*  
(*Structure Reports Online*)**

**2000–2008**

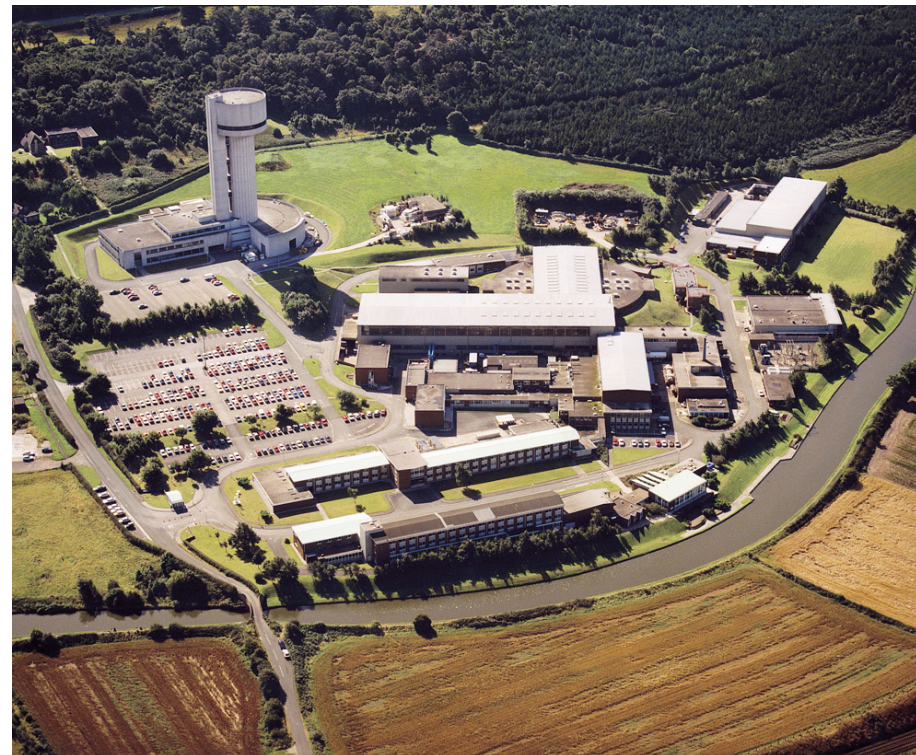
**Acta E's Adventures in Journal-land**

**...with apologies to Lewis Carroll**

**Alice's Adventures in Wonderland**







## **Acta E – a brief history**

2000 Concept and initial planning

2001 First year of publication (Volume E57)

800 papers (6 Co-editors)

2002 923 papers

2003 1299 papers

2004 1808 papers (30 Co-editors)

2005 2887 papers

2006 3991 papers

2007 5181 papers (58 Co-editors)

## **Acta E      Objectives**

Publication of crystal structures:

easy

reliable

reputable

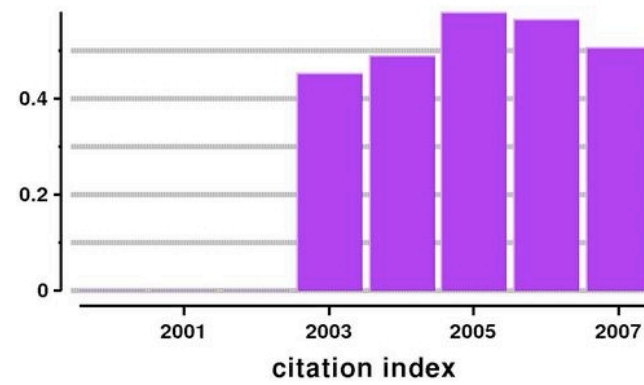
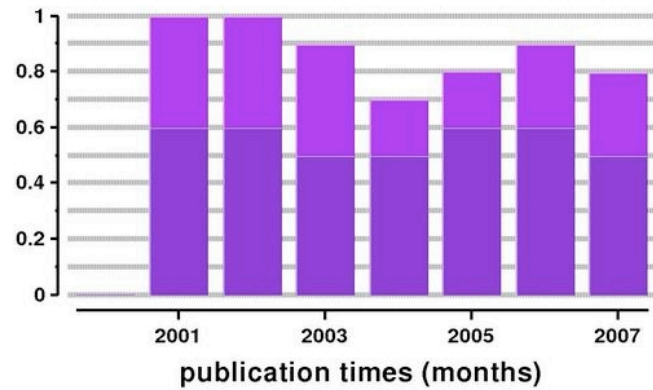
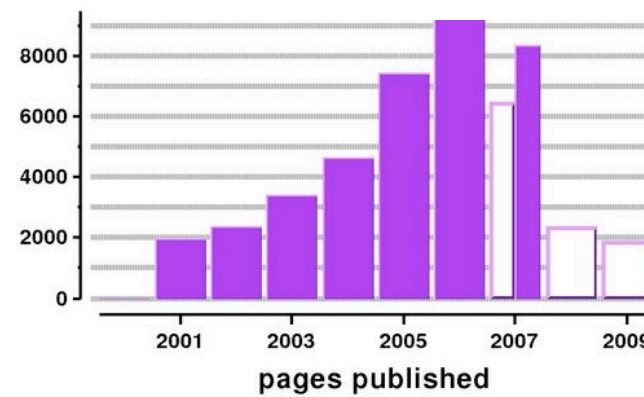
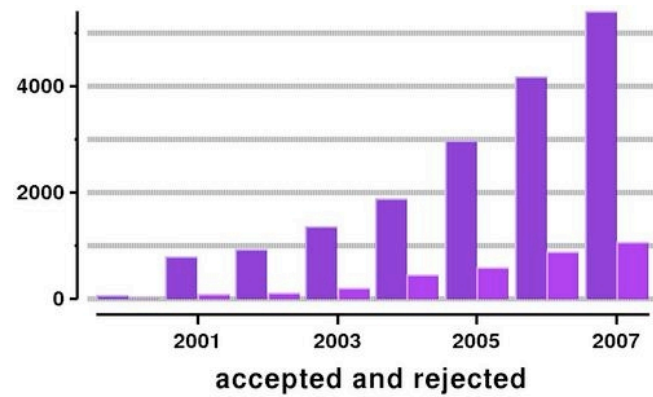
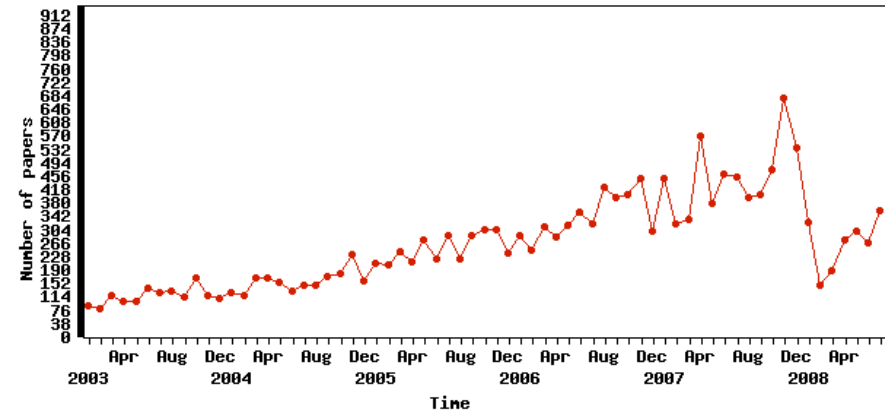
popular with authors

widely read

rapid

More than just a “database entry with ISI citation”

# Acta E      Some trends



## **Acta E      Relevant topics for this meeting**

### **1. An entirely electronic journal**

- submission (in CIF format, via web site)
- review (via PDF generation + original files)
- editing (directly in CIF or with IUCr tools)
- proofs (via email and web site)
- publication (including email alerts)
- reprints (PDF, including Supplementary Material)
- all correspondence (email, also via web site)

## **Acta E      Relevant topics for this meeting**

- 2.** Appropriateness of crystal structure reporting for a purely electronic publication medium

The central importance of CIF



## **Acta E      Relevant topics for this meeting**

### **3. Submission, handling and review procedures**

Initially (2001): mainly email + FTP; several steps involved in submission of files and copyright agreement; email correspondence among authors, IUCr staff, co-editors

2006: fully web-based system, including tailored pages for authors, co-editors, section editors, IUCr staff; storage of web-generated emails

2007–2008: enhancements for Open Access mechanism

## **Acta E      Relevant topics for this meeting**

### **4. Tools for authors, editors and readers**

CheckCIF/PLATON [also enCIFer] for checking etc.

PrintCIF for manuscript preview

publCIF for CIF editing and manuscript preparation

Jmol toolbox for generating enhanced figures

## **Acta E      Relevant topics for this meeting**

### **5. Changes in content and format of papers**

Original style (2001) essentially as Acta C but shorter

2005: removal of some tabulated experimental items

2006: restriction of Comment section to 400 words

2007: new short format with enhanced

Supplementary Material

## **Acta E      Relevant topics for this meeting**

### **6. Open Access**

Introduced primarily for financial reasons

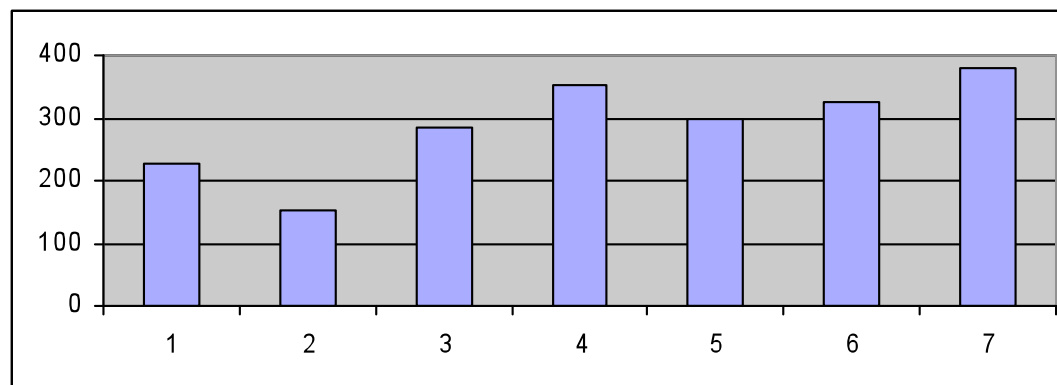
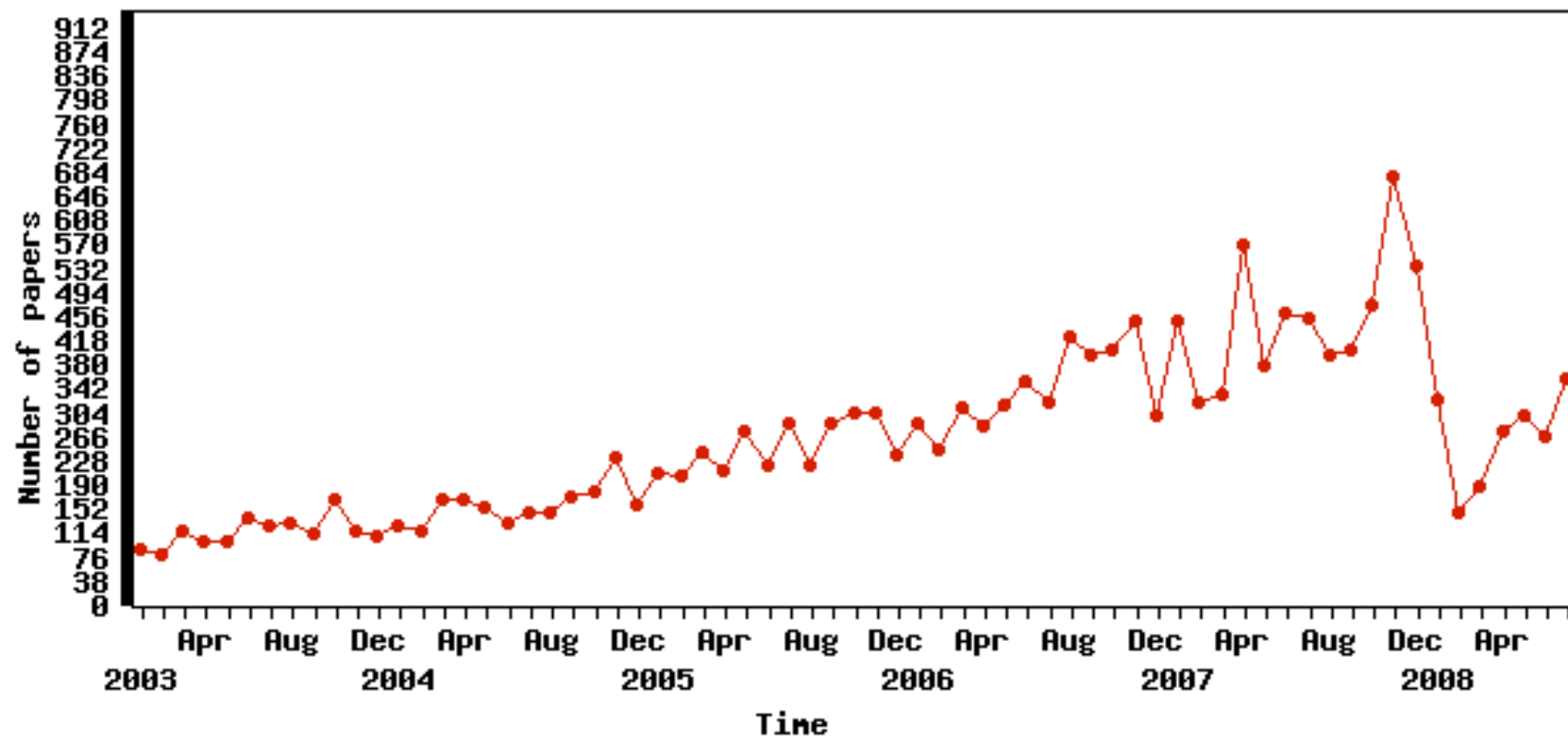
Acta E once again a testing ground for new methods

Aim to minimise cost to authors – hence new format

Predictions of dire consequences, including demise of Acta E and flood of papers for Acta C

Actual outcome is an initial reduction, followed by continued growth

Currently similar statistics to 2005–2006





## **The impact of Acta E**

- Testing ground for IUCr, followed later by Acta F
- Spectacular growth
- Demonstration of benefits of electronic-only publication (including speed)
- Largest annual contributor to CSD
- Financial difficulties caused by success, leading to introduction of Open Access model

# **The impact of Open Access**

- Testing ground for IUcr once again
- Initial reduction in submitted papers (partly an artefact of the pre-OA bulge), followed by continued growth from a lower baseline
- General acceptance of Open Access charges, which are very moderate
- Change in balance of author nationalities
- Larger potential readership
- Eventual effect on journal impact factor?

## **New and continuing challenges**

Difficult structures

Difficult authors!

Poorly written text, untrained authors, factual errors

Consistency and flexibility

Degree of automation

Heavy dependence on human involvement

Chemical diagrams: automatic generation, checking

Still only a very small fraction of known structures

No publication of primary data

# Acta E's Adventures in Journal-land

